

ACTA NEOPHILOLOGICA

36. 1-2 (2003)

Ljubljana

ANDREJ PODBREŽNIK

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NEW ZEALAND AND SLOVENIA: CULTURAL CONTACTS, 1923–2000

Andrej Podbrežnik

Abstract

Situated many thousands of miles apart, possessing very different historical experiences and occupying different positions in the world, Slovenia and New Zealand nonetheless share a number of common features as a result of the political, economic and cultural contacts that have been established between the two countries. The author of this paper attempts to gauge the intensity of the contacts, mostly cultural, that have been forged between the two countries, with an emphasis on descriptions of New Zealand and portrayals of its people in the work of some of Slovenia's most outstanding travel writers. Alma Karlin (*Samotno potovanje*), Miran Ogrin (*Na jugu sveta*) and Tomo Križnar (*Samotne sledi*) have all succeeded in acquainting the Slovene reading public with New Zealand and its people and culture. So that readers might understand more fully the observations offered by these writers, the author of this paper provides background information in the form of a short account of the history of New Zealand and of New Zealand literature, going on to focus on those New Zealand writers whose work has been translated into Slovene, most notably Katherine Mansfield. Other writers whose work has been translated include Janet Frame, Dorothy Eden, Ngaio Marsh, Stephanie Johnson and Samuel Butler.

In order to understand the cultural phenomena that typify New Zealand, one has to look at some of the events that have played a crucial role in the process of shaping the country and its culture, and the New Zealanders as a nation.

Abel Tasman, an unknown Dutch mapmaker and navigator, was the first European known to have visited the region, named New Zealand. This was in 1642, but the land had been discovered and settled a thousand years earlier by people from eastern Polynesia, perhaps the Cook Islands or Tahiti. It was in the mid 19th century that descendants of these people adopted the name *Maori* (from *tangata Maori*, meaning "ordinary person"), to distinguish themselves from the *Pakeha* (European settlers).

In 1769 Captain James Cook came south to investigate Tasman's discovery. He sailed round the two main islands, becoming embroiled in several bloody conflicts with the Maori, and accurately placed New Zealand on the map. He recommended the place he called "Thames" as a site for a colony, and claimed New Zealand for Britain. European contacts with New Zealand came largely from the British convict settlement in Sydney. In the 1790s Australian settlers began deep-sea whaling and sealing off the New Zealand coast, and cargoes of spars and flax were taken from the Hauraki Gulf in

1794 and 1795. The Maori became involved in these activities, and missionaries settled in New Zealand to convert the Maori to Christianity.

Increasing commerce and colonisation led to conflicts between the Europeans and the Maori, and the British government moved to impose law and order on the region. The Maori were more violent towards one another than they were towards the Pakeha. Fighting was common between the tribal groups, and those that were first to obtain European weapons used them in attacks on their traditional enemies. Nevertheless, the missions continued to expand rapidly in the 1830s, indicating that the Maori were being converted to Christianity in large numbers. However, conversion was largely superficial and was undertaken by the Maori for their own motives, the most important being that the missions provided them with the key to literacy.

Increased European settlement was proving problematic, which necessitated a policy that would regulate land deals between white settlers and the Maori. In 1840 the so-called Treaty of Waitangi was signed, with the Maori ceding sovereignty of their country to Britain in exchange for protection and guaranteed possession of their lands. But relations between the Maori and the Pakeha soon deteriorated, with the Maori becoming increasingly alarmed at the effect the Pakeha were having on their society and the fact that their rights as outlined in the treaty were not being respected. In 1860 war broke out between the Pakeha and the Maori, continuing for much of the decade; it ended in Maori defeat. By the late 19th century the situation had calmed, albeit temporarily. The discovery of gold had engendered much prosperity, and widescale sheep farming meant New Zealand had become an efficient and mostly self-reliant country. New Zealand was given dominion status in the British Empire in 1907 and granted autonomy by Britain in 1931; independence, however, was not formally proclaimed until 1947.

Sweeping social changes – women's suffrage, social security, the encouragement of trade unions and the introduction of childcare services – cemented New Zealand's reputation as a country committed to egalitarian reform.

The economy continued to prosper until the worldwide recession of the 1980s. Today the economy has stabilised, thanks to an export-driven recovery. Internationally, New Zealand was hailed during the mid 1980s for its anti-nuclear stance – although it meant a quarrel with the United States – and its opposition to French nuclear testing in the Pacific.

The Maori population is now increasing faster than the Pakeha, and the resurgence in *Maoritanga* (Maori culture) has had a major and lasting impact on New Zealand society. The most heartening cultural aspect has been the mending of relations between the Maori and the Pakeha. In 1985 the Treaty of Waitangi was overhauled, leading to financial reparations to a number of Maori tribes whose land had been unjustly confiscated. However, a recent clumsy attempt by the New Zealand government to offer financial reparations has resulted in an upsurge in militant Maori protests. This disharmony has shocked New Zealanders and placed national reconciliation at the top of the political agenda.

Hundreds of years ago the Maori developed New Zealand's first and most individual arts. Their carefully detailed woodcarvings and poetic legends created a tradition that is still current among the Maori. The Maori composed, memorised and per-

formed laments, love poems, war chants and prayers. They also developed a mythology to explain and record their own past and the legends of their gods and tribal heroes. As settlement developed through the 19th century, Europeans collected many of these poems and stories, copying them into their native language. In every aspect of the Maori oral tradition, the texts, which in pre-European times survived by being memorised, were inseparable from gestures and music. Until the 1970s there was almost no connection between the classical Maori tradition, preserved largely as historical record, and the development of the post-colonial English language literature of New Zealand.

It is not surprising that the most notable 19th century writing is found not in poetry and fiction but in letters, journals and factual accounts, such as Samuel Butler's *A First Year in Canterbury Settlement* (1863) and, perhaps most notably, F.E. Maning's *Old New Zealand* (1863).

The best of the 19th century poets include Alfred Domett, whose *Ranolf and Amohia* (1872) was an attempt to discover epic material in the new land, and William Pember Reeves, who was born in New Zealand, rose to be a government minister and then retired to Britain, where he wrote nostalgic poems in the voice of a colonist. They were competent versifiers and rhymers, interesting for what they record. But none of the poets stand out until the 20th century, the first being Blanche Baughan (*Reuben and Other Poems*, 1903).

New Zealand literature was making a slow and respectable appearance, but already the whole historical process had been pre-empted by one brief life – that of Katherine Mansfield (born Kathleen Beauchamp), who died in 1923 at the age of 34, having laid the foundations for a reputation that has gone on to grow and influence the development of New Zealand literature ever since. Impatient with the limitations of colonial life, she relocated to London in 1908, publishing her first book of short stories (*In a German Pension*, 1911) at the age of 22. For the 12 years remaining to her, she lived a life whose complicated threads have, since her death, seen her reappearing in the biographies, letters and journals of people as famous as Virginia Woolf and D.H. Lawrence. Two additional books published in her lifetime (*Bliss and Other Stories*, 1920, and *The Garden Party and Other Stories*, 1922) were followed by stories published posthumously, collections of poems, literary criticism, letters and journals. For a time she was a major figure, then faded for two decades, to be rediscovered in the 1970s by feminists and scholars. It seemed, from every perspective, that Mansfield remained a New Zealand writer whose best work was that in which she recreated the country and the family she grew up in. She made the short story respectable, established it as a form sufficient in itself for a writer's reputation to rest on, and made it a staple of New Zealand writing. She never completed a novel.

The first important New Zealand novels came from two writers who used northern New Zealand as their backdrop: William Satchell (*The Land of the Lost*, 1902, *The Toll of the Bush*, 1905, *The Greenstone Door*, 1914) and Jane Mander (*The Story of a New Zealand River*, 1920). They were followed by John A. Lee, whose *Children of the Poor* (1934), mixing fiction and oratory, was drawn from his own experience of childhood poverty in the South Island, and John Mulgan, whose *Man Alone* (1934) held in

balance both the colonial romanticism of the solitary figure in an empty landscape and the leftist romanticism of a group of men moving together to change the world.

New Zealand literature first gained widespread international recognition in the mid 20th century. The most important writers of the mid and late 20th century included the novelists Sylvia Ashton Warner, Janet Frame and Keri Hulme, the poets James K. Baxter and A.R.D. Fairburn, and the academic, poet, dramatist and short story writer Vincent O'Sullivan. The 1960s were dominated by the poetry and charismatic presence of James K. Baxter, a very public and prolific writer whose *Collected Poems*, when it appeared after his death in 1972 at the age of 46, contained more than 600 pages; it was said that possibly three times as many additional poems remained in unpublished manuscript. Another notable literary figure active since that period is Vincent O'Sullivan. One of his best plays, *Shuriken* (1985), uses a riot by Japanese soldiers in a New Zealand prison camp to illustrate how understanding and sympathy fail to cross cultural boundaries. Drama, the last of the major literary genres to get started in New Zealand, developed rapidly.

Janet Frame's works show a deep understanding of the minds of mentally disturbed people. She is best known for her autobiographical trilogy *To the Is-Land* (1983), *An Angel at my Table* (1984) and *The Envoy from Mirror City* (1985). Sylvia Ashton-Warner wrote an international bestseller, *Spinster* (1958), a success unmatched by her later novels. But her fine autobiography *I Passed This Way* (1979) is a personal record of her life both as writer and teacher.

Keri Hulme became a full-time writer after several years of working in a variety of occupations. She wrote the award-winning novel *The Bone People* (1985). Ngaio Marsh rose to become one of the world's best-known writers of detective stories.

In summary, New Zealand literature represents a synthesis of Maori and Pakeha influences, independent from English or European literary traditions and with its own characteristics.

Although independent for little more than a decade, Slovenia nonetheless has a literary tradition reaching back nearly 500 years. New Zealand, which has been in "historical" existence for about 200 years, has in this relatively short period developed a literary tradition as prolific as Slovenia's, yet one must bear in mind that there was no need in New Zealand for colonists to develop a literary language since English had already established itself as such. Thus, in a sense, colonial writers were merely continuing the English literary tradition, creating a firm foundation for nearly all sorts of literary creativity in New Zealand. Apart from descriptions of the life of the pioneers in their new homeland, literary works from New Zealand often deal with the life of the Maori and Maori culture. Many New Zealand writers considered their new homeland to be a sort of exile, far from the large bustling centres of culture, and decided to return to England, bringing back from New Zealand several new literary motifs and themes.

Though they are very small countries situated far from each other, Slovenia and New Zealand both possess a rich cultural heritage, and they have both tried to establish cultural, economic and political links with countries near and far from their borders. While searching for cultural, economic and political contacts, both countries have ventured far beyond their national borders, and – especially nowadays, within the process of "globalisation", with information transfer becoming faster and faster – the

question arises as to whether there have been any links established between New Zealand and Slovenia in different areas and at different levels of life.

By exploring newspaper articles from the past acquired from the archives of some of the most outstanding and prominent Slovene newspapers, most notably *Delo* and *Večer*, one can gain a great deal of extremely useful information about the political contacts between Slovenia and New Zealand that came to be established between 1924 and 2000. The first attempts to establish some form of political and economic cooperation between the two countries can be traced back to the period before 1991, when Slovenia was still part of Yugoslavia. There were indeed some links between Wellington and Belgrade, where the Slovene politicians of that time did not have much of a say. In 1973 Džemal Bijedič, the then president of the Yugoslav federal government, paid an official visit to Wellington, with New Zealand Prime Minister Wallace Rowling visiting Yugoslavia in the course of a European tour two years later. These state visits were supposed to establish close political and economic cooperation between New Zealand and Yugoslavia – a goal that was never fully achieved.

Upon gaining independence in 1991, Slovenia, a newborn country and, as such, still quite unrecognised and unknown, tried extremely hard to consolidate its position and reputation, attract the attention of the rest of the world and establish productive economic and political links with other countries. So it was in 1992 that Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel visited New Zealand, with both sides agreeing to establish diplomatic contacts and strengthen ties. Upon his return to Ljubljana, Rupel announced the establishment of wide-ranging economic cooperation between the two countries – cooperation that has never come into being.

Six years later Slovene Prime Minister Janez Drnovšek visited New Zealand in an attempt to consolidate links. Though New Zealand had been one of the first countries to recognise Slovenia as a sovereign nation and break with Belgrade, Slovenia at the time of Drnovšek's visit was still virtually unknown to New Zealanders. The economic cooperation that has arisen between the two countries since Drnovšek's visit is, however, barely worth a mention, due basically to the great geographical distances separating the two countries, as well as to the size of both countries and the financial difficulties that plague them – factors that could hardly ever encourage successful economic cooperation between two countries at opposite ends of the planet.

The same can be said of cultural cooperation between Slovenia and New Zealand. Tours by artists from one to the other country have always proved to be extremely expensive. Slovene audiences have only had one opportunity to see New Zealand artists on stage; this came in 1989 when Cankarjev Dom, the national cultural centre in Ljubljana, hosted the New Zealand Royal Ballet. In 1995 Danijel Černe and Boštjan Gombač, two Slovene creators of popular music, visited New Zealand, where they managed, during their three-month stay there, to revolutionise the music scene with their computer-assisted musical performances.

Palpable interest in the New Zealand film industry and in New Zealand films arose in 1990 in Slovenia when *An Angel at My Table*, a film by Jane Campion based on Janet Frame's autobiographical trilogy, enjoyed huge success at the Venice film festival. Soon afterwards the film played in cinemas throughout Slovenia, with reviews in the press focusing on the film as well as on Janet Frame as a writer. This was

followed by the showing of some of the most outstanding contemporary Australian and New Zealand films at the Ljubljana film festival in November 1994. In tandem with this event, Vesna Rojko, a journalist, wrote four articles about the New Zealand film industry entitled 'Film v Novi Zelandiji' (Film Industry in New Zealand); these were published in the *Republika* newspaper. Rojko highlighted four well-known award-winning New Zealand movies of international reputation: *An Angel at My Table* and *Piano* by Jane Campion, *Heavenly Creatures* by Peter Jackson, and *Once Were Warriors* by Lee Tamahori. Though the films presented at the Ljubljana festival were among the best of their kind, no other notes, reviews or commentaries appeared in any other Slovene publication, nor was there any information about whether New Zealand audiences had ever become acquainted with Slovene films.

Many Slovenes have visited New Zealand since 1924. Here one must emphasise the importance of those travel writers and travellers who have journeyed to New Zealand and whose travelogues provide a precious insight into the country and its culture.

Alma Karlin is the most famous of them. After World War I this erudite lady, whose travelogue *Samotno potovanje* (Solitary Journey, 1924) marks the start of contact between Slovenes and New Zealanders, set out on a trip around the world, setting foot in New Zealand along the way. Her observations on this faraway country are very interesting because she provides extremely colourful descriptions of the country, its people, and its flora and fauna.

During her trip through New Zealand, Karlin made numerous contacts with white settlers and Maori, whom she respected a great deal in spite of their civilisation being very different from that of the Pakeha; she would never judge people by their race but by their human qualities and virtues. She travelled around the country with her eyes open, always making her own critical judgements of the impact of the white settlers and their culture upon the Maori. She even criticised New Zealand missionaries, upon whose hospitality she often depended during her trips through the South Pacific, and it is precisely this unbiased critical note, always present in her judgements of the characters of the people she encountered during her travels, which gives her writing a particular and very special flavour, and makes it particularly valuable for those still not acquainted with New Zealand and its culture.

Karlin dedicated 14 chapters of *Samotno potovanje* to a description of her travels in New Zealand, a country she called "the farthest point" she travelled to in the course of her journey around the world (*Samotno potovanje*, 315–342).

She arrived in Wellington harbour in 1924 and there her problems began. Since an official of the shipping company had failed to provide correct information concerning her nationality in her registration forms, she had to hand all her money over to the suspicious customs officers, who only allowed her to keep a letter of credit for 300 yen, which turned out to be useless since no bank was willing to pay her the money stated in the document. A large strike then prevented her from travelling to Auckland. She then turned for help to two ladies working in the editorial office of the *Dominion Paper* and *Evening Post* newspapers. It was only thanks to their intervention that the banks were finally willing to pay Karlin the sum stated in her letter of credit. She was finally provided for and given shelter in a Quaker dormitory.

Karlin provides an accurate description of New Zealanders, whom she also compares frequently to Australians, finally coming to the conclusion that the people who settled in New Zealand came from higher social classes than those who had settled in Australia: in her opinion one could discern from the characteristics encountered among New Zealanders – elevated speech, graceful manners, views on life, the way they fitted out their living quarters – that they surpassed those of Australians. In her opinion Australians wanted to sever any links that might connect them with Britain, at the same time making fun of the British and the Oxford accent and considering themselves superior to the British, whereas New Zealand was “... England’s baby still in its nappies, lying far away from its mother’s breast, thus being spoiled a little bit, but hanging upon its mother with blind love that is touching, yet unpleasant sometimes” (*Samotno potovanje*, 318, 319). She was sad to leave Wellington, not only because of the open-heartedness and kindness of the city’s residents but also because, as she puts it, Wellington is one of those places on Earth that keeps smiling at its visitors, filling their hearts with joy.

Karlin also provides descriptions of the landscape and the flora and fauna of New Zealand. She finds the South Island very cold, similar in its appearance to the Alpine countryside of Slovenia. She is very enthusiastic about the snow-capped New Zealand mountains looming up above the sea, as well as the eerie precipices and the woods full of unusual trees, with herds of sheep grazing on the lower slopes of the hills. She describes stick insects and various species of bird, among them the moa, and provides short descriptions of the kiwi bird and of a reptile known as tuatara, the only member of the ancient group of reptiles from the age of the dinosaurs still extant, and thus, as she puts it, the oldest surviving living creature on Earth (*Samotno potovanje*, 320). She regards New Zealand flora and fauna as the top attraction of the island, which once upon a time, according to the well-known Maori legend, had been dredged out of the sea by a god named Maui and had thus been called “The Fish of Maui” by Maori ever since. Thus Karlin combines the sublime uniqueness of the flora and fauna of New Zealand with the Maori myth of the origins of the country. She also describes her trip through the land of the Maori as very pleasant, due to the magnificent landscape and its mountains – some of them with a conical shape, some of them rugged and others round.

When she arrived in Auckland it was extraordinarily cold. However, she strolled along all the city’s major streets and roads, admired the architecture of some of the public buildings and the wide bridge linking the two halves of the city. The typically verdant New Zealand vegetation drew her attention. Later on she gives a vivid description of everyday life in the catholic dormitory where, for the first time in her life, she encountered a self-service restaurant, which she found a little weird and ineconomical. Auckland proved to be quite an expensive place. She found out that many of the local residents were forced to live extremely modestly and that the children in colonies became independent at a very early age, since they had to earn money themselves in order to sustain their families.

Karlin wrote to a very well-known Auckland botanist, whom she refers to as “Mr P”, imploring him to introduce her to New Zealand flora, unaware of this gentleman’s position as the Mayor of Auckland. Mr P proved to be a proper gentleman and

was willing to find enough time in the course of the following four months to explain to her the particular characteristics of New Zealand plant life. They became true friends, since they found out that they held similar views on the world and world affairs, as well as on a number of other issues. So for four months Karlin absorbed with great enthusiasm huge quantities of information about New Zealand flora and the very beginnings of the islands of New Zealand and their history. She advocates in her travelogue the theory that three million years before, New Zealand, initially part of an enormous equatorial continent, did not crumble during its split from this continent (for some reason still unknown) and that it therefore only gradually lost its tropical climate, which thus allowed its plants to adapt gradually to the climatic changes. This meant that even the palms adjusted to the cold climate and the evergreen shrubs became resistant to the typically mild New Zealand winters (*Samotno potovanje*, 323). She describes araucaria trees, which she believes can only be found in New Zealand, Australia and South America and which appeared for the first time in the Jurassic period.

During her stay in Auckland, Karlin also became acquainted with an erudite Anglican priest, Reverend Coates, and his wife; they soon offered her temporary lodging. Their amiability, as well as the quiet surroundings of their home, suited the writer very much and, for some time at least, she was spared the privations of lack of proper food and money usually suffered during her travels. Other well-educated priests would pay frequent visits to the house and they often became immersed in long discussions about the Christian faith – discussions where there was no air of intolerance but where statements were advanced on the basis of fact and with enthusiasm on the part of all the participants (*Samotno potovanje*, 325). It is this passage in Karlin's account of her adventures where her high level of tolerance towards people whose beliefs and opinions were different from her own shows itself, and where one can also see her ability to respect other people's arguments and opinions.

Alma Karlin's life in New Zealand became increasingly dynamic, since various newspapers showed an interest in her adventures and therefore invited her to give lectures on her trips, as did a number of priests. She also undertook various study trips throughout the country. As a determined opponent of any sort of violence, she spoke about the ideals she had always been trying to follow and that everybody should strive for.

Karlin notes that many Yugoslav immigrants were living around the town of Henderson at that time, people who had moved there in search of money and in order to make a living as gum-tappers. However, she did not visit any of them, since she did not know which nationality they belonged to and she was not sure whether they would be pleased to receive her. She also writes that it had only been in Sydney and nowhere else that she was able to find a Yugoslav embassy, which in her opinion was also the reason for the occasional problems she had with various authorities throughout the world (*Samotno potovanje*, 330).

Karlin also describes the native people of New Zealand. She writes that in Auckland and Wellington one encounters only individual natives here and there, of mixed (i.e. European-Maori) origin. To those who might be interested in seeing the real Maori, as they were, in their houses called *whares*, Karlin recommended entering the bush of

rimu and kahitea trees and searching for them there (*Samotno potovanje*, 331). She also mentions that European settlers had adopted a great deal of the Maori mentality, and that the close contacts made between the European settlers and the Maori, in a land where the boundary separating people of different skin colours was not as strict as elsewhere, had given the white settlers certain mystical traits. She quotes as examples some of the superstitious beliefs held by both the Maori and the European settlers. She also mentions the Maori folktale about a woman who, upon sneaking into *te reinga* (the world of the dead), steals fire away from the guards, who then pursue her until she finally throws the torch up into the sky, where it gets stuck and stays there ever after (*Samotno potovanje*, 332). In her opinion the Maori language is similar in its melodiousness to the Hawaiian language, containing many very fine metaphors, of which she gives some examples. She also notes that the Maori know many wise proverbs and sayings. She pays a great deal of interest to the Maori oral tradition, which she holds in very high esteem. She does not treat the Maori as primitive people but as a nation equal in every respect to Europeans.

She describes her journey through that part of New Zealand known for its profusion of geysers. She travelled to Rotorua following an invitation from a priest there asking her to come and give lectures on world peace, as well as on her own travels. She travelled by train, and although the journey lasted a very long time (the distances involved were enormous) she was entranced by the picturesque countryside (*Samotno potovanje*, 333). We learn from her descriptions that the geyser country lies at an altitude of 1,000 metres above sea level. Karlin visited this area in July (winter in the southern hemisphere), with frost gathering in the cracks and covering the ground, though it never snows in Rotorua. The people she met there were usually very kind to her, often offering to take her to some of the remoter places in the surrounding area. She took a car journey past both lakes to Rotomahana Valley, from where the company of travellers hiked across hills and through a gorge to Lake Tarawera. At this point Karlin provides a vivid description of the magnificent white and pink limestone terraces which used to descend all the way to the lakeshore until they were destroyed by a tremendous earthquake in the second half of the 19th century (*Samotno potovanje*, 334). She greatly enjoyed her stroll to the shore, in particular because of the scenery surrounding her and the several unusual phenomena on display, such as the shrouds of steam rising from the shore and the numerous boiling hot rivulets flowing into the lake. Finally she reports on a geyser they found on top of a hill. She adds that one need not necessarily stand by the biggest geyser in order to pay reverence to the work of underground spirits, since even some of the smaller geysers, as well as the bubbling and seething mud holes and brooks, evoke the due respect of the visitors. She also mentions a legend linked to the lake and its surroundings; it tells of an evil spirit dwelling on top of Mount Tarawera, feared to such an extent that nobody dares climb the mountain (*Samotno potovanje*, 335).

During her journey through New Zealand, Karlin also visited Whakarewarewaio, a typical Maori model village, where people lived the way they had since time immemorial, as well as several Maori homes, where she saw during her discussions with the natives that they still believed in spirits as well as the events and spells connected with these, although the Maori, at least officially, considered themselves Christians (*Samotno*

potovanje, 336). She finds the Maori very sensual. Despite all the curiosities she passed in the Maori model village, whose characteristics had already been adjusted to suit the needs of the tourist industry, Karlin was much more strongly impressed and enchanted by one other small village near Rotorua, where there were hot springs, hot streams and basins everywhere. In one of them an exhausted naked little girl was trying to escape the cold, children were cavorting in the many pools of hot water, women were washing clothes, and in some of the narrow holes full of bubbling and seething water she noticed cooking pots full of meat mixed with vegetables, cooking slowly in the water issuing from the hot springs. Yet the most beautiful and most touching experience was the reception given to her as a guest by a company of old carpet weavers who bid her welcome by performing an old dance in which they surrounded her and danced around her. At the request of some of the visitors, the Maori performed the *haka*, a tribal war dance; it made a strong impression on Karlin and she provides a vivid description of the dance itself in her travelogue (*Samotno potovanje*, 338). She also describes how she took baths in some of the hot thermal pools, and gives a short account of the water and its properties, as well of her encounters with a number of Jews who, for some reason unknown to her, were surprisingly kind to her – one of them, a merchant, even gave her some money.

In the last chapter on her travels in New Zealand, Karlin writes about the small community of Whangaroa, which she labels “the gateway to the north”. It lies in a magnificent landscape, surrounded by tremendous forests of kauri trees, where the climate is slightly warmer than elsewhere in New Zealand. Her New Zealand friends keep giving her advice for her further travels and one of the ladies even gives her twenty pounds that she would have to pay in Fiji – the place she was going to visit next – in order to be allowed to disembark there.

Miran Ogrin, another well-known Slovene travel writer who also had the opportunity to become acquainted with New Zealand, its landscape and its culture, provides a description of the country in his travelogue *Na jugu sveta* (In the Southern Part of the World, 1969), establishing a tight link between his personal experience and his extensive and broad knowledge about the country.

Ogrin starts by taking a ship from Sydney to Auckland. The descriptions of his adventures are full of personal views and judgements, which he blends with the broad knowledge he has acquired by reading travel guides and other written resources about the places he initially intends to visit. He seems to be putting all these pieces of information acquired by reading to the test, while constantly questioning them and checking their validity and authenticity during his travels in the places described in the books.

He goes on to provide a number of historical facts about New Zealand, as well as a picture of Europe as it was at the time the Maori started arriving in New Zealand. He concludes that the Europe of that time was a savage, largely uninhabited area in the midst of the dark Middle Ages, where nobody dared venture out onto the open sea, with the exception of the Arabs, who had established a lively maritime trade and who traded goods across the seas known at that time. In Ogrin's opinion the achievements of the Vikings or the medieval Portuguese explorers and sailors were nothing compared to the achievements of the Maori sailors as far as sea travel is concerned, since

the latter were able to sail all over the Pacific Ocean as skilfully as the Venetians were able to do in the Mediterranean hundreds of years later; the Maori settled on nearly all the islands of the Pacific, finding their way with the help of the stars, since they had no navigation instruments. Ogrin notes that the New Zealand Maori population is increasing in size by 3.6 per cent a year and that the Maori enjoy all human and civil rights, since New Zealand has successfully solved all its racial problems.

When Ogrin landed in Auckland, he was disappointed with the city, which he found silent and dreary, its streets empty. But upon ascending Mt Eden he was able to observe many bays and sailing boats, countless houses with swimming pools and gardens, and numerous sports grounds, tennis courts and bowling greens. The lush green gardens, the red roofs of the houses and the white flowers enchanted him. Ogrin then gives an enthusiastic description of the bays and islands of Auckland, of the Maori and their totems, of the sunny, rather humid climate, and of the 150-kilometre-long beaches that adorn the North Island (*Na jugu sveta*, 178). He was surprised by the vibrant nightlife. He also describes the sporting activities, social life and customs of the people of Auckland.

Ogrin continued his journey with a trip to a volcanic area strewn with geysers. The closer he got to the geysers, the mistier the area became, with the smell of sulphuric acid becoming more prominent. On his way through the area, he suddenly noticed a totem – a huge carved wooden sculpture of a Maori staring towards the north. Wherever he looked, he saw totems – wooden effigies of Maori gods – staring into the distance with their hollow eyes and, as Ogrin puts it, maybe thinking of times long ago when the Maori were the only rulers of New Zealand (*Na jugu sveta*, 179). And it is finally here that the author probes this very painful part of New Zealand history – the wars between the Maori and the Pakeha.

During his stay in the national park, Ogrin also visited the “model Maori village”. Visitors can enter this village by passing a huge red gate covered with ancient traditional Polynesian motifs. The gate itself is made of wood and carved in a way the author finds similar to that of old Gothic cathedrals. Ogrin is not only an accurate observer; he also analyses everything he sees, searches for its inner meaning and links it to some phenomena of the same kind elsewhere in the world and its historical development, forging everything into an interesting story.

In the land of geysers he often came across groups of Maori children playing among the totems; from time to time he also saw an elderly Maori sunbathing, observing the tourists sulkily, and he could hear radios blaring out of some of the Maori houses. Modern appliances had already sneaked into this model village. The traditional war dance, the *haka*, was performed exclusively for tourists. Young Maori women and girls danced in bars in some of the large New Zealand cities. During his journey the author gradually became aware of the reality of the position and status of the Maori in New Zealand society. He also mentions that the skin of the Maori had become adapted in the course of the centuries to the slightly colder climate of New Zealand, becoming slightly paler than that of the Samoans and Hawaiians. Ogrin also remarks that the names of nearly all the lakes, rivers and mountains had been derived from the Maori designations of these places. He also mentions the Moriori, the people who had inhabited New Zealand before the Maori arrived; the Maori gradually exter-

minated them in the years that followed their arrival. The last representative of this ancient tribe supposedly died in 1933 on Chatham Island, 1,000 kilometres east of New Zealand. He points out that it is the Maori who have given New Zealand its colour, its music and its folklore, as well as the sense of decoration displayed by New Zealanders as a whole.

Ogrin also visited the Waurakei Geothermal Project, a system of geothermal power plants where engineers harnessed geothermal steam to generate electricity. The author was deeply impressed by this technical solution, making a comparison between some of the primitive ways of deploying hot water used by the Maori (e.g. cooking) and this modern way of exploiting such resources – in the form of power plants.

Writing about his visit to Lake Taupo, the author gives the reader some geographical information about the lake and provides a description of the tourist hurly-burly on the shores. His trip through the landscape surrounding the lake was also interesting, since it kept changing as he was travelling through it, being now similar to the Southern Alps, yet suddenly changing its face and reminding him of Norway, with dark green woods all around.

The author also reflects on the New Zealand way of life. He describes the traffic in New Zealand as less frenetic and more peaceful than elsewhere in the world. In his opinion, life in New Zealand is not pitched at the deadly pace found in other developed countries; people in New Zealand live at a more steady pace, following their own rhythm (*Na jugu sveta*, 187). The country reminds him of Switzerland, but whenever he tries to make parallels between New Zealand and Switzerland, he has to conclude that New Zealand is unique since, apart from all the characteristics it shares with Switzerland (lakes, mountains, glaciers), it has something more – the sea, the South Sea, which is home to numerous cultures and nations (*Na jugu sveta*, 188).

During his journey across New Zealand, Ogrin came to know the nature of the people. He writes that New Zealanders resemble the English most, sharing language and culture with them; however, he believes the New Zealanders are even more conservative and even greater individualists, living mostly in their own private houses. The English and the New Zealanders also differ in their views on sport. Whereas the English regard sport in terms of competition, the New Zealanders regard sport rather in terms of pastime activities enjoyed in the countryside. Ogrin refers to New Zealand as a technologically highly developed but conservative nation where they talk very little about socialism, although they have managed to turn New Zealand into a country of welfare and progress as advocated by the major proponents of socialism. The author mentions that every single New Zealand family has a car, which does not, however, serve as a status symbol. They do not hanker after the newest models but usually drive older ones, since it is most important to them that a car serves its purpose. He therefore depicts New Zealanders as extremely modest, rejecting any kind of boasting and appreciating virtues such as practicality and functionality.

Ogrin provides a vivid description of his further travels in New Zealand, where he describes how he travelled from Lake Taupo to Tongariro National Park eager to see the volcanic landscapes. Upon providing a short description of the park itself, he explains that New Zealand forms part of the so-called Pacific Volcanic Belt, a mountain chain consisting of volcanoes which stretches in the form of an enormous cres-

cent along the southern boundary of the Pacific Ocean, embracing it by its whole length. The author portrays the landscape in the park as dreary, with the gloomy brown slopes of the volcanoes being so much different from the verdant landscape that surrounds Lake Taupo.

Turning to Wellington, New Zealand's capital city, Ogrin observes that it could just as well be situated in Scandinavia, surrounded as it is by high mountains, a steep seashore and long, deeply carved bays, just like some town in Norway. He enjoyed the views of the city from the top of Mt Victoria, where he also came across a memorial dedicated to Admiral Byrd, a well-known explorer of the Pacific Ocean, and he reflected (at the site of the memorial) on the achievements of the explorers who, centuries ago, explored the unknown parts of the world by using very modest and simple instruments and equipment and whose achievements nowadays, in an era of helicopters, airplanes and rockets, no longer seem so important. The author offers a description of the layout of the capital, from which we learn that the city sprawls over numerous small hills, that wide streets can only be seen in the city centre, and that the city has a certain provincial air – for, as he says, "... New Zealand's cities are so young, they still don't have any historical or cultural tradition" (*Na jugu sveta*, 197). The author mentions that New Zealanders are very proud of their independence and that they regard with suspicion and a great deal of disapproval any newcomers, i.e. immigrants, as well as anything new that might change their way of life. They loathe Americans and do not pay much attention to them.

After his visit to Wellington, Ogrin crossed the Cook Strait by ferry, landing in Picton and continuing his journey straight to the town of Christchurch, whose history and appearance he briefly describes. Due to the residents' ambition to preserve in this part of New Zealand a piece of Victorian England, there are no skyscrapers or high-rise office blocks. Ogrin observes that everything in Christchurch, its cathedral, its parks and its houses, remind one of England; the largest of the city's parks even goes by the name of Hyde Park. The author then mentions the university and emphasises that students in New Zealand enjoy very good working conditions. During his stroll through the city, Ogrin also came across a monument to Robert Falcon Scott, the explorer who started his famous expedition to the South Pole in Christchurch. Ogrin notes that even nowadays Christchurch serves as the jumping-off place for many expeditions to Antarctica. He also mentions the vast plain that stretches to the north and south of the city – Canterbury Plain, New Zealand's chief grain-growing region.

Ogrin describes his journeys along the 45th parallel, through the territory on the South Island that lies halfway between the equator and the South Pole, with vegetation that is slightly different from that seen on the North Island and weather that is very changeable, due to the winds blowing all the way from Antarctica. As far as he could see, there were only birds there, and mountains which reminded him of Scotland as it was in the 19th century.

Dunedin, which is also called the "Edinburgh of New Zealand", was founded by Scottish colonists in 1848. It is full of greenery, with castles and Gothic church spires, all built in a typical Scottish style, jutting out of it. He adds that the residents of Dunedin walk in such an energetic way, as if they were all born athletes; in his opinion this is due to the strong winds that drag the pedestrians along. Dunedin is actually the

fourth largest city in New Zealand, with 100,000 residents, all of them of Scottish origin, whereas Christchurch is home to 200,000 residents – all of them of English origin. Dunedin was the first town in New Zealand to get a university, seven years after the city was founded; until 1965 it had the only medical school in New Zealand.

The author also mentions the southernmost part of the South Island called Fiordland, and gives a short description of this part of New Zealand, a country where, as he puts it, there is extraordinary peace everywhere and where even the dogs don't bark.

During his journey across New Zealand, Ogrin tried to figure out the number of Slovene immigrants living in New Zealand. From the information he obtained he was able to draw the conclusion that the Slovene community in New Zealand numbered less than a hundred and that they were not connected and probably did not even know one another.

Tomo Križnar, the third figure in our group of Slovene travel writers, uncovers the soul of New Zealand and its peoples with great sensitivity in his travelogue *Samotne sledi* (Solitary Trails, 1993), combining description with his own philosophical views. *Samotne sledi* consists of 31 chapters, the last 16 of which make up the bulk of the narrative of the author's travels in New Zealand.

During his flight from Australia to New Zealand, Križnar was able to observe the waves of the Pacific Ocean, till they came in sight of New Zealand.

He decided to travel through the country by bicycle; according to his estimates this would take him two to three months. He therefore planned to obtain some additional equipment and as much information as possible, since he was well aware of the fact that the New Zealand countryside was sparsely populated, with some areas still unspoiled by human contact; he knew that he would have to make do during his journey with what he could take with him on his bicycle. He spent the week making preparations in the company of some Slovene acquaintances of his who had moved to New Zealand some months before, and during his stay there he had a good look at Auckland. He also gives an account of the city's atmosphere. He took a stroll along the well-known Piha Beach, where he spent some of the time observing some typical New Zealand plants – unusual grasses, trees and ferns – as well as birds nesting in the cliffs. He states that Auckland is gradually becoming the largest Polynesian city in the world, attracting immigrants from almost the entire Pacific region, a process which white New Zealanders in particular do not approve of at all (*Samotne sledi*, 129). The author points out that he came to New Zealand mostly because of his interest in the descendants of the ancient tribes who, for unknown reasons, left the legendary archipelago called Hawaiki a thousand years ago and set out on a risky and dangerous journey to their new homeland. Like Miran Ogrin, Križnar too acclaims their voyage across the wide Pacific Ocean as an extraordinary achievement. He then provides a brief history of the Maori and their culture, and gives an account of two Maori legends – one about the legendary sailor Kupe who, on his own audacious visit to this new land, persuaded his tribe to join him and come to what is now New Zealand, and one about the first great migration of the Maori to New Zealand approximately a thousand years ago. Križnar wanted to contact some of the Maori in order to get some first-hand information about their own opinion of their position in modern New Zealand society. He

soon found out, however, that his otherwise successful and efficient ways of making contact with people in Africa and elsewhere in the world proved ineffective with some of the local Maori. He soon had the strange feeling that there was a certain invisible psychological barrier separating him from the person he was trying to speak to. None of the Maori would answer his questions but would simply grumble something to themselves and frown at him; they undoubtedly identified him as a representative of the race which had forced them into their unequal and disadvantageous social position. His first impression of the Maori was that they did not feel much more secure in their own country than the Aborigines did in Australia, but since the Maori looked stronger and more aggressive than the Australian Aborigines, he feared them a little.

Upon leaving Auckland he made his way through the nearby hills, where he came in sight of his first flock of sheep. The landscape he crossed on his bike seemed as neat as a Christmas crib – clean and orderly, with things in their proper places, picturesquely trimmed and full of paddocks. The fruit stalls he frequently encountered, each of which was fitted out with an “honesty box” (a little box for money), testified in Križnar’s opinion to the honesty and reliability of the New Zealanders. The local people he met were very kind, polite and trusting (*Samotne sledi*, 132); one finds similar remarks in Karlin’s and Ogrin’s descriptions of the country. While cycling on some of the side roads, Križnar would often come across various war memorials commemorating the husbands, fathers and sons killed in the two World Wars. He points out that New Zealand lost a higher percentage of its male population than all countries involved in the two World Wars. The fact that New Zealand soldiers always fought on the winning side seemed very significant to Križnar.

When the author stopped at a petrol station at the end of the second day of his trip, an elderly local kindly invited the exhausted traveller to his house as a guest. Križnar portrays the members of his host’s family, paying particular attention to the grandfather who, sitting by the window and keeping watch over his huge herds of cows, sheep and horses, told him the story of his family, whose roots went back to the 19th century, when his ancestors came to this area and started turning it into farmland, which now brought them a great deal of money. He also recounted a number of facts about the Maori wars, speaking with respect of the Maori warriors and saying how it had only been possible to fight them with tenfold strength and with the help of modern weapons. He stated that the British had made wide use of Maori warrior tactics in the two World Wars; they were even assisted in these endeavours by those Maori who had joined the British army and fought alongside British troops, and the Maori were known and feared by the enemies of the British as the fiercest and cruellest warriors. Nevertheless, the farmer and his wife expressed negative attitudes towards the Maori, who were greedy enough to demand the right to have their own radio station and to get certain fishing districts for themselves.

On the wall of a small grocery store in a remote village, Tomo Križnar found a poem by James Baxter warning travellers, especially foreigners, that they should allow themselves to be guided by the country and its nature, that they should overcome their own negative feelings and try to live in tune with nature, which runs the world according to its own laws. Križnar states that these verses reflect the typical mentality of New Zealand and its way of life.

Križnar writes that the Bay of Plenty was the first landing place for the Maori ancestors arriving from Hawaiki, as well as the site of Captain Cook's second landing in New Zealand. He says that this strip of coastline is still very rich and is the horticultural centre of New Zealand, with extensive kiwi fruit plantations, which nowadays bring the country even more money than the livestock bred throughout the country. While staying with the Pearsons, another host family, he was told about the economic crisis that had hit the country hard ever since Great Britain – New Zealand's major export market for meat and cheese – had become a member of the European Union. Their opinion constituted a New Zealand farmer's protest against the new situation and new relations in the world, which could endanger the otherwise peaceful and secure life of New Zealand. The Pearsons also displayed very negative attitudes towards the Maori, stating that the Maori views on land and life did not match colonial views, that the Maori multiplied like rabbits due to the social security offered to them and that there were already too many of them – especially the aggressive ones. The majority of white New Zealanders would never socialise with the Maori, since it involved too much effort. If the Maori had the land given back to them, the author was told, they would neglect it and transform it into an unproductive wilderness, which would turn New Zealand into a Third World country, forsaken and forgotten down under in the middle of the Pacific Ocean (*Samotne sledi*, 140).

On his journey Križnar often noticed several villages and townships with typically Maori names hiding in lush vegetation, yet on the other side of the bay he could see shrouds of smoke rising from the volcanoes of the White Island. His attention was also constantly being drawn by the unusual red houses he saw from time to time, adorned with numerous carved wildly grimacing faces with their tongues sticking out, with depictions of naked male figures painted on the walls. The author explains that these are Maori sanctuaries (temples) and that the most impressive of them is that commemorating a massacre of 600 Maori by colonial troops during the Maori wars.

While cycling around the Bay, with the wind blowing against him, a Maori driver named Steven kindly invited Križnar to put the bicycle on his truck and come home with him. He took the author to his home, a white house on a white strip of seashore, and introduced him to his wife Ann. There Križnar encountered a Maori whose character and lifestyle differed greatly from that of the mistrustful, growling, grunting representatives of the Maori race, hostile to Europeans, whom the author had met in Auckland. A strange feeling suddenly seized him – it was as though he had known these friendly and hospitable people for ages. They started talking about their adventures and the discussion grew so loud that the neighbours heard them and came over and joined them. Some of them even brought their musical instruments, and soon they all started singing and dancing. The author learned that Steven was a Maori protestant priest and that all the other men made their living as fishermen. In order to honour the author, they organised a traditional Maori fishing expedition that very evening, and spent the rest of the evening making fires, roasting fish and partying on the seashore. Their generosity and open-heartedness initially made the author wonder whether these natives had already forgotten their conflicts with white New Zealanders and the injustices the latter had visited upon them. While discussing the issue with Steven and Ann, the author learned about the Maori view of the conflict between the two major races of

New Zealand. In Steven's opinion the British colonisation of the two New Zealand islands was actually one of the most brutal invasions upon a weaker nation ever seen in the history of the human race. When asked about the harsh treatment of the Maori and the massacre of the indigenous Moriori, who had inhabited the country before the Maori arrived there, Steven and Ann stated that there was proof that the indigenous Moriori and the Maori actually adopted each other's rites and that, by way of intermarriage, the Moriori gradually became integrated into the Maori race, whereas the European settlers, who came later on, brought much harm to the Maori race, first by bringing the weapons with which the warring Maori tribes nearly exterminated one another, thus becoming too weak to resist the colonists, and second by bringing disease, against which the Maori were initially not immune, thus falling prey to several epidemics. Steven and Ann proved to be very well-educated and wise, and Križnar was able to talk to them about all aspects of Maori life, and about Maori myths, the Maori oral tradition, the major events in the history of the race, and the more recent changes undergone by the Maori religion. Steven and Ann were always able to provide well-founded and reasonable answers to Križnar's often provocative questions. In this part of his travelogue Križnar keeps thinking intensively about the Treaty of Waitangi and the ambiguities in its interpretation. He wonders why the Maori chieftains of that time did not discard the Treaty as a fraud and expel the British, whom they still outnumbered. Here he draws the conclusion that, as has always been the case when "civilisation" interfered with an indigenous native people and their culture, the Maori had been cheated, their tribes weakened by being pitted against one another by the British, and finally massacred and expelled from their land. Križnar puts himself firmly on the side of the Maori. He also quotes some of the statements made by Jack Brockfield, a well-known professor of public law at Auckland University, who advocates the idea that the New Zealand government is obliged to make up for the past injustices done to the Maori. The author also agrees with Ann's optimistic statement that things will change for the better as far as the Maori and their social and economic ambitions and desires are concerned. Discussing the Maori arts, especially the totems and various paintings, Steven and Ann told him that all these things were living subjects that passed the nation's soul on to younger generations, along with qualities such as strength and respect for the authority of ancestors and deities. The Maori arts contain a certain spirituality which white people are quite unable to understand due to their materialistic view of the world, which is totally at odds with that of the Maori. Totems do not serve only as elements of decoration but represent centres of life energy and a sort of bond connecting man with the invisible forces that surround him in his everyday life, symbolising his concepts, ambitions, visions and motivation and making it possible for the nation's spirit to survive. They also showed Križnar their collection of old Maori works of art, explaining to him the spiritual meaning of each of them. Before Križnar left their house, Steven explained to him the meaning of the Maori greeting "Kia ora", which means: "Have the life!"

Križnar introduces his readers to Rotorua, the famous tourist resort on the banks of the lake of the same name, famous for its geysers and hot springs. First he gives a detailed description of Rotorua's history and its geothermal springs. He proceeds by mentioning the numerous majestic hotels, their intrusive modern architecture out of

place in this once typically Maori district. He notes that neither of the Maori folklore shows performed in the village by the local Maori have anything to do with the original Maori way of living, Maori traditions or Maori rituals but are merely part of the tourist industry (*Samotne sledi*, 154).

East Cape is still the most isolated part of the North Island. It is a wild and not easily accessible region with very few natural harbours and even fewer areas of fertile soil. Squeezed into the narrow bays are sparse village communities populated mostly by Maori; like their Auckland brethren, perhaps even more, they hate white New Zealanders. Even Križnar had to feel their hatred, bordering on racism, when he encountered a dangerous gang of motorcyclists known as “Black Power”; he was so in fear of them that he spent the night near a larger group of Maori. At dawn the next day he was awakened by the oldest member of the group, who motioned him to follow. The man took him deep into the nearby wood until they came to an enormous tree, 80 metres high and with a trunk almost three metres in diameter, its branches spreading out to form a majestic crown. With his eyes full of tears the Maori elder referred to the tree as *Tane Mahuta* – the god of the woods. Very sadly and with a great deal of nostalgia, the old man told Križnar that trees like the one in front of them, sacred to the Maori, had been destroyed by British colonists, who prized the wood and paid no attention at all to Maori feelings about these huge trees, which the Maori themselves would fell only after performing a series of very long and complex rites.

Križnar describes his journey around the East Cape as magnificent, thanks to the fact that the natural beauties of nature were still intact, and he adds that he even felt a little uneasy when he arrived in the town of Gisborne, where life was, again, regulated by the rules of modern technology and civilisation. He had an interesting experience here, too, when, during his visit to a *marae* – a traditional place where Maori gather to discuss issues of greater importance – the headmaster of the nearby Maori school invited him to give a short lecture about his country and his travels for the teachers and students, which Križnar did. He spoke from his rich experience, mostly about the position of small nations – including the Maori – whose existence was threatened by the domination of economic and military force. He also told his audience that Slovenes were familiar with the Maori and their fate; finally he congratulated the students on the fact that they could once again learn their mother tongue. The teachers introduced him to a simple-looking man whom they said that, while being a street sweeper in the world of white New Zealanders, he was considered by Maori the best orator and the best poet in New Zealand (unfortunately, Križnar never mentions his name). While discussing the issue of white colonisation, the poet explained his views of the relations between the two races:

We – the Maori and the Pakeha – both emigrated to this place. We both moved here and made these islands our home. The Pakeha think that the land belongs to them. We, the Maori, think that we belong to the land. Europeans want to develop the land and make the most profit out of it. We Maori, however, want to protect it and explore its resources. This is the basic difference. But none of us has the right to say what is right or what is wrong. It is good, in a way, that the pragmatism of environmental

protection on the one hand is in conflict with the inhumanity of famine on the other. (*Samotne sledi*, 162)

The school headmaster also had his own views on the conservation of nature. He rejected the theory devised by some white historians that the Maori had burned down woods in order to drive out the moas. In his opinion it was the European settlers who destroyed the woods and shrubs and burned huge tracts of grassland. The Maori cultivated their land by making terraces in order to prevent erosion, and the first European settlers would not have survived at all in the harsh conditions of the islands had the Maori not come to their aid. Later on the white settlers gave up the Maori way of cultivating the land, finding it primitive, and introduced some new animal and plant species, which proved highly detrimental to the indigenous plants and animals, destroying the natural balance and changing the landscape drastically.

Križnar took a ferry from Wellington to the South Island. He gives a description of the voyage past Melborough Sound and past fiords, islands, mountain slopes and patches of lush pastureland (*Samotne sledi*, 167). He recounts the history of Picton, a town situated at the head of the fiord, and of Nelson, another town nearby, where Križnar describes how the town was founded by the New Zealand Company, which had managed to acquire a great chunk of territory from the Maori in exchange for a single gun. The island then gradually became a paradise for the onrushing settlers, who gradually became wealthy shepherds.

Križnar travelled from Nelson towards the inner districts of the South Island, choosing the remotest side roads. Before ascending the mountain route rising just ahead of him, he spent a night in a stable, whose owner woke him up early the next morning with a gun in his hands – he had mistaken him for a thief. Upon clearing up the misunderstanding, the owner, a local farmer, took Križnar to his house, where they met a group of other farmers and soon began an interesting conversation, where the author learned many interesting facts about the farmers and their life. He was also told that the Maori had been expelled from the area, which they had initially used as hunting grounds. The farmers referred to the Maori as if the latter were some extinct species of dinosaur.

The author continued his journey along the Wairau Valley, bound for the mountains ahead of him. As he made his way higher and higher, the landscape around him kept changing. He finally found himself surrounded by a wild and rocky landscape, abundant with torrents and waterfalls. He spent a night in a small neglected chalet, where he met two other cyclists – an elderly New Zealand couple travelling in the opposite direction. In Križnar's opinion the man – while being over 80 – looked 70. They seemed to Križnar to be typical healthy New Zealanders, and he writes at this point about New Zealanders:

New Zealanders are fond of describing themselves as tough, strong, courageous, persevering and susceptible to robust humour and beer. I had the honour of enjoying a great deal of hospitality on the part of New Zealanders. I realised that New Zealanders hardly bear any sort of European criticism, as though they wanted to say: We are now here and you are there – in the old Europe; leave us alone so we may be like we are,

even if we are different from you. Yet the Kiwis often seemed to me to be as unsure about the identity of their country in the Antipodes as Adam was unsure about his Paradise. (*Samotne sledi*, 179–180).

His descriptions of New Zealanders are largely based on his own feelings and perceptions; his portrayals of New Zealanders therefore cannot serve as a uniform picture of the entire nation. Križnar often makes use of phrases like “it seems to me...”, “it seemed to me...”, or “I find it...”; these show the reader clearly that his personal opinions, made while in contact with these people, greatly influence his descriptions. The author is an extraordinarily accurate observer and attentive listener who is skilled at making conversation and who succeeds in coaxing individuals or groups of people to tell him their own personal opinions and express their own prejudices and dilemmas; he is able to do this thanks to his broad general knowledge of historical facts and of social relations throughout the world. It is his attitude towards people and the natural world, however, which is primarily reflected in his portrayal of his adventures and travels.

On his way from the chalet he soon reached the mountain pass, from which he descended through one of the numerous valleys to Lake Tennyson. He reached the town of Hanmer Springs two days later.

During his ride to Christchurch he came across an unusual building similar to a medieval fortress, bearing the notice “Camp David – The Kingdom of God, The Palatinate of Canaan”, and he realised that he had come to the headquarters of the community, whose members had decided to dedicate their lives to God and to an intensive reading of the Bible. He also remembered a friend of his who had become a member of this religious community some years earlier and from whom he had received numerous invitations to visit. He spent a week with these people, and he enjoyed his stay in the community very much, with his old friend being in charge of his spiritual life, the kitchen staff of his body, the community brethren of his heart and the Bible of his intellect.

In the little harbour town of Littleton, an elderly couple invited him to their home and offered him some leftovers from their Christmas dinner. It turned out that they had already been to Bled and that they knew Slovenia quite well.

While riding through the nearby valley, the author was enchanted by the magnificent view of the Isle of Banks from the road that ran along the very rim of the crater of an extinct volcano, half of which was sunk in the sea. At the bottom of the crater, on the seashore, he could see Akaroa, a village originally founded by the French. In Akaroa he was able to enjoy New Zealand hospitality once again, though he also witnessed the cruel treatment of a young Maori by police on New Year's Eve.

Križnar says that his journey through the Canterbury Plains was “a journey through boring plains but full of encounters with interesting people”. While he was copying some old inscriptions from gravestones in a Maori graveyard, a woman called Jenny started to talk to him. She took him to her house, introduced him to her husband and they had lunch together. He spent the night in Rakaia Gorge, where he was awakened the next morning by a group of young Maori who invited him to join them on a rafting expedition.

During his journey the author would often knock on the door of a house to ask for help or a small favour. He would deliberately choose different houses, those of the rich and those of the poor, but people were always willing to help him. When the spokes of his wheel broke shortly before reaching the town of Twizeln, two elderly retired brothers, whom he occasionally ran across, entertained him the whole weekend with choice foods, recounting stories from pioneer times. Finally, they took him to the local pub and told the locals gathered there about his difficulties with the bike; a mere two days later a hydrofoil brought the spare parts required and the repairs were done by the guys from the local cyclists' club.

On his travels Križnar met a young Maori woman, who was, as he describes her, young and as beautiful as a film star and with whom he spent a long time discussing the arts, philosophy, and fear of death and of love. Križnar remarks that this young Maori woman helped him overcome his fear of love.

In the last five chapters Križnar gives a description of the rest of his travels in New Zealand and his encounters with other interesting people on his way to Milford Sound, where his travelogue on New Zealand ends with a portrayal of an elderly Maori elaborating on the discrepancies between white people's understanding of the world on the one hand and that of the Maori on the other, drawing conclusions similar to those of several other Maori the author had encountered on his travels.

Among those who have travelled to New Zealand and written about the country, we must mention Professor Bogomil Ferfila and his rather touristy travelogue, which contains descriptions of some of his "adventures" there.

Several articles about New Zealand have been published in various Slovene scientific and educational magazines as well. Among the authors that have published articles, one must mention Professor Anton Gosar, a prominent lecturer in the Department of Geography at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana (Professor Gosar teaches now at the university of Koper, in Slovenia). While he was as a guest lecturer at Wellington University, he wrote a series of extremely interesting articles dealing with New Zealand's culture and way of life.

By reading literary works by New Zealand authors in translation, Slovene readers can now become acquainted with the life and culture of the country. The most outstanding New Zealand writer of all time is undoubtedly Katherine Mansfield, an unusual writer who dedicated her life to artistic creation. She deliberately renounced the wealth and opulent lifestyle of her parents, living in poverty and becoming seriously ill in the process. She was responsible for several great collections of the most deeply touching short stories. Her first collection, *In a German Pension*, was published in 1911. She followed this with several further short stories, inspired by her life in Europe as well as in New Zealand. She often used herself and members of her family as models for the main characters. In 1920 her second collection, *Bliss and Other Stories*, was published, followed in 1927 by *The Garden Party and Other Stories*. But from 1911 she was already suffering from tuberculosis and spent much of her life, especially the last five years, in hospitals and sanatoriums. After her death a further two collections were published: *The Dove's Nest* (1923) and *Something Childish and Other Stories* (1924). Posthumously published stories, poems, literary criticism, letters and journals followed. She became for a time a major figure, before her reputa-

tion faded for two decades. She was rediscovered in the 1970s by feminists and scholars. Written interest in Katherine Mansfield in Slovenia goes back to 1939, when a short article entitled 'Nežna ženska' (Tender Woman) by an anonymous reviewer named simply N.K. appeared in the *Življenje in svet* magazine. However, it was not until 1963 that her work began to seriously interest Slovene translators and critics. It was in that year that the Slovene poet and writer Jože Udovič translated 28 of her stories into Slovene, adding a commentary on Katherine Mansfield, and published them in a book entitled *Družba v vrtu* (*The Garden Party*). The stories were chosen not only from *The Garden Party* but from the other collections as well, *In a German Pension* being an exception (none of the stories from this collection have ever been translated into Slovene). Udovič not only did a good job as a translator but also managed to introduce the writer to Slovene readers. Mansfield was popular in Slovenia for a while but, as time passed, her popularity faded and she fell into obscurity once again, with very few translations or critical reviews being published. However, in 1988 'Ura petja', a translation by Katarina Mahnič of 'The Singing Lesson', was published to mark the 100th anniversary of Mansfield's birth.

A number of works by other New Zealand writers – novels, short stories and extracts from novels – have been translated into Slovene. Interestingly, nearly all of them are by women writers.

The novel *The Way of All Flesh* by Samuel Butler, published in Slovene translation as *Pot vsega živega*, is the only exception in this group. Escaping from the confines of Victorian England, Butler went to New Zealand, successfully adapting to the lifestyle of the pioneers and creating several outstanding literary works. Though he composed *The Way of All Flesh* while still in New Zealand, it mostly deals with English Victorian society. The novel was translated into Slovene by Herbert Grün and published in 1960, with an excellent introduction by Božidar Borko that deals with the most important circumstances that influenced Butler's writing and helps the reader to understand his ideas.

The group of literary works translated into Slovene also includes four novels by Dorothy Eden: *Speak to Me of Love* (*Govori mi o ljubezni*), *A Lamb to the Slaughter* (*Žrtveno jagnje*, 1984), *Sleep in the Woods* (*Brezdomka*, 1984) and *The American Heiress* (*Zamenjana nevesta*, 1984); three of them were published in a collection entitled *Za lahko noč* (which translates as "a pleasant evening's reading for a good night's sleep"). The very title of the collection, as well as the remark that these novels make good examples of "reading for women", may make one wonder about the quality and importance of these novels.

It is through the novel *Plemičeva smrt* that Slovene readers became acquainted with Ngaio Marsh, a well-known writer of detective stories. This novel is the translation of her *Death of a Peer*.

Janet Frame, another outstanding New Zealand writer known for her unusual life story, is a master short story writer and novelist. Only one of her short stories, 'You Are Now Entering the Human Heart' (translated as 'Zdaj vstopate v človeško srce'), and an extract from her novel *Carpathians* (*Karpati* in Slovene) have been translated into Slovene.

'The Glass Whittler' is the only short story by Stephanie Johnson, another promising young New Zealand woman writer, to have been translated into Slovene. It was published under the title 'Rezbarka stekla'.

One of Keri Hulme's stories, 'A Knife and a Stone', has been published in Slovene (as 'Nož in kamen').

If we examine the statistics and other available information, we can see that Slovenia has made several attempts to establish political, cultural and economic ties with New Zealand. However, these links have never been particularly successful, either economically or politically, because Slovenia is too small and too far away to be of any particular interest to New Zealand. The majority of contacts have been made in the field of culture (some films and music, but mostly literature and literary creations), but here one can speak mostly of a one-way flow of information about the country's culture, society and geographical characteristics. Although Slovenes have to a fairly large extent become acquainted with New Zealand and various elements of its culture, social structure, economy and lifestyle, Slovenia has, in contrast, remained a mystery to the great majority of New Zealanders.

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- Note: the article is based on the author's doctoral thesis, which was supervised by Professor Mirko Jurak.

SLOVENE CRITICAL RESPONSES TO THE WORKS OF PEARL S. BUCK

Alenka Blake

Abstract

At the beginning of her writing career, in the 1930's and 40's, Pearl S. Buck achieved great success that reached its pinnacle with the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1938. Her works were admired among readers around the world, including Slovene readers. It seems that the Slovenes did not lag behind the world's literary trends of the time. The first translation of *The Good Earth*, probably the writer's most prominent novel, in 1934 – only three years after the original was written. The subject matter that the writer introduced in her works, China in interaction with the West, attracted many readers and soon resulted in a number of works being translated into Slovene. Consequently the amount of critical material in Slovene newspapers and magazines also began to rise. This article provides an overview of and assesses the Slovene critical material on Pearl S. Buck, while evaluating the literary quality of that material.

The Nobel Prize winning author Pearl Sydenstricker Buck is best known for her Chinese peasant novel *The Good Earth*. She was, however, an author of several places and 'several worlds'. Indeed, the title of her autobiography is *My Several Worlds*. Buck saw herself as a citizen of the world, but one influenced most strongly by two countries, China and America. In Xionggya Gao's assessment, "[s]he knew both countries, loved both, but belonged to neither. Although two worlds met, interacted and mixed in her, she frequently found herself in between rather than having both" (27). Being 'in between' is a typical position of an expatriate, which Peter Conn, the author's biographer, for this case extends into "involuntary expatriate" (163). By emphasising the involuntariness Conn is referring to the year 1892 and the fact that Pearl S. Buck was born into an American missionary family and was taken by her parents in a shopping basket to China when only three months old. Buck believed that this shopping basket marked her whole life. Since the day she was brought to China she lived a life of detachment and division, and her two worlds, China and America, were never unified into one. As an expatriate she had access to both worlds yet she felt at times separated from them, not belonging to either of them. It was precisely the sort of existence for which Homi Bhabha produced the neologism "unhomely", meaning "the relocation of the home" (141). This position of 'relocation', displacement, and 'unhomeliness' provided for her a unique experience of life, making Buck well-situated to become "a western interpreter of the East" (Yü 31). This has been particularly

acknowledged by Chinese Americans, and it was Maxine Hong Kingston, a colleague in letters, who in 1992 praised the writing of Pearl S. Buck "for making Asian voices heard, for the first time, in Western literature" (Lipscomb et al. 2).

Today, thirty years after her death, Pearl S. Buck survives as an author who dedicated her life to writing about China. American by origin and by university degree, she spent her formative years in China, though unsettled political circumstances forced her to leave in 1934. By that time she had already written her most celebrated work *The Good Earth*, which belonged to the oeuvre that won her the Nobel Prize for literature in 1938. Though the Prize was hers, universal acceptance was not, for many American writers of the time argued and protested against Pearl S. Buck's receiving the prize. Still, this was not the only literary prize the author won. Pearl S. Buck was not just a prolific writer, having produced over ninety works of literature, but also a prolific prize winner. In addition to the Nobel Prize and many other more minor distinctions she also won the Pulitzer Prize and the Dean Howells Medal. Her books were very often best sellers in America and they were consequently translated into many other languages. According to Paul Doyle she was in the 1960s the most translated American author (7). Among other foreign languages many works have been translated into Slovene. Consequently many Slovene critics responded to the translated works. Until now no one has looked into this material on the writer as a whole. My present interest lies therefore in the evaluation of the Slovene criticism and the reception of Pearl S. Buck's works in Slovenia.

The Slovenes seemed to be following popular Western literary tastes in the first half of the twentieth century. Almost with no delay the first translation of Pearl S. Buck's most famous work appeared. Already in 1934, three years after the original English version had been published, Stanko Leben translated *The Good Earth* into *Dobra zemlja*. He accomplished his task with a lot of thought and with great responsibility to the original. While translating Leben focused on what he deems the translator's basic responsibilities such as careful and appropriate choice of words, richness of vocabulary and inventiveness in word formation (Leben 241). However, he adds that he does not forget about the most important characteristic, meticulously following the writer's rhythm. In order to do so one has to translate from the original which enables the translator to dive into the depths of the writer's own process of creation and is thus the first necessary step towards producing a good translation. In the magazine *Modra ptica*, where Leben's thoughts on translating appear, he points out another particularity specific to this translation. Leben emphasises that *The Good Earth* was the first book written by a woman and translated by him. In those times the Slovene literary scene was dominated and led by male writers. It was believed, as Leben describes, that women were not capable of creative imagination, flexible intellect and viewing matters with a critical eye (ibid.). Despite this seemingly limited patriarchal viewpoint, Leben does not hesitate to acknowledge the quality of Buck's *The Good Earth* and to praise the author's ability to create and effectively render her heroes.

The few Slovene female critics of the time equally endorsed Pearl S. Buck's writing. Among the first women to focus on and respond to Pearl S. Buck as a female writer was Silva Trdina. In her article in the magazine *Mentor* she not only applauded one of the world's greatest writers, but also a female writer who gained respect and

acknowledgement among her male colleagues (Trdina 198). In the same year, 1939, Zlata Pirnat declared that Buck had surpassed the rest of the American writers and is qualitatively the first among them (11). Both comments stress that the author is a woman who can compete with her male colleagues. In Slovenia Pearl S. Buck became a role model to many women because she was thought to be the best at presenting the female life and soul (Grahor 279). This foregrounding among critics of the fact that Buck was a woman surely affected her Slovene readership. In fact, that the writer was read particularly by female readers in Slovenia was so evident it found mention in the daily *Večer* in 1975 (Šrimpf 5). What appealed to women in the writer's books were the stories which often presented a fight for women's rights. Such an example is the book *East Wind: West Wind* where Kwei-lan the main heroine develops from a shy woman into her husband's friend and equal. Primarily due to examples like this, in the Slovene critical arena Buck was thought to be a feminist writer. Yet despite the fact that Slovene critics persistently focused on Pearl S. Buck's being a woman, and despite the fact that her writings had quite an influence on Slovene female readers, none of Buck's feminist treatises have ever been translated into Slovene. With this I am referring specifically to a collection of essays *Of Men and Women* which the *New York Times* compared with the works of Virginia Woolf (Conn xvii). In Slovenia this collection was mentioned for the first time by Janko Moder in his preface to the novel *Dobra zemlja* in 1980, which is almost forty years after the essay collection appeared in the original. Judging by the numerous translations of the author's works into Slovene one can surmise that translators preferred Buck's fiction to her non-fiction.

From the given examples one can conclude that the Slovene critics spoke favourably of Pearl S. Buck and her fiction. In contrast the critics in the writer's home country were not always so positive when evaluating her works. What is more, there was less consistency even among individual American critics, as their opinions sometimes changed over the years. This we can see with J. Donald Adams, who spoke well of the writer in the 1930s and 1940s and later on changed his mind. Kang Liao reflects on this incident by stating: "Even the comments of her once favorite reviewers were much less enthusiastic, as evidenced by J. Donald Adams's unfavorable remark on Pearl Buck in the *New York Times* article 'Speaking of Books' on 22 September 1963" (4). J. Donald Adams wrote in the *New York Times* in 1934, at the beginning of the writer's career: "*The Mother* is Mrs. Buck's best book up to this time, [...]" ("The True Epitome" 1). Thirty-nine years later the critic wrote: "*The Good Earth* was an excellent novel, but it seems likely to remain Miss Buck's best performance [...]" ("Speaking of" 2). Adams' first statement, about the novel *The Mother* being the writer's best book, was written three years after *The Good Earth* was published. With his first statement Adams praises *The Mother* above *The Good Earth*, and in his second statement he calls *The Good Earth* the only good book by Pearl S. Buck. This sort of criticism can not be found among the Slovene critics, probably due to the fact that none of the Slovene critics really followed fully the author's writing career. What we can find though with the Slovene critics is the striking similarity and uniformity of critical opinion. This can be illustrated with the following examples:

Zlasti stranske osebe in popisi krajev dihajo nekaj pravljičnega, brezčasnega in ta brezčasna pravljičnost le še močneje podčrtava glavne osebe

in njihove strasti, ki so občečloveške, žive enako v vseh ljudeh in pod *vsemi podnebj*. (my emphasis, *Leben* 247)

Neprisiljeno in povsem vsakdanje razkriva pisateljica posebnosti kitajskega življenja, [...], ki hrani v bistvu vendarle občečloveške prvine, ki veljajo za vse ljudi pod *vsemi podnebj*. (my emphasis, *Trdina* 199)

It is the similarity of phrasing – that her heroes are so universal that they could live ‘in all climates’ (‘pod vsemi podnebj’) – at the end of both comments on the book *The Good Earth* that is most evident. *Leben*’s comment appeared first, in 1934, whereas the second one appeared as a response to the Nobel Prize in 1939. One of the reasons for the similarity may lie in the fact that the Slovenes did not have much information on the writer and had to rely solely on their own colleagues. This is not necessarily a handicap as long as the reviewer reflects on the borrowed idea and expresses his/her own critical opinion. Speculating on this apparent copying of another critic’s words leads one to regard the Slovene critics as being dependent, shy and reserved instead of sovereign and decisive in their opinions. Therefore it is not surprising that in 1980 a critique on Slovene criticism on Pearl S. Buck was written. With a short statement which followed the preface of Janko Moder to the novel *Dobra zemlja* Jože Munda characterised the Slovene writing on Pearl S. Buck as relatively modest and without tendency to surpass popular presentations (“[Naše pisanje o Buckovi je bilo] razmeroma skromno in skoraj prez težnje, da bi se dvignilo nad poljudno seznanjanje”); in other words, the critical writing was intended for the layman (376). In addition to this Jože Munda wrote a list of the works by Pearl S. Buck translated into Slovene as well as a list of the Slovene secondary literature on the author. When collecting the Slovene bibliography on the writer Munda realised that the Slovene critiques could be divided into three categories, namely into 1) articles written for occasions like winning the Nobel Prize, 2) reviews and 3) prefaces (*ibid.*). One would expect that Munda’s critical opinion would influence and motivate the critics in their manner of writing. Interestingly enough the situation in this field did not change after Munda’s findings. From 1980 to the present one can see the continuation of the past situation in that the critics continue to write for the general public.

It seems that the primary purpose of the Slovene critics was a commercial one. The objective of the critical material appears to lie in attracting and appealing to a general reading public. To support this, one has to take a look into the structure and layout of the reviews. The critics usually present the writer’s work, a few words are dedicated to the writer’s life and finally general information like translator, publisher and sometimes the price of the book are mentioned. In other words, it is less a critical evaluation than a description of, or simple report on, the work. One also has to consider the fact that none of the reviews of Pearl S. Buck’s works appeared in any of the literary magazines. Most of the reviews were written either for daily newspapers like *Jutro*, *Slovenec*, *Primorski dnevnik*, *Večer* and *Delo*, or general interest magazines like *Dom in svet*, *Mentor*, *Ženski svet*, *Prijatelj*, *Socialistična misel* and *Otrok in družina*. In keeping with their medium the critics were clearly addressing a general public. When writing about a book they did not go deeper into interpreting the book and aimed at readers from various walks of life and of diverse occupation. It is perhaps

due to this that the Slovene reviews contain some mistakes to which no one has paid any attention up till now. Some of the mistakes might result from the lack of material on Pearl S. Buck at the beginning of her career. From *Stanko Leben* we know that even the translators sometimes did not have the original to translate from and Slovene reviewers probably also relied on informational sources that were not original. No matter what the reasons for the inaccurate writing on Pearl S. Buck, the mistakes can be classified either as minor, which do not greatly disturb the correct comprehension of Pearl S. Buck's life and work, and major, which can lead to a distorted picture of the writer in the readers' minds.

To start with one should take a look at the minor mistakes:

- In the magazine *Mentor* Silva Trdina writes about Pearl S. Buck's life which also includes the writer's academic life. Trdina wrote though that in order to study the writer travelled to the USA on her own (198). Unfortunately this assertion of young independence is not correct. In actuality Buck's parents decided to travel with her through Russia and Europe to America. This journey was a "pre-college gift to Pearl" from her parents (Conn 44).

- After obtaining her degree Pearl S. Buck moved back to China owing to her mother's illness. She stayed in the country until 1934, when she permanently settled in the USA. Jakob Šilc was misinformed about the year of the writer's moving to America. In his review in 1936 he wrote that the writer was still residing in China (Šilc, "Mati" 442).

- There were also some misinterpretations concerning the year of the writer's first marriage. Silva Trdina wrote in 1939 that the writer got married in 1916 (198). In the same year Zlata Pirnat wrote that the event happened in 1917 (11). Here it is most evident that the critics used different sources, with Zlata Pirnat opting for the correct one.

- Silva Trdina was not only mistaken when writing about the writer's first marriage, she was also wrong by a year when reporting on Buck's second marriage, which happened in Reno, Nevada in 1935. Silva Trdina wrote the following: "Sedaj živi [pisateljica] v New Yorku, kjer se je leta 1934. drugič poročila z založnikom *Walschen* [...]" (my emphasis, 198). From the statement we can see that the critic wrote the husband's surname incorrectly, since the correct spelling is Walsh. That was not the only example of spelling mistakes. A misprint can be noticed in the review of the novel *The Rainbow* written by Gema Hafner where instead of 'Harvard' the name Harward appears. The German-like orthography in these two examples might suggest either the usage of German language sources, or merely an unsettled Slovene orthography.

These minor mistakes individually do not seem to be worth mentioning, but if we look at them as a whole we realise that the Slovene reviews contained many inaccuracies. This can also be backed up by Jože Munda who believed that the aim of the Slovene critics was a 'popular introduction' ("poljudno seznanjanje") to the works of Pearl S. Buck (376). All the mentioned mistakes together definitely contribute to a somewhat deformed portrayal of the writer on Slovene ground. A Slovene reader concerned with accuracy and more than a superficial view is therefore bound to foreign sources and foreign countries to acquire a more precise view on Pearl S. Buck. At

present the only foreign work of criticism about the writer in Slovenia is a book written by Paul Doyle with the title *Pearl S. Buck*.

In addition to reflecting on minor mistakes in the Slovene criticism one should also highlight and classify the major mistakes. Within this division we can talk about one particularly prominent mistake. It was believed, not only in Slovenia, that Pearl S. Buck received the Nobel Prize for her novel *The Good Earth*. In Slovene criticism we come across this conviction several times. Critics like Zlata Pirnat, Marija Švajncer and Janez Švajncer claimed in their reviews that Pearl S. Buck received the Nobel Prize for her novel *The Good Earth*. This misconception was brought to light in 1992 at the symposium dedicated to the writer which took place at Randolph-Macomb Woman's College, the college from which the writer graduated. Two years after the event a collection of essays presented at the symposium with the title *The Several Worlds of Pearl S. Buck* was published. In the introduction to the collection Peter Conn wrote: "She survives only in caricature: as the author of a single book, *The Good Earth* [...]" (Lipscomb et al. 1). To acknowledge the importance of other books her biographer wrote:

Despite a durable misconception, Pearl did not receive the Nobel Prize for *The Good Earth*. Like all laureates in literature, she was honored for the body of her work. The Academy's citation referred collectively to Pearl's Chinese novels as pioneering stories, but it specifically identified the biographies of her parents as the finest "literary work of art" she has written. (Conn 212)

It seems that the writer herself became aware of her problematic situation. In an interview with S. J. Woolf for the *New York Times* she emphasises: "But now that I won the prize – not for one book but for all my work – I feel that the responsibility [to continue writing well] rests upon me" (4). It is interesting that none of the Slovene critics mention the importance of the author's biographies *The Exile* and *Fighting Angel* for winning the Nobel Prize. Janko Moder even wrote that the biographies were generally not received with excitement, though people continued to praise *The Good Earth* (369). This statement appears to be only half true, since Pearl S. Buck wrote the second biography *Fighting Angel* after *The Exile* "earned such a stunning success that Pearl immediately wrote a sequel, a biography of her father called *Fighting Angel*" (Conn 187f). It looks like the Slovene readers were not allured by the biographies. The translation of the first one by Janez Meglič did not appear until 1971, whereas the second biography has yet to be translated into Slovene. It is difficult to speculate about the reasons for such a demeanour towards the biographies in Slovenia, especially since the critics themselves do not mention them. Many American critics on the other hand treated the biographies as "monuments to the story of Protestant evangelism in China, a vital but neglected chapter in American cultural history" (188). Whereas the biographies definitely show a key part of American and Chinese history, Slovene history unfolded in different ways, and one should therefore not be taken aback by the different attitude to this thematic. Such an attitude can be also noticed in the review of the translation of *The Exile*, which appeared in the daily *Večer* and was written by Marija Švajncer. The critic does not dedicate much reflection to missionaries and evangelisa-

tion, as a matter of fact the critic only mentions that the writer's mother was married to a missionary. The rest of the review focuses on the life of the writer's mother, who never yielded to the most severe circumstances in China and was always ready to offer her helping hand to the poor Chinese ("Pisateljica o svoji materi" 10).

It was primarily on the basis of the biographies, together with other works written by 1938, that Buck became the first female American writer to win the Nobel Prize for literature. By that time the Slovenes were acquainted with the novels *The Good Earth*, *The Mother* and with a short abstract from *East Wind: West Wind* that had been translated by Olga Grahor and published in the woman's magazine *Ženski svet*. Although many of the works for which Buck won the Nobel Prize were not known in Slovenia, Slovene critics responded to the occasion in a very positive way. Tine Debeljak reports favourably on the fact in the daily *Slovenec*, but nevertheless mentions that the prize was a sort of surprise, which came at the right time, for China was beginning to increasingly attract the world's attention (5). Tine Debeljak not only hints at possible negative responses to the prize, although he believes the writer deserved it, but also mentions one of the reasons why Pearl S. Buck won the prize, namely her thematic interest in China. Debeljak does not mention the two main reasons for winning the prize, the aesthetic value of the writer's work and the subject matter, rather he claims it was the current political interest in China and Buck's belief in a humanity that does not distinguish between races and nations which made her books attractive to readers and Nobel Prize jury alike. There was of course nothing wrong with this fact, because according to the will of Alfred Nobel the prize should go to those "who, during the preceding years, shall have conferred the greatest benefit on mankind, [...] who shall have produced in the field of literature the most outstanding work of an idealistic tendency" (Liao 26). The works of Pearl S. Buck were in keeping with the Nobel Prize's purposes, but many believed that awarding the prize to Pearl S. Buck was a political step on the part of the Swedish Academy because the writer presented a "powerful voice against the rising tide of international violence and totalitarianism" (Conn 211). Unfortunately the Slovene critics only reported on the award and never really examined the problematic position of Pearl S. Buck in the field of American literature. The criticism that the writer received from other American writers was a continuation of her dual position of being 'in between' China and America. Not Chinese, Buck found that though living in the USA since 1934 she could not entirely belong to America either, since her writing was often not accepted by her contemporaries. The writer herself "became aware that she was not considered an American at all" (Harris 256). William Faulkner for example commented on Buck's Nobel Prize with the following words:

I don't know anything about the Nobel matter. Been hearing rumors for about three years, have been a little fearful. It's not the sort of thing to decline; a gratuitous insult to do so but I don't want it. I had rather be in the same pigeon hole with Dreiser and Sherwood Anderson, than Sinclair Lewis and Mrs. Chinahand Buck. (Conn 210)

The writer herself was hurt by such responses and later in her life wrote: "I was oversensitive to this American criticism which did fall upon me too soon. And it must

be confessed that I have never quite recovered, though years have passed [...]” (Buck, *My Several* 87).

Pearl S. Buck might not have been liked by some of her American critics but the readers gave her the support she needed to keep on writing. What made her works interesting to the readers was the universalism and humanity, that is to say that her Chinese heroes were presented as human beings facing the same problems in their lives that any Westerner had to face. It is an interesting parallel that it was the same novel, *The Mother*, that made the critics in the USA and in Slovenia recognise these qualities of the writer. J. Donald Adams uses in connection with the novel the phrase “universal human values” (“A true Epitome” 1); Marija Cvetko, in the same vein, points out in *Tedenska tribuna* that Buck’s heroes could live anywhere else in any remote village, and only their names would vary (7). A similar view is noticed in the comments on the same novel by Silva Trdina, though in her critique one realises that China was still an exotic country in the eyes of the Slovenes at that time (Trdina 199). That was a particularly Western point of view, where everything that deviated from the norms set and adopted by Westerners was exotic and agitated the imagination of the West. But according to Stanko Leben such thinking can only spring from a self-centred European (245). Indeed, the Eurocentric point of view was the reality through which the Slovenes saw the Orient, and this way of seeing is also prevalent among the Slovene critics. Tine Debeljak, for example, strikes us with his contrasting the Chinese to the civilised (5). With the last he is referring to the Westerners, against whose reflection the Chinese were deemed uncivilised. In addition to these, there are other Slovene critics who do not fail to recognise that the Chinese culture was rooted in a tradition which was different from ours, even when not speaking poorly of the other civilisation. Jakob Šilc stresses that the intentions of the writer were to draw near a foreign mentality and a foreign culture (“Dobra zemlja” 102), and Marija Cvetko believes that the writer excited many readers with such subject matter (7). Echoing the words of Debeljak, who highlighted the contemporary interest in China, Cvetko does not forget to mention that the writer was lucky in her choice of themes.

If Buck was fortunate to be writing about China just as China was becoming popular in the West, one may add though that the writer was also lucky when choosing the manner of writing. Because of her style, which did not follow the modern trends in writing, her books were “a preferable choice compared with the works of Dreiser, T. S. Eliot, or Faulkner [...]” (Liao 36). The style of writing seems to be one of the most controversial aspects of the writer’s works. Critics very often fell into extreme camps by either praising or condemning outright Pearl S. Buck’s writing. There were few neutral opinions. Will Rogers for example was convinced that *The Good Earth* was “the greatest book about people ever written [...]” (Liao 21). Isidore Schneider on the other hand labels *East Wind: West Wind* as an “ordinary, quite mechanical novel, full of plot and sentiment, but empty of any lifelikeness in its characters or significance in the thesis – the clash between modern and traditional China” (17). With the Slovene critics one cannot see such a gap and variety in the criticism. Indeed, they almost unanimously praised the writer’s style. Debeljak for example compares the tragedy in *The Mother* with the tragedy of the Greek dramatists, which, he says, proves the writer’s immense stylistic talent (5). This comparison is especially interesting because it

can not be found with any other Slovene or American critic. Debeljak's statement is as unique as it is exaggerated, or at least unsubstantiated, for he does not provide any arguments to support his claims. Other Slovene critics want to catalogue Buck's writing into established literary headings. Tine Debeljak later on in his article on *The Mother* realises that the writer's style is naturalistic. He calls this naturalism "poduhovljeni naturalizen" (ibid.) or "spiritual naturalism", which is not quite in accord with Zola's naturalism as described by Paul Doyle:

In Zola's world, people are oppressed by social and economic forces which overwhelm the human individual and render him almost helpless. Zola's characters are caught in a deterministic world, shaped by heredity and environment. [... in Pearl S. Buck's], on the other hand, free will exerts considerable influence. (47)

What critics fail to mention is the optimism of Pearl S. Buck's heroes. These heroes may suffer under determinism, however they know that there is a way out if only they are motivated enough. It is interesting that Debeljak classifies Buck among the naturalists on the basis of the novel *The Mother*. The American critics see naturalism in Buck's novel *The Good Earth*, in which Wan Lung manages to change his life of a pauper into a rich man's life. Stanko Leben is convinced that *The Good Earth* belongs to realism which from time to time sounds like a fairytale ("In vendar zazveni [Dobra zemlja] marsikdaj kot čudovita pravljica") (247). A similar statement can be found with Kang Liao who calls Buck's writing "realistic with some romantic tinge" (35). Yet another parallel in the Slovene reception: This sort of romanticism is achieved according to Franc Šrmpf by a suggestive writing ("sugestionov pisanje"), which makes the readers sentimental (5). Šrmpf, it should be pointed out, was somewhat less positive in his observations. He wrote the review of the novel *Portrait of the Marriage* in 1975 and concluded that this sort of suggestive writing might be a bit dated (*ibid.*).

Franc Šrmpf and Marija Cvetko are the only examples of the Slovene critics that responded to the writing of Pearl S. Buck negatively. While Franc Šrmpf only expresses his doubt, Marija Cvetko puts down some arguments for her criticism. According to Marija Cvetko it is most difficult to objectively express the critical opinion because the writer is very much liked by the readers. It often happens that Buck's works are so quickly translated that by the time the critics manage to respond to her work the work has already been accepted by the readers with excitement and fascination (Cvetko 7). Cvetko is also surprised that Buck manages to assert herself among other writers who write about the problematic position of modern man's inner psychological situation. We can see the same expression of surprise arising from criticism with Kang Liao, who states that the writer's "college majors, psychology and philosophy, do not emerge prominently in her literary creation, nor do her graduate studies of English literature at Cornell show much impact" (39). If Liao and Cvetko's comments seem similar – and Cvetko's well justified negative response unique among Slovene critics – one must keep in mind that each appeared several decades after Buck began writing. Cvetko's critique appeared in 1963, and at that time the critic was already detached from the times that brought Pearl S. Buck the fame accompanying the Nobel Prize and other awards. That is why Cvetko was able to speak about Buck in a more

objective manner, which of course does not only mean exposing negative points of the writer's writing but at the same time acknowledging the good things in her works. Cvetko does not neglect some of the qualities that the writings of Pearl S. Buck possess. Such qualities include the themes and style that always attract many readers (Cvetko 7). Though typically a virtue in a writer, in the case of Pearl S. Buck this can be seen as a deficiency because it was her way of writing that is "the reason for her present low status [...]" (Liao 33). For this reason many critics classify Buck's writing as "potrošna literatura" or 'consumer literature' (Inkret 20), with its suggestion of pulp or popular fiction. Among such works is according to Andrej Inkret the book *Kennedy Women*. Inkret wrote the review of this book in the daily *Delo* in 1972. He believes that the purpose of this book was to bring closer and reconstruct the lives of celebrities and their families. Inkret attaches Buck to 'consumer literature' because of her popular sociological digressions and feuilletonistic style (ibid.). With this he believes the writer influenced the Slovenes and through Buck the style became popular in Slovenia.

Inkret was not the first Slovene critic to notice these aspects of Buck's writing. Jakob Šilc remarked on its documentary style in 1935 when reviewing *The Good Earth*, and Janko Moder in 1980 in his preface to the translation of *The Good Earth*. It is surprising though that none of the Slovene critics mention the autobiography *My Several Worlds* as being documentary in style. Peter Conn comments thus on this style: "She frequently used her novels as political and educational instruments, exchanging the challenges of novelistic art for the easier satisfactions of melodrama, propaganda, and protest" (380). Pearl S. Buck used her works as a medium through which she educated her readers and spread her humanitarian messages. Marija Švajncer adds to this the fact that the writer not only wrote about humanitarianism, but also lived it ("Predvsem človečnost" 5). In the event, Pearl S. Buck established many humanitarian organisations, such as Welcome House and the East West Association (mentioned in Moder's preface). Moder also adds that Buck wrote copious amounts as a means of financing her humanitarian work (372). Pearl S. Buck was a humanitarian in a broad sense of the word. She fought for the rights of the Chinese and Japanese in the USA, for the rights of African Americans, for women's rights, rights of abandoned children, handicapped children and many more. Out of her own experience with her mentally disabled daughter she wrote a booklet with the title *The Child Who Never Grew*. The book was very well accepted by Slovene readers since it was translated twice and suggested as a reading, not only for parents with similar problems but everybody, by Zoran Jelenc in 1969 in the magazine *Otrok in družina* and by Metka Klevišar in 1981 in the magazine *Cerkev v sedanjem času*.

If one reads the many glowing Slovene reviews of Pearl S. Buck's works, it is not surprising that the author won so many prizes. The critics themselves do not fail to mention such approbation. As mentioned above, the writer Jože Munda included articles written in response to particular awards as one of the three categories of Slovene considerations of Buck. The high point came when the writer won the Nobel Prize, as many articles were published in 1938 and 1939 in honour of the occasion. Marija Cvetko sees this as the most successful time in Buck's career, but notes that recognition has waned in the decades since the Nobel Prize (7). The decline can also be seen

in the field of the Slovene critical material. Since 1978, after the bibliography on Pearl S. Buck in Slovenia written by Jože Munda appeared, until today Slovene Buck criticism has increased by only four reviews. One of them is Metka Klevišar's above mentioned review of *The Child Who Never Grew*. Continuing from there, Gema Hafner wrote a review of *The Rainbow* and *Dragon Seed*, while Janez Švajncar reviewed the novel *This Proud Heart* in 1988. Each of the last two critics published their writings in the daily *Večer*, and the reviews themselves consist of little more than a description of the novels' content.

In conclusion one can summarise the analyses of the secondary material on Pearl S. Buck by saying that there was little real critical response in Slovenia. The critiques contained many mistakes and the reviewers mostly reported only superficially on works by Pearl S. Buck. The conclusions to which the critics came were rarely supported and sustained by argument. As the above examples indicate, the critics often retreated to very general and vague terminology to satisfy the populist nature of their critical writings. This however was not only the case in Slovenia. Xiongaya Gao, who published the book *Pearl S. Buck's Chinese Women Characters* in 2000, comes to the following conclusion:

The numerous reviewers of her work [...] are disappointing in this regard [treating her works as works of art] because, when they talk about the artistry of Buck, they tend to use vague and general terms without detailed explanation of what they actually mean. (19)

When talking about inaccurate and general terminology in Slovene one need only look at the following examples from the reviews:

Njena prva dela – članki, novele, pozneje tudi romani – se odlikujejo po vroči ljubezni do kitajskega naroda. (Pirnat 11)

Označitve njenih romanov so močne in prepričevalne. (Trdina 199)

Majhna in krasna stvarica je "Vzhod in Zapad". (Grahor 279)

While the interest in Pearl S. Buck is rising again in her home country this can not be noticed in Slovenia. Pearl S. Buck was a pioneer in bringing together the Americans and the Chinese. According to Carl van Doren: "*The Good Earth* for the first time made the Chinese seem as familiar neighbors. Pearl Buck had added to American fiction one of its large provinces" (Liao 21). The influence that Pearl S. Buck exercised on the Slovenes was a similar one. The writer definitely introduced the Chinese to the Slovenes as a familiar neighbour, but in the context of Slovenia we cannot agree with the second half of van Doren's statement. Pearl S. Buck brought new thematic territory into American literature, provided a literary motivation especially to all the Chinese Americans living in the USA and contributed to the prosperity of one of the most multicultural countries in the world. In response to my e-mail enquiry on Pearl S. Buck's current status, Peter Conn, the leading Buck scholar, had the following to say:

Buck is not studied widely in university literature departments. The interest in her is focused more (as was mine in the book I wrote [*Pearl S. Buck – A Cultural Biography*]) on her broader cultural significance. She

remains fairly popular with general readers (sales of her books, especially THE GOOD EARTH, remain strong) and her work still appears frequently on high school reading lists. ("Re: Question about")

Today Pearl S. Buck is believed to be "one of the few lamps that shed light from her age of Eurocentrism upon our age of multiculturalism" (Liao 14). The Slovenes, in contrast, have never been affected by multiculturalism in the way the USA has been and never really had a direct connection with the Chinese. Consequently, China remains a far away culture in Slovene minds, a culture we can nevertheless comprehend a little better today through the books written by Pearl S. Buck.

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- Note: the article is based on the author's M.A. thesis, which was supervised by Professor Mirko Jurak.

NAME ETYMOLOGY AND ITS SYMBOLIC VALUE IN FRANCIS SCOTT FITZGERALD'S *THE GREAT GATSBY*

Vanja Avsenak

Abstract

The aim of my paper is to scrutinize the manifold interpretations of proper names and their possible symbolical value that the reading of F. S. Fitzgerald's classic leaves in the reader. On the whole, the novel's internal structure is rather comprised, which consequently makes the story exact, its plot condensed, but behind this seemingly concise and more or less simple language the author nevertheless manages to embody powerful symbolism that speaks for itself. It is disputable whether Fitzgerald truly aimed to produce such a strong metaphorical emphasis that would most minutely delineate America's social character in the turbulent twenties as projected in the personal stories of the novel's leading protagonists. Within this figurative scope, large as it is, I therefore focus only on the significance of proper names and their obvious contribution to the holistic social portrayal. It may be only a minor, but nevertheless one of the most reliable and crucial means of outlining the consequences of the postwar spiritual apathy that overwhelmed the American nation and was induced by the societal downfall due to the disillusion of the American Dream. How this Dream influenced each individual's and society's destiny remains to be my goal in this article. For the purpose of analysis I rely on the 1994 Penguin edition. All direct quotes from now on are to be taken from this source.

This astonishing and ever penetrating novel of the leading Jazz Age writer has never quite ceased to capture the interest of critics, literary historians as well as avid readers all over the world in their attempt to reach beyond the story itself and find more multiple and intriguing interpretations of Francis Scott Fitzgerald's masterpiece *The Great Gatsby*. The compulsion that perhaps any reader feels by diving into the text is not its extensive structure, something in the likes of Steinbeck's *East of Eden*, but its exact opposite. What Fitzgerald strives to achieve and does succeed in so doing is a prosaic, matter-of-fact story of a golden boy of American dream, whose main blunder is his insatiable desire to enter a higher class than the one he was born into only to win "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" who ultimately destroys his aspirations. Gatsby's fate is hardly anything less traumatic than what so many other people from the social bottom experienced in the turbulent decade of superficial glamour and sophistication. Fitzgerald takes this sheer inertia experienced by the likes of Gatsby to portray the country's all-encompassing social disintegration, cultural dissolution and each individual's alienation as a result of the national hysteria felt by the majority. Gatsby may have been only

one of many victims that developed from the Jazz Age euphoria, but nevertheless his personality as conflicting as it may be serves to tipify an average individual produced by the disillusioned society of the roaring twenties. As I proceed each protagonist's contribution to the creation of the national psyche back then shall be interpreted at some length, starting with the main character.

Jay Gatsby as the central character appears to be one of the most contradictory personae in the novel. On the one hand he is a benevolent man with a heart of gold, whose main fault is merely that he has lived too long with a single dream that never becomes a reality for him and makes him blind to the penetrating truth of the greedy society he lives in, which measures people by their affluence rather than their personal qualities. On the other hand, however, he emerges as a self-centred figure who overestimates his abilities and holds too high an opinion of himself and is too lenient in judgement of others. Lehan (1969: 121) associates him with a God-like figure, "rising from his Platonic conception of himself", but his attempt to create "[this] god-like image of himself" is in vain. Just like Eckleburg's gaze over the vast emptiness, Gatsby's "solemn dumping ground of worn out hopes [and shattered dreams]" turns out to be pointless. His endeavour to be true to his belief in people's innate goodness is the one that makes him look naive at the end but at the same time enables him to rise to the proportion of "a mythic hero" (Bewley 1963: 138) since it is the quality unlikely to be found in any other character.

Gatsby's first name is mentioned very seldom throughout the novel, which understandably enough triggers some questions. Being the same as the surname of America's first Chief of Justice John Jay (1789-1795), it justifies my previous claim that it was Gatsby's sincerity towards himself and others that made him great. A possible dichotomy that could be observed in analysing Gatsby's name and his personality occurs if we consider that in addition to a possible name or surname *jay* is also a common term denoting a foolish or talkative person (Webster 1997). Foolish Gatsby is – a fool of impossible love never to attain, a fool of judgement, many a fool, but extremely likable nonetheless. Talkative, however, he is not. His continually reiterated "old sport" starts to reflect his actual lack of words, his incapacity for rhetoric, otherwise observed in his antagonist Buchanan who never seems to run out of words. Oftentimes situations leave him speechless, even in intimate encounters with the golden girl of his dreams, which should spread his wings rather than make him utterly helpless. But as aforementioned, his personal name is barely used at all. No one except Daisy on a few occasions calls him Jay – he is known as Gatsby and people attend Gatsby's parties and gossip about him in Gatsby's mansion. According to Tamke (1968-69: 443-445) back in the twenties "gat" was a slang expression for a revolver, a pistol, which alludes to the fact that Gatsby was a man of mob connections residing in the house of accumulated fortune, in the district of the abundantly wealthy. This is exactly what "gat" as an archaic past tense of "get" suggests. (Webster 1997). He has amassed immense quantities of money through underground connections, become rich almost overnight, but has done so quite consciously, choosing to become a bootlegger, following his very own *law*. This strategy of his is hidden in the old Scandinavian suffix *-by* denoting a town or a place, which implies that the neighbourhood where he resides pertains to him as the initiator of this law. Moreover, Kruse (1969-70: 539-541)

relates that *Gatsby* written with “d” rather than “t” was back in the early twenties the name of a glamorous VIP hotel, which provides one final association to Gatsby’s palace as “a hotel for rootless people.” In the same way his wealthy status could be depicted as rootless since in order to get his fortune he first had to deny his father’s roots. Contrastively, Tom’s and Daisy’s rootlessness is conditioned by their instability to settle down for any longer period of time.

Gatsby as the leading character has two counterparts – Nick Carraway and Tom Buchanan, both epitomising two aspects of the same reality, albeit through two different points of view. If Tom personifies the sordid reality of the rootless upper classes, Nick stands for wakening and reason – he is a centre of integrity and moral uprightness. Being a narrator and a close friend to just about everyone else, Nick takes on the role of Daisy’s beloved cousin, Tom’s former university buddy and Gatsby’s favourite neighbour. After Gatsby’s death he is the only one that takes responsibility for him. This shows in his loyalty to take care of all the arrangements and in his last attempt to gather some of Gatsby’s alleged friends for his funeral. Their close relationship finally results in Nick’s decision to have Gatsby’s story told in the first place. His caring personality is very visibly reflected also in Nick’s first and last names. As St Nicholas, the patron of young people and sailors (Webster 1997) – Gatsby used to be an adventurous sailor – he keeps watch over Gatsby. He is a protective caretaker and probably the only character that truly evolves in the course of the novel. Initially he judges Gatsby for his irrational attempt to reiterate his illusive dream from the past, but then grows to admire his idealism, since heading for the future also means being inevitably drawn back into the past. At the end Nick realises that “[w]e [all] beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.” (188)

The spelling of *Carraway*, however, reveals the following inconsistency. It might suggest that his chosen way in life is to care a great deal (care + way) rather than to care not, as the particle *away* infers. This, however, plays an essential role in the second possible analysis which sees Nick and others continually surrounded by cars which finally gain dimensions of death vehicles doing away with people’s lives (car + away). Nick’s sensitive personality could never sustain such a dire threat embodied in the image of cars as posed in the detached and inhuman East. Towards the end Nick admits:

I see now that this has been a story of the West, after all – Tom and Gatsby, Daisy and Jordan and I, were all Westerners, and perhaps we possessed some deficiency in common which made us subtly unadaptable to Eastern life. (183)

In accordance with this, Nick’s movement back West is triggered by the fact that he does not care for the East anymore, nor did he ever particularly care for it in the first place. They were all westerners as Nick recognises, but unlike himself

[t]hey were careless people, Tom and Daisy – they smashed up things and creatures and retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness, or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made ... (186)

To pursue with Tom Buchanan, it should be mentioned that he is Gatsby's diametrical opposite. His extreme cruelty for another human being is what he has in common with Daisy rather than Nick, let alone Gatsby. If Gatsby is heightened sensitivity and humanity, Tom is all animalism and vulgarity, manipulating Gatsby with his oral skills, maliciously using them to dematerialize Gatsby's illusions. His Yale education is definitely reflected in his speech versatility, but is often misused in small talk on topics he misinterprets, and sometimes he ends up excelling only as a bloodsucking bully, which may also be indicated in *bu-*, the first syllable of his last name *Buchanan*. His potential becomes misused under the weight of his wealth, which shall distinguish his future generations in the years to come. His surname alludes to the last name of America's fifteenth president James Buchanan, who was vilified for having led the Americans into the Civil War. Principally, President Buchanan was against the institution of slavery as such but he also claimed that states should decide for themselves whether to retain slavery or not since only their free decision would eventually contribute to the peaceful solution of the slavery issue. By winning the warm support of the South, he gained hostility of the North (Klein 2002). Tom Buchanan's racial and ethnical hatred, however, is contrasted with President Buchanan's pro-slavery beliefs. If the President spoke in favour of slavery to help the southern states secede peacefully, Tom's alleged superiority is based on the exact opposite. Unlike James Buchanan who believed that if the South chose to form the Union, their rights should be protected in the Constitution, Tom Buchanan believed in the white Nordic race and asserted that "this rising nativism" would announce the fall of the "self-made man" such as Gatsby (Decker 1994: 52-72). Tom's animosity towards coloured races is his prejudice, his antagonism towards America being submerged by the influx of other nations. If James Buchanan is supposed to have been a benevolent father of the South, Tom Buchanan undoubtedly appears to be an advocate of Nordic supremacy and a vindictive foe to racial minorities. All in all, he could be claimed to stand for a distorted image of his political counterpart. What Fitzgerald did was that he took President Buchanan as his model on which he roughly based Tom Buchanan, but he deliberately reversed the very idea for which the President was vilified by the public in the first place. President's fatherly care mistaken in his time for his pro-slavery inclination and therefore reproached him by the North stands in sharp contrast with Tom Buchanan's scorn of coloured races. Having done so, Fitzgerald strengthened the character of Tom Buchanan and diminished Gatsby's significance respectively.

Tom's wife Daisy is in fact no better than him. Egotism and corruption are attributed to Tom as much as her. Her name shows a parallel to her flower counterpart *daisy* whose heart is yellow and its leaves white, just as Daisy perpetually dresses in white robes, but her soul is empty, vain, insincere, scheming, replete with alternative motives, inspiring ultimate deception. Yellow, gold and silver, all colours indicative of money and possessions, are observed even in Daisy's voice, which "is indiscreet" and "full of money" (126). Similar tones are heard at Gatsby's parties, where "the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music" (46). Similarly to Daisy who mostly deceives with her deceitful voice inspiring hope and devotion, Gatsby does so merely with his possessions gained through corrupt yellow money. On the other hand, yellow

is also the colour of the sun that radiates from Daisy towards Gatsby. Sun appears to be the prevailing light force in the novel. Daisy seems to emanate sunlight and Gatsby attempts to bathe in it. This correlation between the two could be understood in the fact that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, which would then put Gatsby in the shadow, since his parties have for years on end been unfrequented by Daisy. Gatsby's luminous halls have been lit by artificial lights not bright enough to attract Daisy. However, Daisy's brilliance is merely external, caused by money and wealth alone, whereas Gatsby's inward glow is real, spiritually incompatible with Daisy's fake golden shimmer spreading from her. Gatsby's downfall, therefore, shows a reversed reality, the setting of the sun in autumn after his death, the dying of summer and Gatsby's great vitality, which with the falling of leaves bring forth social decay and disintegration. The second part of her name, suffix *-sy*, indicates her sight which is blurred. Finally, as her maiden name suggests, she is *fay*, beautiful, also fair-haired, but far from faithful, which is also a possible meaning of *fay*. (Webster 1997). Her promises to leave her husband and stay with Gatsby are empty, her words are not to be trusted. Even if she had sworn "by her fay" (by her faith) (Ibid), this would have been a phrase without a meaning.

Myrtle Wilson, on the other hand, a victim of the ashen community, the product of the less favourable Wasteland, endeavours to outgrow her poisonous suffocating milieu at any cost. She is Daisy's complete opposite in appearance as well as character. This contrast is visible in the association of her name with an evergreen shrub that has brown berries and pinkish-white flowers (Webster 1997). The leaves and the berries of *myrtle* suggest her sturdy character she needs to survive in the Valley of Ashes, while the pink flowers indicate the long-aspired quality she admires in the likes of Daisy. Daisy is everything she is not. She is not sophisticated, but oozes sexual vitality, a lust for life, the quality missing in Daisy, that Tom finds himself inexplicably drawn to. The distinction between the two flowers thus indicates a discrepancy between the two women as to their physical appearance and class affiliation. Fragile and delicate like the flower, Daisy serves as an ornament in her white world closed to any intruders, whereas Myrtle's struggle in the wasteland of scum is real and painful. In her attempt to be more like Daisy she gets killed. Still her attempt to surpass her social rootedness, to live a glamorous life, if only for a moment, shows that she is ready to risk her life. She decides to buy herself a dog because she thinks this will associate her with class. Furthermore, when Mrs McKee compliments her dress she pretends to be modest by saying "I just slip it on sometimes when I don't care what I look like" (37). It is obvious that she cares a great deal about her appearance. Her aspiration to enter high society is most visibly reflected in her statement "I told that boy about the ice. These people! You have to keep after them all the time." (38). These words sound more like Daisy she so desperately tries to imitate. But just as Myrtle was never born into the upper strata and could thus never be Tom's equal in social status – in this she parallels Gatsby in his desire to win Daisy back, – Daisy also could never deny her class affiliation by getting involved with Gatsby. Both women therefore cannot live below or beyond their social status, but Myrtle's struggle to try to do so is real, whereas Daisy's vague attempts are nothing but a pretence.

George Wilson as a son of God's will triggers a lot of dispute as well. Claiming to be almost faithless – the last or the only time he was in church was on his wedding day, – he becomes paradoxically blinded by the false gaze of the man advertising spectacles, since he naively misjudges the signboard above his workshop for God's omniscient persona. He could thus at best be interpreted as a fallen son deceived by the ruling God of advertising that has devoured American materialistic community. Like Tom's surname which relates him to President Buchanan, George Wilson himself could very well be paralleled with Thomas Woodrow Wilson, America's twenty-eighth president, supposedly one of the most intelligent, democratic and high-minded presidents, who led the States into the World War I (Buchanan, on the other hand, led America into the Civil War), believing that America was privileged to spend her energy to fight for the principles promising happiness and peace. His powerful statement that "[a] conservative is a man who sits and thinks, mostly sits"¹ designates George to the fullest, since it is precisely his passivity and inaction that drive Myrtle out of her wits. In this respect his instant decision to take vengeance on Gatsby is in stark contrast with his previous passive life, but in precisely the same aspect he resembles Gatsby's urge to stand up for his girl by fully taking the blame for her action. At this point, two more statements of President Wilson that appeal to both Wilson and Gatsby should be mentioned. The President once stated that "[t]he object of love is to serve, not to win"² and "[t]he man who is swimming against the stream knows the strength of it."³ Both men blindly serve their ladies, honour them with their blind devotion, but it is only Gatsby of the two who chooses to swim against the current. This act finally becomes fatal since by diving into the past he is denying himself any kind of future.

Finally, Meyer Wolfshiem, the fatherly patron of Gatsby, who claims to have made Gatsby, needs some deeper interpretation. He appears to be a direct embodiment of Arnold Rothstein "who fixed the World's Series back in 1919" (79), but unlike Rothstein who was more of an old dandy, *Wolfshiem* 'wolfishly' preys on Gatsby. His canine character is suggested in "cuff buttons" (78) he wears, "finest specimens of human molars" (78). Speaking to Nick about his protégé he relates to Gatsby as "a man of fine breeding" (78). But Gatsby's absorption with his ideal makes him utterly unprepared for Wolfshiem's scheme to draw him into his world of gambling. *Scheme* is hidden in the second part of Wolfshiem's name, *-shiem*. Contrastively, the analysis of his first name *Meyer* into *my err* as in *my error* is immaterial since it was Gatsby rather than Wolfshiem who committed an error in judgement by choosing to trust the latter and at the same time aimed to re-live the Great American dream represented in the safe pastoral past and his impossible love for Daisy Fay. All this made him utterly unprepared to recognise the blunder in a seemingly benevolent man.

At this point two further instances of visual symbolism should be outlined. The ubiquitous eyes of Dr T.J. Eckleburg blindly gazing from the oculist board into the vast nothingness of a once shining city as false eyes of God of advertising have already been stressed. As for the etymology of the name *Eckleburg*, *Eckle* is a diminutive of a German *Ecke* for corner, whereas *Burg* formerly denoting a fortified place upon a hill gains a connotation of a hill at large, even of a town and together with

¹⁻³ <http://www.top-education.com/Speeches/ThomasWoodrow.htm>

borough stems from the same Germanic root. Significantly enough, it points to the middle-class *bourgeois* (Tamke 1968-69: 443-445) and consequently to Gatsby as a representative of the landed gentry. Dr Eckleburg's advertisement stands in a God-forsaken corner of the Valley of Ashes, the nationally disillusioned Wasteland initiated in modern literature by T.S. Eliot. This vast nothingness stands for the once beautiful country disintegrating on its moral corruption, with the two Eggs (imaginary divisions of Long Island) running into the pit of decay and spiritual desolation. The image of the two Eggs – the corrupted Eastern isle and its more pure Western half – is most paradoxical, since both are in fact located on the East coast of the USA, which comes to stand for glamour, success and sophistication as opposed to peaceful tradition, loyalty and integrity of America's West and Mid-West. The infected Valley of Ashes symbolises the American soul, showing how the West is getting increasingly tainted by the moral degeneration of the East, thus turning into a place of decadence and moral decline. The two Eggs, however, as their names by insinuating fertility might suggest, breed nothing but utmost degradation.

Alongside with the brooding eyes of Dr Eckleburg, Owl Eyes represents another instance of powerful visual symbolism, since he acts as a physical incarnation of godly providence, but above all he appears as the man with the clearest sight. Meeting Gatsby at one of his parties, he immediately recognises that the gold-bound books in his library serve merely as a decoration, but he nevertheless sees through his posture and also attends Gatsby's almost unattended funeral. His character, though of minor importance, was modelled upon Fitzgerald's close friend and well-known satirist Ring Lardner (Hampton 1976: 229), whose neighbour used to throw lavish parties that he and Fitzgerald sometimes observed, often even joined. His as well as Lardner's nickname was due to the enormous spectacles they both wore, which figuratively speaking represents the solemnity of an owl, which is not only a night bird, sometimes referred to as a nighthawk, but comes to be used also for people with nocturnal habits. (Webster 1997) It is important that the first time we meet Owl Eyes he appears at one of Gatsby's night parties. The next time he shows up is at Gatsby's funeral, where he offers a piece of his wisdom by concluding that Gatsby was "the poor son-of-a-bitch." (182) But in truth Gatsby resembles an elusive cat more than a greedy dog.

Apart from canine and feline allusions that indeed pervade the text, the former being mostly attributed to Wolfshiem's and Tom's characters, the latter to elusive cat-like Gatsby, there is only one further instance of animal symbolism in addition to Owl Eyes, which is directly attributable to the proper name of Gatsby's piano player *Klipspringer*. He entertains Gatsby, even lives at his mansion, but he does not show up for the funeral. His cheating nature is hidden in the first part of his amusing name. *Klip* derives from *-clip*, which means "to cheat", but also "to move rapidly", *springer*, however, denotes an agent of jumping. As a compound, however, *klipspringer* refers to a small agile antelope of southern and eastern Africa, known for his rapid movement (Webster 1997). Symbolically this name suits its owner as it stands for a false friend who will never stand by Gatsby in times of need but will vanish into thin air as rapidly and instantaneously as he had appeared. This at the very end turns out to be the case with almost all who claim to be Gatsby's friends but do not know the meaning of the word, which consequently brings Gatsby to his inevitable end.

The aim of the etymological analysis of proper names was primarily to show how pervasively symbolic proper names in *The Great Gatsby* really are and how their interpretations contribute to the minute analysis of the protagonist's diverse personalities. The multifold interpretations of each individual's name have even greater significance when they contribute to the formation of America's social character. This has been based on the notion of the American dream of endless opportunities that promised people happiness in their self-made lives. This Dream, however, occurred as America's greatest idea but also its greatest blunder, the grand illusion that was common not only in the visionary atmosphere of Jazz Age, but which remains timeless in history since dreams, either personal or national, keep recurring in all periods and all milieus.

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RESPONSES TO TONI MORRISON'S OEUVRE IN SLOVENIA

Simona Midžić

Abstract

Toni Morrison, the first African American female winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature, is certainly one of the modern artists whose novels have entered the world's modern literary canon. She is one of the most read novelists in the United States, where all of her novels have been bestsellers. However, only *Song of Solomon* and *Beloved* have so far been translated into Slovene. There have been several articles or essays written on Toni Morrison but most of them are simply translations of English articles; the only exception is a study by Jerneja Petrič.

This paper presents the Slovene translation of *Song of Solomon* by Jože Stabej and the articles written on Toni Morrison by Slovene critics. Jože Stabej is so far the only Slovene translator who has translated Toni Morrison. The author of this article uses some Slovene translations from the novel in comparison to the original to show the main differences appearing because of different grammatical structures of both languages and differences in the two cultures. The articles by Slovene critics are primarily résumés or translations of English originals and have been mainly published in magazines specializing in literature.

Jože Stabej is the only Slovene translator of Toni Morrison's work. Morrison's third novel *Song of Solomon* was translated as *Salomonova pesem*. Regarding the possibilities offered by English vocabulary and grammar in comparison to the Slovene language, Stabej's translation mostly corresponds to the original. If characteristics of the Slovene language do not offer the possibility of identical translation or if the translation is important to understand the idea, the translation does not correspond to Morrison's version. Such is the case already in the dedication »Daddy« at the beginning of the novel where Toni Morrison leaves out the word »for« or »to« typical in a dedication. Because of the endings indicating the grammatical case, such a dedication would sound wrong in Slovene. That is why it is necessary to decline the word »očka«, so that the dedication reads »Očku« (»To Daddy«). But for Slovene readers this is a typical dedication and it is not easy to recognize other ideas hidden in the English dedication. If in English the word »for« or »to« is left out, readers might wonder why that is so. Toni Morrison tries to show the formation of manhood in relation to fatherhood that is not noticeable in »Očku«. Anyway, the epigram following the dedication calls the reader's attention to the central themes of the novel in both languages:

The fathers may soar
And the children may know their names (Morrison 2)

Očetje naj letijo
In otroci naj poznajo njihova imena (Stabej 1)

The translations of some personal names are very interesting. Toni Morrison ascribes a great importance to the names of the main characters, namely they have a certain connection to or meaning for the lives of the characters. Names, which are important for the understanding of the novel, have been translated into Slovene, others remain unchanged: Milkman – Mlekar, Guitar – Kitara, Empire State – Nebotičnik, Moon – Mesec, Railroad Tommy – Železničar Tommy, Hospital Tommy – Bolničar Tommy. There are some other important characters whose names have not been translated even though the meaning of their names is crucial for the development of the narrative. In such cases Jože Stabej gives an extra explanation of the names, such as First Corinthians – »Prvi list Korinčanom v novi zavezi biblije.« (First Corinthians in the New Testament of the Bible) or Pilate – »Pilat, ki je ubil Kristusa« (Pilate, who killed Christ). The note to the name Sing does not appear until Milkman realizes that his grandfather's ghost wanted to tell Pilate the name of his wife and not to »sing«. The name Macon Dead has not been changed but it has a Slovene translation »Mrtev« attached to the original because the meaning of the word »dead« is of great importance in this case. The same rules were accepted for the geographical names – important ones have been translated (No Mercy Hospital – Bolnišnica brez usmiljenja, Lincoln's Heaven – Lincolnova nebesa, Solomon's Leap – Salomonov skok etc.). I would like to draw attention to the place called Shalleemone where Jože Stabej uses the phonetic transcription of the name (»Šelimon«). It is important for the reader to hear the similarity between the personal name Solomon and the pronounced Shalleemone.

A problematic issue for the translator were certainly African American and English colloquial words, expressions and phrases where Jože Stabej used Slovene dialects or looked for the most suitable word, expression or phrase in Slovene. Here are some examples: »Oh, Lord.« - »Sveta nebesa.«, »cake« - »potica«, »right alongside« - »čisto vštric«, »itty bitty teeny tiny tub« - »male micene drobne drobčkane banje«, »backwoods« - »rovte«, »I was broke as a haint.« - »Bila sem revna kot cerkvena miš.«, »Mr. Tommy, suh« - »Mr. Tommy, gspud«, »healer, deliverer« - »padarka, babica«, »storming Pilate« - »furjasta Pilate«, »Y of a sycamore« - »vereja sikomore« etc.

Toni Morrison's novels deal mainly with African American mythology, culture, and life; in short, with a world that is less familiar to a Slovene reader. Nevertheless, in Stabej's translation there are no additional explanations about their culture, mythology or way of life. The fact is that such information is given throughout the original text. However, it is questionable whether that is enough for a Slovene reader who has not experienced discrimination in a way the citizens of the United States did. The most important myth is without any doubt the myth of flying Africans which forms the central song of the novel and deals with Solomon's flight to freedom. There have been made some changes in the translation by Jože Stabej but they do not effect the meaning of the whole song:

Jake the only son of Solomon
Come booba yalle, come booba tambee
Whirled about and touched the sun
Come konka yalle, come konka tambee

Left the baby in a white man's house
Come booba yalle, come booba tambee
Heddy took him to a red man's house
Come konka yalle, come konka tambee

Black lady fell down on the ground
Come booba yalle, come booba tambee
Threw her body all around
Come konka yalle, come konka tambee

Solomon and Ryna Belali Shalut
Yaruba Medina Muhammet too.
Nestor Kalina Saraka cake.
Twenty-one children, the last one Jake!

O Solomon don't leave me here
Cotton balls to choke me
O Solomon don't leave me here
Buckra's arms to yoke me

Solomon done fly, Solomon done gone
Solomon cut across the sky, Solomon
Gone home.

Jake, edini Salomonov sin,
daj buba jale, daj buba tambi,
vrtil se in sonce prim',
daj konka jale, daj konka tambi.

Spusti otroka v belo hišo,
daj buba jale, daj buba tambi,
vzame ga Heddy v rdečo hišo,
daj konka jale, daj konka tambi.

Je črna ženska na tla pala,
daj buba jale, daj buba tambi,
telo okrog je razmetala,
daj konka jale, daj konka tambi.

Salomon in Ryna Belali Šalu
Jaruba Medina Mahomet tu.
Nestor Kalina Saraka cake.
cel kup otrok in zadnji Jake!

O, Salomon, ne pusti me tukaj,
kjer me bombaž duši,
O, Salomon, ne pusti me tukaj,
me belec k tlom tišči.

Salomon ne zleti, Salomon, ne hodi,
Salomon, nebo presekaj, Salomon
ostani.

(Morrison 303)

(Stabej 312)

As a whole the song can be considered as a rather identical translation of the original song, so that even a Slovene reader gets to know the legendary song about Solomon, the flying African. Differences in the translation, which mostly do not have an effect on the meaning of the song, have been made because of certain characteristics of the song. The first line of the second stanza »Left that baby in a white man's house« has been translated as »Spusti otroka v belo hišo«. Such translation is acceptable because the reader is aware of the fact that Solomon threw his son Jake in front of the house where white people lived. The reiteration of »Come booba yalle, come booba tambee« and »Come konka yalle, come konka tambee« in the first three stanzas have been left almost unchanged. Jože Stabej used the pronounced transcription of African words which even the English are not familiar with. The names of Solomon's children are transcribed in the same way. The translator even decided to use two English words for the sake of the rhyme – »cake« is »cake« and »too« is simply written in a Slovene way (»tu«). The last line of the fifth stanza sounds completely different in Slovene but the idea of slavery is recognizable even in the translation – »Buckra's arms to yoke me« - »me belec k tlom tišči«. In the last stanza there is an African American expres-

sion »done« meaning »don't« that is impossible to translate into Slovene, so Jože Stabej used the words which best suited the meaning of the last two lines.

If we read through the English original and the Slovene version of the novel, we can have a look at some fragments dealing with some African myths and legends or racial issues. There is a great deal of such fragments, so I would like to present those where the Slovene translations are rather interesting in comparison to the English ones. First there is the case where Guitar makes a white nurse aware of the mistake she made spelling the word:

»...It will say 'Emergency Admissions' on the door. A-D-M-I-S-I-O-N-S.«

...

»You left out a s, ma'am,« the boy said. (Morrison 7)

»Na vratih bo pisalo 'Nujni primeri.' P-R-M-E-R-I.«

...

»Izpustili ste i, gospa,« je rekel deček. (Stabej 13)

In comparison to her brother Macon Dead Pilate is not ashamed of her African roots and there is a revealing description of her appearance which shows a typical African American woman and has a great aesthetic value in English as well as in Slovene:

Her lips were darker than her skin, wine-stained, blueberry-dyed, so her face had a cosmetic look – as though she had applied a very dark lipstick neatly and blotted away its shine on a scarp of newspaper. (Morrison 30)

Njene ustnice so bile temnejše kot koža, popackane z vinom, take barve kot robidnice, tako da je bil njen obraz kot naličen – kot bi se bila skrbno namazala z zelo temnim ličilom, potem pa njegov lesk popivnala s kosom časopisnega papirja. (Stabej 36)

The cruel murder of Emmett Till is one of the historical examples of fierce discrimination:

A young Negro boy had been found stomped to death in Sunflower County, Mississippi. There were no questions about who stomped him – his murderers had boasted freely – and there were no questions about the motive. The boy had whistled at some white woman, refused to deny he had slept with others, and was a Northerner visiting the South. His name was Till. (Morrison 80)

V okrožju Sunflower v Mississippiju so našli mladega črnega dečka, poteptanega do smrti. O tem, kdo ga je poteptal, ni bilo nobenih vprašanj – njegovi morilci so se odkrito bahali – in tudi o njihovem nagibu ni bilo nobenih vprašanj. Deček je zažvižgal za neko belko, ni hotel zanikati, da je že spal z drugimi, in je bil severnjak na obisku na Jugu. Pisal se je Till. (Stabej 86)

Superstition and magic potions are parts of African culture. A reader can witness how Pilate prepares a special potion for Macon Dead and gives it to Ruth, so that she can seduce him into her bed.

»She gave me funny things to do. And some greenish-gray grassy-looking stuff to put in his food.« Ruth laughed. »I felt like a doctor, like a chemist doing some big important scientific experiment. It worked too.« (Morrison 125)

»Naročila mi je, naj počenjam hecne reči. Dala mi je nekakšno zelenkasto sivo, steklasto stvar, da sem mu jo dajala v hrano.« Ruth se je zasmejala. »Počutila sem se kot zdravnik, kot kemik, ki opravlja kak velik, važen znanstven poskus. Tudi delala sem.« (Stabej 131)

When Milkman has a conversation with the priest Cooper he realizes the truth about the lives of African American people in the south. They have been dying under the hands of white people but nobody wants to take the responsibility for their murders. The sentence »Besides, the people what did it owned half the county.« has been translated grammatically correct, which is not necessary in this case because Toni Morrison uses here the colloquial language of African American people and not standard English here.

»...White folks didn't care, colored folks didn't dare. Wasn't no police like now. Now we got a county sheriff handles things. Not then. Then the circuit judge came through just once or twice a year. Besides, the people what did it owned half the county. Macon's land was in their way. Folks just was thankful the children escaped.« (Morrison 232)

»...Belcem je bilo vseeno, črnci si niso upali. Ni bilo policije kot zdaj. Zdaj imamo okrajnega šerifa, ki ureja stvari. Takrat pa ne. Takrat se je po enkrat, dvakrat na leto oglasil okrožni sodnik. Poleg tega so bili ljudje, ki so to naredili, lastniki pol okraja. Maconova zemlja jim je bila napoti. Ljudje so bili samo hvaležni, da sta otroka ušla.« (Stabej 240)

It is an African American tradition to sing at funerals. Pilate and Reba sing for their Hagar. Especially interesting is the translation of the part of the lullaby they sing. »Sweet sugar lumpkin« has been translated as »sladkorček«. Instead of three words just one word has been used, and what is even more noticeable is that the alliteration in »sweet sugar« is lost in the translation.

At the end of the novel Jože Stabej probably faced some difficulties translating the final conversation between Guitar and Milkman. The last syllables of the words are echoes of the sentences they shout. The change of Guitar's name into »Kitara« results in the change of key words in the translation, but nevertheless providing an adequate impression.

»Guitar!« he shouted.

Tar tar tar, said the hills.

»Over here, brother man! Can you see me?« Milkman cupped his mouth with one hand and waved the other over his head. »Here I am!«

Am am am am, said the rocks.

»You want me? Huh? You want my life?«

Life life life life. (Morrison 337)

»Kitara!« je zakričal.

Tara tara tara, so rekli hribi.

»Tu sem, brat! Me vidiš?« Mlekar si je eno roko nastavil k ustom, z drugo pa mahal nad glavo. »Tu sem!«

Sem sem sem sem, je reklo skalovje.

»Me hočeš? Ha? Hočeš, naj ne bom več živ?«

Živ živ živ živ. (Stabej 345-346)

Translating the novel was surely not an easy task because the original contains many words, expressions and phrases dealing with African culture and society and it is not easy to present their culture and society to a Slovene reader who faces a completely different culture and society. However, the translator mostly succeeded in his attention and added some additional notes if necessary, so that a Slovene reader does not feel lost reading the novel. But if one really wants to become acquainted with the world of African American people, one should read the original.

As I have already mentioned there have been some translations of foreign essays on Toni Morrison or short summaries of her novels in Slovenia. There are few among Slovene authors who responded critically to the oeuvre of that African American novelist who does not receive as much attention in Slovenia as in the United States. Her real value has been recognized by Jerneja Petrič, who was the first to write extensively and critically about the novelist. One of the reasons is probably the fact that just two of her novels have been translated.

In 1991 the translation of *Beloved* was just to be published and Janez Krek reacted to that in his essays »Ni ženskih izjav« (»There are no female statements«). (*Eseji – Problemi* 145) He proceeds from the expression »woman's perspective« which has often been used when talking about Toni Morrison. As examples he presents two fragments from *Beloved* written from the perspective of Paul D. and wonders how a certain desire can be registered as feminine. Dealing with the Paul D. fragments the critic realizes that womanliness cannot be characterized by the content but by the difference towards manhood, that is the feminine in a certain culture can be restored only in the difference towards the masculine. According to that there are no natural feminine statements but there are masculine ones. The latter are natural statements and the former are the artificial ones. On the other hand a certain statement becomes masculine only when faced with the statement registered on the feminine side. At the end the critic stresses that statements would not be deemed either masculine or feminine, if we did not define human beings according to gender. Krek's essay is an interesting reading but I cannot completely agree with him. We have been defining gender for centuries but why should something feminine be characterized by the difference towards masculine – perhaps it is vice versa. Something feminine can exist without the presence of something masculine too and vice versa. So we cannot claim that a feminine statement is an artificial one because it derives from the masculine one which is natural. In a way Janez Krek acknowledges - perhaps even speaks in favour of – the

danger which Toni Morrison tries to warn us of in her writings and wants to change it, that is the double determination of African American women (because of race and gender). The author of the article meditates upon possibility of existing of something feminine without something masculine. His meditations are based on the fragments dealing with Paul D. from *Beloved*. In my opinion, he speaks in favour of masculine statements which are - according to him - rarely used by Toni Morrison.

In the monthly magazine for literature *Mentor* Nataša Hrastnik deals with the modern African American female authors Toni Morrison, Alice Walker and Gayl Jones. Their special position in American society, defined by race and gender, is what they have in common. In their works they deal with old racial themes using new and fresh techniques. They portray African American women in their conflicts and relationships with their men and children breaking in pieces the old stereotype of an African American woman who is a fat, stupid housewife or an object of sexual abuse. Their heroines are usually lonely, vulnerable and victimized, especially if they move to the industrial North where they have to fight for their human dignity. They try to find their identity which differs from the one that American society imposes on them. The first part of the article is about Toni Morrison and it presents short summaries and fragments from the novels *The Bluest Eye* and *Song of Solomon*. The author points out that Morrison's novels explore the relationship between an individual and society, good and evil, American and African culture stressing spirituality, religion and family history. Especially in *Song of Solomon* one can face the fact that culture, tradition and the past exist - you just have to admit that. The salvation for the African American identity lies in creating new cultures and considering the existing folklore. Nataša Hrastnik points out the importance of ancestors for the spiritual development of the characters because being linked with ancestors means being linked with the past that gives you a certain cultural identity. The article is a general description of African American female literature resting mainly on two novels of Toni Morrison. The author does not develop any new ideas about Morrison's work - she just sums up what is already familiar.

When in 1993 Toni Morrison received the Nobel Prize for Literature as the first African American female, Mitja Meršol published the article »Črno, žensko in doživeto - vrednote, ki osvobajajo« (»Black, female and experienced - values that liberate«) (*Delo* 5) in Slovenia's most read daily, *Delo*. Most of the article deals with the events of the day she received the prize and Toni Morrison's feelings. She was happy that her mother lived to see her receive the Nobel Prize. She sees herself as a woman from Ohio, New York and New Jersey; she sees herself as an African American woman as well and everyone should share the happiness with her. Her wish is also to share the joy with all these places, countries, people, nationalities and races. At the end she adds that to her as an American the prize means a lot, but for her as an African American the prize is a real knock out. In the second part of the article the author presents the Nobel Prize winner's life and closes the article with the quotation from *Song of Solomon* describing Hagar's African passion. If we compare Meršol's article to Krek's, we can notice that Mitja Meršol speaks about the values that liberate (values of females and black people) and are not dependent on anything else, especially not on the masculine - as Janez Krek claims in his article. Toni Morrison's statement that she is an

African as well as American and that she is aware of her role in the American society is rather surprising because the American society still refers to coloured authors as »African American« and not »American«. The author of the article reports about the first African American female to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature. Instead of writing about her work he only sums up her feelings and quotes an extract from *Song of Solomon*.

In November 1993 most of magazine *Literatura* was dedicated to the Nobel Prize winner Toni Morrison but again the articles were just the translations of the English originals. It starts with the translation of the fragment from Morrison's sixth novel *Jazz* which was translated by Jože Stabej. (*Literatura* 61-66) What follows is the article »Dediščina: Prednik kot načelo« (»Legacy: Ancestor as principle«) whose author is Toni Morrison herself and the translator is Boštjan Leiler, who adapted the article from Mari Evans's book *Black Women Writers (1950-1980). A Critical Evaluation*. Toni Morrison explains in the article that the novel enlightens people about how to react in new situations and that autobiography gives an author a chance to become a representative of their generation. Music is very important in the lives of African American people but today's African American music is only a variety of modern music, so Toni Morrison believes that a novel is what African American people need nowadays. Reading a novel should have the same effect as the sermon of an African American preacher who stimulates his believers to speak up, participate, open up, cry out the pain, change and adapt. Toni Morrison points out the importance of reader's participation, the presence of ancestors and an omniscient narrator. This attention was best expressed in *Song of Solomon*. She concludes that estimating African American literature without considering men is as deficient as estimating it without considering women.

Nataša Hrastnik translated and arranged Bill Moyers's interview with Toni Morrison which was published in his book of interviews *A World of Ideas II*. They discuss race and class. There used to be no discussion about race, so it remained beyond the literary world. When Toni Morrison writes about African American people she never defines the race. She pushes them to the limits to see what they are made of. Her characters usually win because of love which can sometimes be too strong or even scary. It is important to make somebody else feel good but there is a danger to become a martyr. Toni Morrison starts writing a novel if she is not familiar with something. To her all novels are questions. In *Tar Baby* she was asking herself what the problem was with a couple that loved each other but were of different cultures. When she strated *Beloved* she was wondering about motherhood.

The chapter about Toni Morrison ends with the article written by Barbara Christian which has been translated by Katarina Jerin and was presented in Slovene under the title »Skupnost in narava: romani Toni Morrison« (»Community and nature: Toni Morrison's novels«). The author deals with the meaning of nature and community for the characters in Toni Morrison's novels. Nature helps Morrison's characters realize themselves. Even blood relationships and characters' relationships towards their community help them realize the fact. In Toni Morrison's worlds family relationships exist within dreams, legends and the subconsciousness of their inhabitants, where the soil participates in saving folk tradition. African American people moved from the agrar-

ian South to the industrial North and now they have to learn how to survive on the ground which does not offer enough for their tradition to be saved. To make these statements plausible, Barbara Christian uses some examples from Morrison's first three novels – *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula* and *Song of Solomon*. All three novels include a consistent vision of the strong desire of human beings to be a part of nature but yet different. Morrison's characters have an instinctive wish to be fertile like soil, fluent like water, alive like fire and free like air. Unfortunately they live within the societies which are based on distinguishing among their members. These last three articles are translations of English articles presenting ideas about Toni Morrison's work as seen by Mari Evans, Bill Moyers and Barbara Christian. Nevertheless, the presented ideas are important for the understanding of Morrison's novels, so they needed to be translated into Slovene.

The newspaper for art, society and humanities *Razgledi* published on 12 November 1993 the critique »Afroameriška ženska literatura?« (»African American female literature?«) by Ženja Leiler (*Razgledi* 45). The occasion was the publication of the translation of *Beloved* in the so called *Collection of the 20th Century*. In her article Ženja Leiler ascribes to the novel the mastery of writing containing magical epic, long and mysterious passages, numerous magic, mystical, ethnic, ethnological and realistic elements which are used by its author to create a bleak and empty world on one side and fresh and colourful world on the other. Ženja Leiler also discusses the problem of the seventies when the Americans brought up the literature of marginal groups. If it is about the literature of African American people, Americans use the word »African« because their humanistic science can accept only the literature written by white people as their own. She stresses that the novel is mostly about the inferiority of women, which is common to all races. She realizes that life is incomprehensibly difficult and it becomes easier if we are prepared to put our stories and stories of other people side by side. What bothers her is the fact that we live in the 21st century and we are still not able to accept differences. The promised land with its democracy is not yet prepared to put its story and the story of African American people side by side and combine them into one story – the American one. The author writes critically about *Beloved* and points out some facts about the society nowadays which is yet not prepared to accept differences. She mainly discusses the differences between men and women. She is as well very critical towards American people who still have certain prejudices about everything that is African American.

Two pages of the 24th number of *Razgledi* (24 December 1993) were dedicated to Toni Morrison's oeuvre. There is the translation by Jože Stabej from Morrison's novel *Jazz* which is followed by the article »Kontrapunkt jezika« (»Counterpoint of language«) by Nataša Hrastnik. The occasion was awarding the Nobel Prize for Literature to Toni Morrison. The prize does not surprise the author of the article because Toni Morrison is one of the key American novelists who managed to capture the beat of the times. Nataša Hrastnik presents Toni Morrison's life and work, which above all includes an African American woman. Her novels seek out and put together the pieces of the mosaic of African American identity. Worlds, inhabited by her characters, are usually bizarre and suppressed, wrapped up in the folk wisdom of African American communities. Like many other critics whom I mentioned, Nataša Hrastnik stresses the

importance of ancestors as well and writes about the narrative process where Toni Morrison leaves empty spaces, uses call-and-response technique, slave spiritual songs and in writing she leaves enough space for imagination and reader's emotions. The language she uses has its own magic power and it is the way for African American people to fight against the supremacy of white people. The experience of black slavery and suffering is used as a metaphor for all human experience. Nataša Hrastnik closes her article with Toni Morrison's words: »Art is political, artists are politicians. I write village literature for my tribe which loses its culture in this urban world.« (35) The article is an overall of Morrison's work and repeats so far known ideas about the Nobel Prize winner.

In 1998 Toni Morrison published her seventh novel *Paradise*. Miriam Drev reacted to the event and published her article »Zaseda v raju« (»Ambush in paradise«) in the daily *Delo* (30 December 1998). The novel is set in 1976 in the town called Ruby, in Oklahoma. The men of Ruby attack the Monastery inhabited by women who have been a thorn in their side for a long time. Witchhunt is just one of many themes in this multi-layered text where people in an isolated district want to recreate the biblical paradise idyll. In certain parts of the novel Miriam Drev sees the elements of a thriller that in spite of the book title places a reader on realistic ground. The town of Ruby was patterned on the all-black towns which were flourishing after 1890 and in the twenties and thirties of the 20th century. These towns were faithful to the tradition and religion and distrustful of anyone or anything that time could bring. Already at the beginning of the novel a reader finds out that the shot woman is a white woman and it is obvious that the novel is going to deal with the race problem. Toni Morrison presents the forms of intolerance between races and within one single race. Nevertheless, all characters are personalities with human virtues and frailties because the author wishes to stress human nature and not race. The language used in the novel is full of religious vocabulary and opens the question about the influence of religious images on the lives of people. At the end of *Paradise* a reader realizes why the attackers perform their actions. Throughout the novel a reader gets familiar with many historical facts as well. All the same, some things are left untold and left to be interpreted by a reader. Even if Miriam Drev's article is more or less only a summary of the novel, we can see the light in the fact that Slovene newspapers immediately reacted to Toni Morrison's new novel. Being aware of the fact that the Nobel Prize winner is still active and creative can encourage someone to start reading her novels. Although Miriam Drev's article is only a summary of the novel, it was at the time necessary to write about the novel because it was a new creation of Toni Morrison and it needed a presentation among Slovene readers.

In 2001 the student newspaper *Spekter* gave a short presentation of *Beloved* even though the novel has been on the market for quite some time. This might not be surprising because there are some, but unfortunately not many, schools in Slovenia where *Beloved* is discussed. The author Špela Debenak stresses the importance of Toni Morrison as one of the major literary figures in modern United States. She deals with already familiar facts about the novel. The novel is set in the time of reconstruction (the sixties and the seventies of the 19th century). Using mystical elements and symbols it turns out to be a poetically and lyrically colourful novel. The novel resumes

the motive of Medea's childkilling which is retrospectively presented through Sethe. Almost the whole novel takes place in house 124, which is inhabited by Sethe and her daughter Denver, who are later on joined by the ghost of the dead Sethe's child named Beloved. She demands her mother's love that she did not get at all. The whole novel points out the feminine concept of life – it presents the story of the life of an African American woman who constantly fights to restore her identity in a society where she is determined by gender and race. Špela Debenak claims that African roots, African ancestors and African legacy form the world by itself where a foot of a white man is not allowed to step because it is overly burdened with rational thinking. Špela Debenak characterizes Toni Morrison as one of the key American literary figures. She undoubtedly deserves the title, although she used to be called an African American author. I agree with Debenak's last statement as well: The white world is obsessed by rationalizing everything it exists and that is why it cannot comprehend the African culture which does not question the existence of their myths and legends. For them myths and legends are a part of their lives and they draw the power for living from them. The author of the article sums up familiar facts about *Beloved* although this might not be interesting after the novel has been on the market for 14 years. But since *Spekter* is a student newspaper some students might find some interesting and perhaps new facts about Toni Morrison and her novel.

The literary theory *Ameriška proza: od realizma do postmodernizma*, edited by Mirko Jurak and Jerneja Petrič and published in 2001, includes the essay »Starodavno izročilo v zgodnjih romanih Toni Morrison: *Sula* in *Song of Solomon*« (»Ancient tradition in the early novels of Toni Morrison: *Sula* and *Song of Solomon*«) written by Jerneja Petrič and deals mostly with mythology and the naming of characters and places in both novels. She points out that in her novels Toni Morrison delivers the history of African American people using magic realism and deriving the history from the oral heritage of her people that she has been carrying in her mind since her childhood. Jerneja Petrič ascribes the theme of invisibility especially of African American women, who have to find their ways in a male and patriarchal society, to the influence of Ralph Ellison. She makes a connection between Sula Peace and Roman general and dictator Lucius Cornelius Sulla because in a male society Sula is forced to fight against being marked by her gender. The surname of Peace women suggests the opposite of the way they live their lives and fight their war. In contrast, Sula's best friend Nel carries the surname Wright which is pronounced the same as »right« and denotes Nel's life story because she adapts herself to the norms of society. The author of the essay notices that almost every name in the novel carries a symbolic meaning or it is an allusion to the Bible or classical myth – e. g. Shadrack's namesake was a Jewish prisoner in Babylon who was thrown in a burning stove and came out unhurt; in Ancient mythology Kasandra was only a sexual object to Ajax who then cast her off. Narrative tension is created by entangling the meanings in figurative sense and by reversing things, like a case of the village called Bottom. The same phenomenon can be seen in *Song of Solomon*, in Ruth's case, whose name means »beloved« in Hebrew. Nevertheless, she is not loved by her husband and even her children are usually humiliated or hurt. Even geographical names (e. g. Not Doctor Street or No Mercy Hospital) are ironic language swings. Jerneja Petrič discusses the African American myth

about flying which is the *leitmotiv* in the novel. In Toni Morrison's novels the world of African American people is presented in contradiction between war and peace. Milkman, who is leading the war against himself and his society, can find peace only if he returns to his origins – he comes the closest to this with Pilate, the flying woman, the one who was born into Solomon's house. Pilate can find her peace only when she buries her father's bones on Solomon's Leap. Both of them are able to believe in that part of the myth that is about flying and because of that they are the only ones in the novel who finally find their peace. This is not the only contrast in the novel – there is one between the North and the South that represent the present and the past; the other can be found in Macon and Pilate who are two contrary poles of one personality. The author of the essay closes her discussion with the following idea: Toni Morrison believes in mobility and thinks of people who insist on the old tradition being lost. Both novels arouse an idea which is usually central to Ernest Hemingway's novels and that is that a human being cannot escape their responsibilities, whatever they might be. The author of the article concentrates only on *Sula* and *Song of Solomon* where she points out the ancient tradition as presented in the two novels. There are certainly some ideas that have so far not been presented considering Toni Morrison's novels. Her article is certainly an important contribution to the Slovene literary critical work.

Responses to Toni Morrison's oeuvre among Slovene literary public are rather weak, especially if we keep in mind that she is the first African American female Nobel Prize winner for Literature and not just one of many authors on the market. Jerneja Petrič stresses clearly the aesthetic value of Morrison's novels, as is shown by her essay's introduction of facts that have never been discussed in other authors' critiques. Except for parts of the articles written by Janez Krek, Mitja Meršol and Ženja Leiler, other articles are simply summaries of Morrison's novels and translations of other critics. But on the other hand such summaries and translations are necessary for Slovene readers because there are just few individuals who are aware of Toni Morrison's artistic grandeur. The purpose of such critiques is in this case questionable; after all how can readers understand critiques if they do not know what they refer to? What is the reason for this lack of awareness of Toni Morrison's work? Perhaps the problem lies within the syllabus for the lessons of Slovene where pupils, among other things, get in touch with literature. Observing the work of my Slovene teacher colleagues I noticed that the authors of »non-white« races are usually not discussed. I am sure that many pupils would rather read a novel by Toni Morrison than a certain book they have to read. In this way we could develop a culture of reading – pupils would read what they like and not what they have to. But how could a pupil know who Toni Morrison is, if even in one of the biggest national libraries librarians do not know whether Toni Morrison is a she or a he? The solution might lie within the syllabus itself – it could be slightly changed, e. g. the Nobel Prize winners would be one of the themes; the extracts from her novels could be read during English lessons. One cannot even find anything about Toni Morrison on the Slovene internet pages. Many people fight against nationalism and racism, but unfortunately there are still some who refuse everything that is different. If we continue this fight, perhaps one day we could speak of one nation.

Velenje

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SAM SHEPARD'S PLAYS ACCORDING TO SLOVENIAN THEATRE DIRECTORS

Anina Oblak

Abstract

The article focuses on the productions of Sam Shepard's plays in Slovenia during 1985-2000 and the author of the paper primarily pays attention to the Slovenian directors' approach to Shepard's works and the problems that have arisen in the process. Five of Shepard's plays have been staged to date in Slovenia, two early works and three works of new realism. In interviews with the directors (Vinko Möderndorfer, Primož Bebler, Boris Kobal, Dušan Jovanović and Boris Cavazza) as well as three actresses and a choreographer (Alenka Vidrih, Barbara Babič, Vesna Jevnikar, Tanja Zgonc) it has emerged that the transplantation of typically American issues to Slovenia and their treatment necessitated a different approach from the one normally taken by the Slovenian directors and actors. Shepard's plays being idiosyncratic, the theatre artists had to either accommodate his material or treat it with different methods that were adapted to suit the Slovenian environment.

1. EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE GLEJ: SUMMERTIME BASED ON SAM SHEPARD'S COWBOY MOUTH

Crow-like Cavale from *Cowboy Mouth* (1971) tries to transform cowboy Slim into a rock deity. She teaches him about the lives of the decadent French poets and the death of Johnny Ace, a rocker who played Russian roulette on stage and blew his brains out in front of his fans. In her bizarre teaching Cavale assumes a perspective that refers to the end of Christianity and the inevitability of a new saviour, a saint with the cowboy mouth, "rocking to Bethlehem to be born" (Shepard 1988: 156). Slim begins to understand the necessity of the artist's sacrifice and feels the tyrannical power of stage. Cavale explains that the duty of the rock saviour is to embody the collective yearning of community, "the stuff in them that makes them wanna' see God's face" (156-57). Slim realises that an artist is a slave to other people's dreams.

Summertime, a free adaptation of Shepard's play *Cowboy Mouth* was produced on 9 June 1985 at the Experimental Theatre Glej in Ljubljana. The director Vinko Möderndorfer cast Jerca Mrzel and Vojko Zidar for the leading actors, as well as Ivan Rupnik in the role of the Lobster (Anon. 1985: 1). Möderndorfer opens his performance in a dark warehouse with Cavale, who has been street-loitering, returning to Slim, whom she has chained to a car (*Summertime*, video recording). Instead of a feel of

threat the director creates an atmosphere of mysteriousness, the suspense over what might emerge from the darkness. The scene is quite intimate, as if the viewers were uninvited voyeurs, accidentally witnessing a certain privacy and not being able to avert their gaze for being lured by the magic of the moment. Rather than keeping the debris that Shepard demands, Vinko Möderndorfer empties the stage. The Slovenian director wanted the production to be more realistic and aimed at tearing down the fourth wall, thus presenting the audience with a real insight into the intimate world of two people, having the spectators become accidental observers of their daily routine. Instead of the bed, the director placed in the centre of the stage a big pink convertible car, functioning as a bed. It presented an icon of Janice Joplin's car (Möderndorfer 3).

From Shepard Möderndorfer adopts the idea that rock equals God, the imaginary world of hippie dreams of the redemptive king of rock, and transplants it into a Slovenian arena, accommodating it to the rock nostalgia that was present in Slovenia at the time:

I am not a representative of the generation that worshipped Morrison. At that time this adoration was in the air. It was one of the cultic performances of the Glej Theatre as well as of the theatre scene of Ljubljana. Shepard's text provided a great inspiration for the performance which I am certain retained a part of the atmosphere and the message. It is absolutely different, though. Ours. It was a performance of that era – it was the tenth anniversary of the death of Janis Joplin. That time was very far away yet still present in this nostalgia. There existed a certain vacuum, generations relied on this nostalgia, but it was futile. Should you live with it, all you could do was hang yourself. This is how our ending was directed and this is how the audiences experienced it. (Möderndorfer 7)¹

In the stage directions of *Cowboy Mouth* Shepard places "a funky set of drums. An electric guitar and amplifier on the other side" on stage (Shepard 1988: 147). Möderndorfer leaves out the songs, there is no live music, instead Cavale and Slim play records of the Rolling Stones, the Doors and Janis Joplin (*Summertime*, video recording). They play the records of the groups and rock stars that were popular at the time in Slovenia, in hope of recreating and capturing the mood that belonged to the past (Möderndorfer 9). Shepard wanted to combine music and acting, the style of music-making in the manner of acting. Möderndorfer in *Summertime* was not interested in that (Möderndorfer 9):

I focused on Hendrix, Morrison, those who were tragic. Who were mad. Those who the audiences knew. Knew their songs. Just like in the opera. When the listeners know certain arias by heart. This is good, because it appeals to them and captivates them. (Möderndorfer 9)

The assumption of the role of rock star and attempt at acquiring the messiah-like persona of Jim Morrison is highlighted in the Slovenian production. In Möderndorfer's adaptation this attempt is the prevailing and the principal image of the play. It offers the answer to the question that is left open in *Cowboy Mouth*. Who is the rock Jesus

¹ Numbers which appear in connection with the recorded interviews refer to the pages in my MA thesis.

with a cowboy mouth whose status was nearly achieved by Bob Dylan and so desired by Mick Jagger?

Jim Morrison was the pop icon that was closest to Jesus. As well as being a poet he possessed that power. He was not a typical rocker. He was a poet. His lyrics, his performance was very different. So messiah-like. In comparison to other rockers he was very intellectual. His texts and his self-destructive energy. (Möderndorfer 2)

The Slovenian Cavale persistently and adamantly instructs her enslaved protégé, who carries the key to his own chain in his pocket, about the performance and the attitude of the divine Morrison who sings about escape.

Cavale: You have to sing as if you are running for your life. This run – is a call to escape from it all, you understand. /.../ Rock permeates the body and soul, ecstasy squared! All your blood and all the juices in you draw breath from rock. Sing as if you are standing on a street corner. The attitude towards the audience is “fuck you”. Therefore they have to fear you. Then you detach yourself from the corner and go to the centre of the world. You sing ever more passionately. More! It’s poetry, Slim! You mustn’t sing, you have to spit like him. Not outwards, inwards you spit, you bleed inside. He is a priest, a consecrated poet of rock. He speaks from the depths of God! (*Summertime*, the text is not available, the quotation is from the video recording).

Slim cannot be taught to be what he is not, what he does not understand. Möderndorfer’s Slim does not feel that because he is from another generation. This presents the basic conflict of the play: can somebody be taught something that he does not feel. Shepard describes a generation that was devoted to the same idea.

Since Cavale considered these singers her gods, she felt their energy which was overflowing and pouring. When she realises that it cannot be adopted, she hangs herself. This is my message. I wanted to tell the old rockers that time cannot be brought back. (Möderndorfer 8)

Cavale’s story is determined by her name that means escape. From the world where one can only exist in an imaginary story the only escape is to death. This is how Möderndorfer’s performance ends: there is no redemptive vision for Cavale, there is no poetical enigmatic dénouement.

Besides I find the ending a sort of squaring of accounts with the nostalgia of rock and roll. Janis Joplin, Jim Morrison, Hendrix who all met with a tragic death. This sort of rock and roll was self-destructive, a form of annihilation of oneself through art. I tried to express what I thought of rock and roll. Of this way of life, of the rock and roll fans and groupies who considered rockers Christs, saviours and when they were gone, they remained alone. Remained alone, with no vision of the future. (Möderndorfer 6)

Shepard deals with escape from reality into the world of hallucination. With Möderndorfer even dreams do not suffice. Yet precisely in the act of suicide he comes closest to the greatness of stars, to the stage feel of saviour's function, blending in with the divinity of rock. The difference between Möderndorfer and Shepard is that Shepard believes in the invented identity of a rock star and retains the hope in the reality of his myth, just as he believes in cowboys. If one believes strongly enough, as believes his Cavale, he becomes real. Slim escapes his demonic teacher and returns to normal life, while Möderndorfer's Slim remains trapped in the relationship, ensnared in dreams, and his Cavale realises there is no saviour and that one cannot be artificially created. Thus disillusioned she takes her own life.

2. SLG CELJE: THE UNSEEN HAND

With its unstable narrative line *The Unseen Hand* (1969) (*Nevidna roka*) offers a rich world of pop sensibility. Shepard interweaves the elements of mass culture, film, rock music, science fiction, comic books, etc. and shapes a unique world at the intersection of the mythology of the American West, contemporary American stereotypes and science fiction. *The Unseen Hand*, under the direction of Primož Bebler was staged on Oderpododrom of the Slovensko ljudsko gledališče (Slovenian People's Theatre Celje) on 7 January 1996. The members of the cast were Jure Ivanušič, Vesna Jevnikar, Davor Herga, Bojan Umek and Igor Sancin. The director decided on the staging as follows:

I found the play very topical after the war in the former Yugoslavia². This is how it must have seemed to the Americans coming here. As if they were dragged here, putting on an act of cowboys to save somebody with guns and kill all "the bad guys". Some poor creature from another planet comes to seek help. They have to perform their part, they are the heroes here to resolve matters. I did not want to convey a political message, I saw the play more like a series of images. (Bebler 1)

The production in Celje faithfully follows Shepard's text. *The Unseen Hand* begins and ends with a long soliloquy, a sort of a hitch-hiker's guide babble of an old cowboy. Suddenly Willie appears, a creature from Nogo, having travelled two galaxies to find Blue. Willie brings back to life the other two Morgan brothers to help him set his people free. Primož Bebler finds inspiration for the Morgan brothers in different westerns. He classifies them according to the types of film icons and clichés. In bringing his characters Kid and Willie to life, he borrows from the mass culture of comic books, science fiction novels and films.

Cowboys observe special laws. They maintain their image. This image is filmic, not quite real life. Like Gary Cooper. Sycamore is the boss, an authority. He has an austere expression. He upholds a prescribed way of

² The reference is to the war that followed the break of the former Yugoslavia (1991-1998).

walking, movement of legs. The second one, who is best at handling guns, is more Mexican and he also moves that way. This is the middle brother Cisco. He is a bit wild, very energetic and always accompanies someone. He is prepared to stab to death. They are classified into three groups also according to their movement: cowboy, realistic and futuristic. (Bebler 2)

Jesse James' opposite is the antagonist, the villain who is prone to violence. He travels alone or in gangs, is stoic, suppressed and cruel. In American mythology it is often hard to distinguish between the heroes and the villains due to the assimilation of the violence, stoicism and suppressed energy. The violent hero of the West is the American prototype. This is what Primož Bebler was looking for in the revived brothers.

The cowboys who come from the previous century are from the "dirty, mean, ugly" genre. I saw some films of Jesse James, films with some very "mean guys". There was a series of these hyper-realistic westerns. There's a lot of Hollywood artificiality, but we wanted the characters to be the way they really looked like. One was completely without teeth. And a bit "far out". Worse than Clint Eastwood. (Bebler 6)

Primož Bebler guided the actors in between the realistical, probable characters and allegoric figures, in accordance with their basic role of mythical, stereotypical or symbolic figure. The director provided Shepard's collage of genres and quotations with a realistic basis of Blue and Kid from our time and complemented it with the past and the future. He wanted to capture real life and prevent the performance from resembling a film stylisation. Willie and the cowboys from the previous century constitute merely a film genre. They possess something that is already artistic. They are not quite realistic but film clichés. (Bebler 2). The story line is provided with a framework of drunken delirium, enclosed by monologues as a prologue and epilogue. Shepard's characters express their author's belief in performance – the spontaneous creation of second scripts within the main story line – as a technique of facing up to the reality of a moment (Marranca 24). Joyce Aaron, a Shepardian actress, in the article "Clues in a Memory", published in the collection of papers *American Dreams: The Imagination of Sam Shepard*, emphasized the danger of a realistic acting approach to Shepard's characters since he does not adhere to its psychological rules or patterns:

You can't approach Sam's plays according to the usual acting terms and conditions – there are no rules, because he has broken them. You might find yourself opening one of his plays as a character who has to deliver a twenty-minute monologue. The character may be in a kind of "tripping-out" state, veering from paranoia to explosion, and the momentum and intensity of the vocal rhythm never lets up, it hounds you. What you have to do is let that rhythm take you instead of you taking it – you have to surrender to the dynamics of that rhythm, let it possess you (Aaron 171–72)

Kid delivers a long, excited and short-winded speech almost without punctuation. Recurring sounds and phrases generate the impression of a hard rock rhythm. The solo brings a projected verse into the play: one sensation immediately follows another. The character's emotions are the projections of his private imagery that usually begins with one sensation and accumulates in a long series of imagery (verbal, visual, aural) that guide the initial sensation into the domain of the character's imagination. This language describes the actor's dilemma that one trained in the Stanislavsky method might have experienced when it became a symptom of a general self-alienation – subjective idealism. Shepard's filmic approach is also evident in his plays, Shepard writes as an actor. Vesna Jevnikar in the role of Willie acknowledges this difference between European and American theatre acting.

European theatre has always had a story line that carried a certain problem in the background. The acting school in Slovenia teaches future actors that words should convey a certain meaning. The American plays are fashioned in such a way that texts speak for themselves, the actor is merely a tool of expression. Already when auditioning for the cast, the Americans base their selection on the acting from oneself. Even the great ones the likes of Nicholson and Pacino seldom create a different character. They build up on their own image – this is how I am; they carry a certain type of role and act from themselves. A Slovenian actor always tries to identify with his role, embrace his character. One changes identities. (Jevnikar 4)

This is why Slovenian actors have to adopt another approach to contemporary American playwrights like Shepard and employ American acting technique:

With an American text such style of acting would prove unproductive. This is why in Slovenia there are so few well performed American plays. This contemporary drama, street drama, Shepard and Mamet, is very demanding for actors, since it is written in such a manner that one should simply carry the text. You are not saying anything with the text. God forbid one wanted to imply a situation, as in European style of acting. The Americans, this type of drama, Shepard, etc., are direct. European acting presupposes another type of communication, conveyance of information. The American dramas are hard to produce. One deals with a neutral gear. One has to discipline oneself greatly not to accentuate. (Jevnikar 4)

Shepard's early plays contain a lot of descriptions of obsession and trances. In a trance Willie pronounces certain magic words that resemble incantation. Shepard emphasizes the electrical charge of these words that influence the spectator and compares them to Indian poetry. The words function with their resonance and the images they conjure up. Each time he has uncensored thoughts Willie gets a spasm. Blood rushes over his eyes and smoke fills up his brain. His whole body shakes. He goes into convulsions and yells out phrases and illogical words as if chasing away unperceivable dread. A realistic approach was not an option. Vesna Jevnikar therefore applied the Japanese technique of internalised movement Butoh:

She was extraordinary. Superb. The spasms are essential. Propelling blood, revitalisation. Here the rhythmical movement is of prime significance. We drew inspiration from trance. The power of poetry that is atavistic. A sort of hypnosis. (Bebler 3)

In agreement with the actress, Tanja Zgonc designed the choreography, creating a special type of movement in order to highlight Willie's extraordinariness. The choreographer defines the Butoh technique as a return of oneself to the interior as well as the exterior. She sees it as an exploration of subjectivity, history and experience that constitute the body and soul. It is derived from Zen Buddhism and is based on the fact that everybody functions through comprehension. Tanja Zgonc developed her original approach through the spinal column. The back is a nerve centre, to Zgonc it represents the centre and the base for the dancer's movements. It is a complete and utter state of consciousness, a conscious stream of energy that one directs from the spinal column. One makes each and every particle of one's body conscious and controls it through breathing in and breathing out (Zgonc 1).

We used the principles of Butoh in my movements, interior spasms. My whole body was distorted. It was very strenuous for me. Butoh is a thing of the interior, the centre of your body. This centre is constantly pulled down. The centre needs to stand and movements originate from it. A typical Butoh movement is when you lie motionlessly on the floor and then leap from the centre as a cat. Quite explosive movements. We also had to find a certain solution for my speech. My speech was not supposed to be human. We had to find a bizarre, torn manner of speech as if plucked from the character. The words jerked out from the spasms ... half robot-like. At times a whole sentence would be discernible from these spasms, at times only a word, half a word. And the voice altered. (Jevnikar 2)

Since a rational approach was not possible they applied a different method of leaps into subconsciousness.

I was not looking for meanings. I saw the illogical speech as thoughts, words, flashes that leave a residue. All this is ejected. A sort of record that one carries in his brains. Completely inarticulate. Subconscious. (Jevnikar 1)

Vesna Jevnikar was aware of the fact that she could easily cross the line when her character would not be credible any more, that there existed a thin line between the credibility and the grotesqueness of her character.

I found the text typically American, hard to adapt. It is a text of Primož Bebler's generation. How he experiences things. As I see the play today, it represents the self-censorship present in Slovenians. The problem of democracy where everything and nothing is allowed at the same time. Everybody has a hand in his head and in 1995 this democracy was very remote in Slovenia, too remote for me to experience it. (Jevnikar 1)

3. CITY THEATRE LJUBLJANA: *TRUE WEST*

True West (1980) (*Pravi Zahod*), the third in the trilogy of Shepard's domestic dramas, retains a firm realistic framework. The play focuses on the relationship between two completely different brothers, Austin and Lee. The main structural principle that Shepard utilises is the exchange of roles – in which brothers reveal their true self, Lee enters the world of business and tries to become a professional scriptwriter and Austin exceeds the limits of orderly bourgeois life and ventures into the realm of pristine human liberty. The play was first staged in Slovenia on 11 December 1986 in the City Theatre Ljubljana under the direction of Boris Kobal and translation of Lado Kralj. The role of Lee was performed by Srečo Špik, and Austin by Ivan Jezernik. Shepard gave very precise stage directions and the ensemble in Ljubljana followed his instructions more or less faithfully. The director Boris Kobal found the text to possess a filmic quality, one imbued with film cuts and written for film actors.

Regardless of the play he directs, the director does not follow the author's instructions laid down in the stage directions, because when writing the author knowingly or not becomes his own director and visualises the play. You visualise it differently from your perspective. The play is meticulously written. Quite filmic to an extent. Because Shepard is more a film than a theatre artist. This is evident in his style of writing, he uses certain segments and the dialogue is such as he uses, when we see him acting in a film. As a director you form your own picture. (Kobal 2)

Shepard's style of writing is filmic, he uses cuts and film dialogue. In the theatre one is faced with the dilemma of the close up of the actor's face, making sure the internal tension shows on his face. Boris Kobal resolved this with a lot of pauses, silences which were to create psychical and physical tension:

Our performance was intended to present a segment of the American style of life, a writer at work. With the coyotes, the desert, resembling *Paris, Texas*. We tried to capture and apply a style of acting that is very colloquial and informal. Perchance a bit filmic. (Kobal 3)

Despite its realistic shell *True West* retains a bizarre, obsessive, dream-like atmosphere. With the conflict between the brothers culminating, the surrealistic touches become more evident and completely take over the stage in the chaotic last scene. The reality in *True West* blends in with the subjective expressionism by means of a special application of sound and light. The howling of the coyotes rises to a crescendo when the conflict between the brothers comes to a climax. In the Slovenian production the director further emphasized the howling of the coyotes – using it to a dramatic effect in all fade-ins thus highlighting the emotional tension between the brothers:

As a sort of inherent threat in the background. As in Strindberg, when a raging storm is brewing and everyone is trapped inside. Here the brothers are trapped in the kitchen. The coyotes are the killers and the tension of entrapment emerges. (Kobal 3)

Srečo Špik and Ivan Jezernik were entrusted with significant acting tasks. In selecting the actors for the principal roles of brothers Boris Kobal was looking for dramatic artists who from the very start would resemble Lee and Austin.

Srečo Špik's very appearance is one of a strange wild animal. He was the axis, the leading man. Among the then ensemble of the City Theatre it was only Špik who had it in him. He possessed a very unique style of acting. He was a bit obnoxious, a bit irritating, a bit warm, all that and mostly very unpredictable. /.../

The transformation between the brothers is very demanding and challenging for an actor. I led Austin as a time bomb. The question is which of the brothers is more dangerous. The one who is wild, has fits of rage or the one whose blood is boiling, simmering and then bursts out. (Kobal 1-3)

Slovenian critics pointed out that *True West* as produced by the City Theatre Ljubljana got entangled in the snare of the concept of acting which counts on the "well-chosen cast" and less on the new, specific moulding of the acting expressions (Inkret 1986: 3). Owing to its metaphoric, symbolic structure, the play demands a special approach to acting, taking into consideration also the internal monologue of the protagonists, their shady, never elucidated, secret self. This was the precise reason why Shepard's dangerous, physical play presented a special challenge for the actors. The director and the actors prepared for the production by watching a few films and reading contemporary American drama. They took film acting for their model of internal monologue. They studied the expressions of American actors, mostly film actors in westerns, where the actor's countenance displays internal suffering:

Shepard diverges significantly from the classical American drama. Because he does not deal with a story following an analytical dramaturgic method, like Miller, he thus opens a psychological horizon. This is not an entirely typical psychological play. It is a psychological war. Which is precisely what poses a problem. We studied certain American actors who say certain lines, it is true, but in the dark recesses there exists an internal monologue that is never revealed, only hinted at. One of the prototypes of such acting is the western. The American western. I am talking about the good ones. For example *High Noon*. Or Ford's westerns. The famous spaghetti westerns. Sergio Leone. Clint Eastwood. These are the actors who possess a certain emotional suffering. You are not aware of their background, what they went through. At the moment when they have to solve something very important, save an entire town. The camera and the direction were phenomenal there, they elicited the tension of expectation. A film close up, a sort of tension cannot be used in a theatre. We tried to solve that with a lot of pauses. (Kobal 1)

True West is a duel where the combatants fence, occasionally violently lash each other. In the production this approach necessitates a very rough physical style of acting. The play is notorious for the strain it places on the actors, the choreography has

to be elaborate to the last detail (Bottoms 1998: 186). The concept of Kobal's direction is hard, cruel, ruthless, the production accentuates the material and physical aspects. With his presence and appearance Lee has complete control over the stage. Srečo Špik becomes imposing especially in the second part, when he takes off his shirt, demonstrating his naked hairy chest, like a Neanderthal claiming the space for himself. He is a wild, untamed, vulgar and ill-bred person, a real Shepardian hero. The director from the very start skilfully employs the golf clubs which function as a threat, not merely physical but also psychological. Golf is a neat sport, suitable for the orderly brother, here it becomes a threat. A means to destroy someone's life. (*True West*).

The review in the newspaper *Delo* denoted Boris Kobal's direction as following the steps of the former psychological-realistic convention. It claims that Kobal stakes all on dialogue and shows the non-verbal actions between the brothers only as secondary, utterly superficial. According to the review the director did not capture Shepard's hyper-realistic picture, composed of anecdotally disintegrated fragments, which Shepard had written following the European models (Inkret 1986: 3).

4. PDG NOVA GORICA: *BURIED CHILD*

Buried Child (1978) (*Pokopani otrok*) is a pronouncedly postmodernist play, characterised by inconsistency, pastiche and an air of acute insurmountable tension in the family structure and dramatic form (Bottoms 1998: 153). *Buried Child* is written in the mode of an analytical play and features Vince who is intent on re-establishing connections with his family in the fertile American Corn Belt. A mysterious event, the murder of a child, has numbed the family, subdued it into vegetative inertia, as if the curse of death had been cast upon it or perhaps a semi-curse since the family members are alive but spiritually dead.

In direction of Dušan Jovanović and translation of Alja Predan *Buried Child* was premiered on 27 February 1992 at the Primorsko dramsko gledališče (Drama Theatre Primorska) Nova Gorica. The members of the cast were Bine Matoh, Stane Leban, Alenka Vidrih, Dragica Kokot, Ivo Barišič, Radoš Bolčina and Rastko Krošl. Jovanović reinvented the drama model, presenting it as a mixture of symbolic events in naturalism and realism, blending the tragic with pathos, perversity with sentimentalism (Lovec 6).

The production in Nova Gorica was very authentic, made from the initiatives of the director, actors and other drama artists. Dušan Jovanović emphasized corn, and the design of the entire set placed a great stress on the family's fixedness in the Corn Belt. The design of the set is original; the yellow colour seemingly absorbing corn (Jovanović 2001: 1). The set designer Marjan Kravos created a wooden "country" set giving the impression that the play takes place inside a barn. The living room walls were lined with boards and on the back wall a double door and a net constructed, leading off onto the porch. In the last scene a gigantic sheaf of corncobs rises in the garden above the characters as a memento of Slavonia and corn grain elevators (Jovanović 2001: 4). Wooden stairs without a landing lead up back stage. The scenery enabled the

transparency of the set and opened various spatial planes, where Jovanović composed different layers of performance and combined them into a clear, dynamically guided story (*Buried Child*, video recording).

In the discrete shading of different time planes and in shedding light on various levels of the play the director cooperated with the composer Davor Rocca, who highlighted the emotive layer of the story. With the melody that resembled the one from the TV series *Twin Peaks*, he evoked the ambience of a horror story, the darkness of the forest that enshrouds the secret of the murder (*Buried Child*). In the set design Dušan Jovanović employed the American fine art modernism of the 1950s and 1960s, the period of colour, graphic stylisation.

The set was yellow. The yellow was dominant. American fine art, mostly graphic art, evolved into a very interesting modernism in the manner of Andy Warhol. It was a stylisation of pop art and op art. Kravos and I tried to capture that trend and chose yellow. For a long time we were searching for precisely the right shade, trying to capture the colour of corn. These silos, corn-racks are a sort of association which Kravos used. (Jovanović 2001: 4)

Shepard uses extended speeches sometimes two pages long, often narrative. With their speeches characters try to exert their will over other characters on stage and demand the attention of the audience (1987: 66). When experiencing the revelation of a man who is destined to restore the decayed estate Vince in a wonderfully designed visual metaphor drunkenly barges in through the curtain on the porch, thrusts the door off its hinges and cuts a hole with a big hunter's knife into the net through which he crawls back into the family in a symbolic rebirth. Dušan Jovanović does not retain many of Shepard's metaphors. The director abridged many monologues although being aware that they represent an idiosyncratic feature of Shepard's language.

The soliloquies seemed too long. Although Shepard wanted them, monologues as a key element of his dramaturgy, when everything that is important to the play happens in monologues. This mythology on a symbolic level does not get through to our spectators with the same force and impact as in America; because some things are conditioned by the civilisation. (Jovanović 2001: 5)

In his collection of essays *Paberki* Dušan Jovanović discusses the style of drama called "new realism" or "dirty realism" or "superrealism", which thrives on accident, dislocation and derangement. The characters are erratic, aimless, often prone to outbursts of wild, irrational violence, the events often follow each other in an illogical fallacious manner. Jovanović maintains that this movement of "new realism" has to some extent confused actors used to portraying "real people" in "real situations" mostly using the acting technique of the System (Method). How can one face up to his character if it is inconsistent, if it acts in a contradictory manner? How is an actor to understand and identify himself with the emotional life of such a personality? How is he to meet the basic requirement of Stanislavsky and find the thread of his character? (Jovanović

1996: 61). A consistent application of Stanislavsky's System in a process of rehearsals would not have been productive for such plays. In *Paberki* Jovanović claims that this rupture between the new realism and the System is not insurmountable. The Academy of Dramatic Art in Ljubljana has been improving on Stanislavsky's System and has been complementing it relevantly with modern techniques. Yet nevertheless – it still holds true that Stanislavsky in Slovenia remains a dominant ideology and the director believes there is nothing detrimental about that (Jovanović 1996: 106). Quite the contrary while involved in the study of the characters Dušan Jovanović felt the problem of their disruption, the difficulty of forming them with the employment of the method or the system of Stanislavsky necessitating the characters' actions to be motivated and psychologically uniform. Jovanović wanted to improve the system, not to renounce it. He wanted to tackle the play with a different approach which he could not apply since it would demand a longer period of study.

I wanted the play to be superrealist mostly on the level of the sensitivity of rhythm, irritability, the speech becoming torn, spasmodic, unusual in rhythm. Yet our actors are used to looking for a thread and uniformity and base their study on some idea of the character and its roundedness. The whole point of this play is in disruption, fragmentariness, accidentality of the uttered words. The characters' intelligence is impaired, one gets the feeling one is dealing with retardation, which necessitates a special manner of thinking, feeling and speech. It was not achieved the way I would have wanted it to be. I had film images in mind, characters. The speech is inarticulate, stammering, the text is written in a way that makes it evident the speech is devised as one goes along. That it is not created by the will of the author but is actually born out of the psychology of characters. Shepard's style of speech evolves from the character. (Jovanović 2001: 5–6)

Jovanović's performance is a brutal, cynical tragedy, as well as a black comedy. It tackles its characters with a distance, arousing cathartic laughter besides pity (Inkret 1992: 3). The comical is inherent in Shepard, yet the cast was such that the comical emerged spontaneously.

As a persona Stane Leban is comical. He is idiosyncratic, bizarre. He possesses physical humour, voice. I am confident the humour is inherent in Shepard. Otherwise we would not have been able to extract it, it was intrinsic in the very situation. The characters. With the humorous touch we were not intending to create comedy, the relation of the cause and consequence facilitated this perspective also, it being the consequence of the text. We did not endeavour to make it funny, it turned humorous with a little intervention of the actors. I allowed the humour to emerge, because I found it amusing. It did not harm the text. Should we have attempted to embrace a certain morbidity, sombreness, we would not have been successful. (Jovanović 2001: 6)

5. PRIMORSKO DRAMSKO GLEDALIŠČE NOVA GORICA: *A LIE OF THE MIND*

A Lie of the Mind (1985) (*Misel lažnivka*) was first produced in Slovenia on 22 February 1996 in Nova Gorica, translated by Srečko Fišer and directed by Boris Cavazza. Members of the cast were Radoš Bolčina, Barbara Babič, Boris Mihalj, Bine Matoh, Mira Lampe-Vujičić, Metka Franko, Nataša Zupančič Konc and Peter Musevski (Inkret 1996: 6).

A Lie of the Mind tragicomically addresses the issues of alienation, possessive love, wanton jealousy, alcoholism and violence. By employing abstract theatre techniques, creating a dream-like atmosphere, *A Lie of the Mind* evokes vast distances between people and places in the present-day America. The play deals with two families and the crisis that arises when violence tears a marriage to shreds. Sam Shepard presents both homes simultaneously by creating a double stage – in stage directions he literally splits the stage, a wide-open space dividing it creates an image of chasm. The front corners of the stage carry two lifted platforms functioning as venues for Montana and California. Before becoming homes, the platforms are used for almost filmic sequences of events. *A Lie of the Mind* is permeated by film references – the simultaneity of the venues, the design of the scenes, the actors thrust into the play *in medias res*, the slang English. The director Boris Cavazza acknowledges that such texts require a somewhat different approach. He ends the scenes in *A Lie of the Mind* with film-like cuts, also curtailing the mode of acting and speech, tending towards realism, to the film genre (Rogelj 15). With the very first scene *A Lie of the Mind* reveals its film structure. Cavazza accentuates the problem of film simultaneity of scenes in a theatre, since on a darkened stage the actors can never be hidden enough from view.

Before starting with the study I was somewhat concerned with the simultaneity of the set. The scenes follow each other in turn between the left and right hand side of the stage. When one side is lit, the other one is in the dark. In the performance we solved this problem by considerably limiting the alternation of set elements, and adapted the third act in such a way that both platforms can be lit. (Rogelj: 15)

Boris Cavazza limited the set elements in *A Lie of the Mind* to place a special stress on the acting. The attention of the audience should from the very start be drawn by the actors. Set and costume design should not interfere (15). Cavazza ends the scenes with filmic cuts, freeze-frames. Such is especially the scene when Beth, whose fragile appearance, bandaged head and child-like inarticulate voice are distressing, is introduced. The scene ends abruptly, as a freeze-frame, thus making the final image resonate and become more intensive (*A Lie of the Mind*, video recording).

I wanted almost all the scenes to end in a freeze-frame. Film cut is a way to achieve film dramaturgy. The scene reverberates. It's a cut. In some artistic films the image freezes. And speaks. This is one of those methods. I directed with the notion that Shepard was a person who wrote a lot for the film that he was a film actor. His works possess film dramaturgy. (Cavazza 3)

As part of the research for her role of Beth the actress Barbara Babič was sent to the rehabilitation centre Soča, to listen and study tapes of people with brain damage.

It was a sort of a method. The type of the method of the American Actors' Studio. In Soča there are mostly young people who have been involved in car accidents. Suffering from brain damage. I studied their tapes. From the first stage after the accident when they cannot even articulate a sentence or a single word, to the whole process of learning to speak from scratch. I also studied their physical posture in a wheelchair. (Babič 3)

The scripts that Shepard wrote for film were the extensions of the issues that he tackled on stage, yet the fact that film and theatre are two quite different media influenced his approach to writing. The stage works were successful also owing to their theatrical nature, the employment of the physical immediacy of the stage, the rhythmical self-demonstrative speech patterns and fragmented flow of events. What belongs to the theatre seems too dramatic on film. Shepard defines this problem: "a play takes place in the flesh and blood and cinema take place in the mind" (Bottoms 1998: 215). A play owes its existence to the physical confrontation of actors within a limited space. Boris Cavazza provided very filmic guidance to his actors, he guided them mentor-like, since the cast was a predominantly young one.

Cavazza has a special approach to film acting. Film acting is less exalted, more natural. Our approach was not exactly realistic. He guided us almost like students, his vision was very elaborately conceived. Being an actor himself, Cavazza helped us considerably. In theatre jargon one would call that a "*Vorspieler*". He is known for his filmic approach. (Babič 1)

In agreement with Shepard's accent on the musical immediacy of the stage presence a pulsating, throbbing physical style of acting is conceived. Cavazza's direction temperamentally captures Shepard's play. He masterly adopts Shepard's physical style of acting. From the very beginning the performance is tense, elated and aggressive, on the razor's edge throughout, yet in the process some implicit, soundless things, though not less significant than the rhetorical brutality and physical violence, saturating Shepard's characters, were lost (Inkret 1996: 6).

Although the texts of his longer plays less obviously necessitate physical confrontations, Shepard encouraged his actors to concentrate less on the psychological motivation by following the Strasberg method but more on the basic, physical issues of the characters' expression (Bottoms 1998: 219). Running parallel to dramatic and mostly Hollywood film production Lee Strasberg stands out as an important phenomenon with his Method, derived from the naturalistic tradition of Stanislavsky and practices in his Actors' Studio a technique of acting which directs the actor to find the truth within himself about the role he is playing with the emphasis on the affective memory (Jovanović 1996: 61). Strasberg focused on the exercises in affective memory and encouraged obsessed introversion in his students. Strasberg's method influenced all levels of American theatre. American actors want to find a true motive for the behaviour of their character. This is perhaps inappropriate with plays which demand demonstrative, unnaturalistic acting. The approach to a role that thoroughly examines

the motives and impetuses of a character helps the director, using the psychological approach understand better the general dynamics of the play (Jovanović 1994: 4). American Method actors rely on private moments and self-exploration for their technique of acting (Cohen 180). One of the greatest controversies of Method is the application of the affective memory. Towards the end of his career Stanislavsky ceased to employ it, since it could produce an effect opposite to the intended one. Instead of creating an illusion of spontaneity, it could seem that an actor is struggling to evoke an emotion that does not emerge naturally from the situation. The problem starts with acting *din ama* (Cohen 181).

Boris Cavazza tried to have a short methodological course of Lee Strasberg's Method to help the actors express the right emotions. Affective memory is a reliving of past experiences - likes and dislikes - when an analogous situation recurs. Something that has brought pain is anticipated with dislike the second time. The dislike, which is felt immediately, rather than remembered, is like a residue of previous appraisals. Affective memory may be linked directly to the memory of a traumatic experience, as the same situation or a similar one recurs, or to an experience that bears little apparent relation to the original, if the memory has been repressed. Of course, an experience need not necessarily be traumatic to leave an affective memory. The concept embraces both sense memory and emotional memory. The concept of affective memory is essential to an understanding of how the actor functions and the faculties that have to be trained to develop his talent. It is unusually sensitive affective memory that enables the actor to respond to events that must be imagined on the stage and to repeat performances.

The actors know they do not have enough time to develop their emotions. Especially the affective memory, which one merely evokes. What happened to you in your childhood and in puberty is most valuable. Regardless of whether you were experiencing tragedies or not. Small things carry just as much weight, for example whether you were wrongfully punished and that hurt your feeling considerably. It is a very simple painless technique but helps you feel. If one needs to express a certain emotional scene, emotion is aroused organically. One does not act it. Then you evoke memories of the event with your affective memory, with the smell, the hearing, etc. The emotions come to you by themselves. Even when they are not real. Merely apparent. (Cavazza 3)

Stanislavski's System presupposes that an actor invests his understanding and imagination into every moment of the play. He should discover within himself what the role demands from him. The director purifies, filters and shapes the results of the actor's exploration without influencing them or suppressing their spontaneity (Cohen 175).

It was a strange mixture, on one hand it was the Method and on the other it wasn't. The Method was the field research of aphasia. According to the Method I was then supposed to start the process of identification, do exercises everyday. Then your affective memory is shaped in such a way that any emotion can be evoked within a matter of seconds. (Babič 1)

The actors tried to adopt the Method although there was some difficulty. They experienced a lot of problems since it cannot be embraced in such a short period of time.

You have to be a complete master of your instrument. This is Stanislavsky's system that was not adopted in Europe. It is called the Method, the only methodological thing being that you have to make your psyche open for emotions. Here you re-create memories and feelings. Summon them up. Shepard is a product of this school. Film acting is actually the same as drama acting, one expects the same results from actors. (Cavazza 4)

In the third act Boris Cavazza lit up both platforms and blended the scenes. The scenes Montana – California do not alternate any more, several scenes take place simultaneously.

In the end I did not employ realism. I joined two scenes; when they are discussing the wedding and when mother and daughter are watching photographs, the light was uniform and black and white. Graphical light. The colours dissolved, only black and white image remained, the lines were uttered alternatively, the dialogue blended. (Cavazza 1)

When Mike and Jake's dialogue ends they do not exit the stage but turn their backs to the audience and wait with their arms folded for the scene to finish.

I found it interesting that they all remain trapped in this space and that the space is relativized, that it merges even though we are dealing with Montana and California. Here the play repositions into another symbolic level. Especially the light was very prominent, besides being black and white, it was the counterlight, "*Gegenlicht*". They remained frozen in silhouettes. As if cut out of paper. (Cavazza 6)

In the centre of the stage Boris Cavazza placed the front of a big lorry whose blinding lights are lit at the end. A piercing siren is heard, not a real honking but a musical one, saxophones, shattering the lyrical atmosphere of reconciliation (Cavazza 6). The director placed his attention and built his play mostly on the roles; employing only the basic set design he completely exposed and laid bare the actors. The direction in the Slovenian production mostly accentuates the actors and employs a filmic approach, especially in the alternation of the scenes, simultaneity of events, music and acting technique. The Slovenian production emphasizes the entrapment of the characters in their own world, while the American, hinting at the possibility of a happy ending, is ambiguous.

The analysis has shown that Slovenian directors have introduced new elements into the staging of Sam Shepard's plays. Vinko Möderndorfer adapts Shepard's *Cowboy Mouth* and stages it as a happening, yet contrary to Shepard's vision, accentuating the hallucinations of pop stars, he ends the play quite abruptly, plunging the main characters into an abyss of despair, by making them realise there is no such thing as a rock saviour. Quite original in portraying the character of Willie are Primož Bebler and his actress Vesna Jevnikar by employing the Japanese technique Butoh for the purposes

of choreography. In staging *True West*, the Slovenian director Boris Kobal employs the film acting technique prominent in westerns and concentrates on the interior monologue of the two main actors as if they were presented in close up on stage. Dušan Jovanović's stage design of *Buried Child* is quite original, borrowing from the art of the 1950s and 1960s, whereas he has found that Shepard's realism demands a different type of acting, that it enters a sort of magical dimension. To achieve this, he focused on the idiosyncratic speech of characters, making it torn, spasmodic, unusual in rhythm to thus emphasize the surrealistic quality of the play. Boris Cavazza is quite innovative in his stage design, especially in the last scene, by breaking the realism and creating a symbolic dimension. He, too, focuses on the filmic approach to acting and attempts to employ the Strasberg's Method in the study and building of characters.

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FRANK CLARES ROMAN *THE CLOVEN PINE* (1942): ZEITDOKUMENT UND FIKTIONALISIERTE AUTOBIOGRAPHIE

Thorsten Fögen

„For a foreigner,' he politely conceded, 'German politics are very complicated.' – 'Very,' I agreed.“

(Christopher Isherwood, *Mr Norris Changes Trains*, 1935)¹

Abstract

Bei dem Roman *The Cloven Pine*, der 1942 veröffentlicht wurde, handelt es sich nicht nur um ein beachtliches literarisches Werk, sondern zugleich um ein wichtiges historisch-politisches Dokument zu Deutschland während des Nationalsozialismus. Im Zentrum der Handlung stehen ein junger britischer Lehrer und ein deutscher Junge, zwischen denen sich allmählich eine komplexe Freundschaft entwickelt. Thematisch-motivische Parallelen zu anderen britischen Schriftstellern wie z.B. Christopher Isherwood, aber auch zu deutschen Autoren sind auffällig. Jedoch nimmt der hier diskutierte Roman in verschiedener Hinsicht eine Sonderstellung ein. – Dieser Aufsatz entstand im Zusammenhang mit einer deutschen Übersetzung des Romans, die im Herbst 2003 erschien wird und eine Wiederentdeckung in Fachkreisen wie auch bei sonstigen interessierten Lesern anregen soll.

1. VORBEMERKUNGEN ZUM VERFASSER

Der Roman *The Cloven Pine* erschien im Jahre 1942 bei dem renommierten Londoner Verlag Secker & Warburg unter dem Pseudonym „Frank Clare“, hinter dem sich Frederick W. Clayton (1913-1999) verbirgt², Lehrstuhlinhaber für Klassische Philologie an der südwestenglischen Universität Exeter von 1948 bis 1973. Sein Studium am King's College der Universität Cambridge schloß er 1937 mit einer Arbeit über Aspekte der Dekadenz primär in der römischen Antike ab³. Das Umfeld am King's College war für Clayton prägend: Eigenen Aufzeichnungen zufolge machte er hier

¹ Zitiert nach folgender Ausgabe: Christopher Isherwood, *Mr Norris Changes Trains*, Harmondsworth 1969, 184.

² Einzelheiten zur Vita Claytons, auf die hier nicht weiter eingegangen werden kann, finden sich im *Annual Report of King's College Cambridge* (October 2000), 32-36.

³ Diese Arbeit wurde nie gedruckt; das Typoskript von 204 A4-Seiten ist jedoch – zusammen mit einigen persönlichen Dokumenten wie Briefen, Notizen und Photographien – im Archiv des King's College Cambridge zugänglich.

erste eindringlichere Begegnungen mit der Welt der Kunst, Literatur und Politik⁴. Seine Kompetenz im Umgang mit den alten Sprachen belegen einige akademische Preise. Sein Interesse an Deutschland und der deutschen Sprache bringt ihn zunächst 1935 nach Wien, wo er sich mit den beiden Söhnen einer jüdischen Witwe anfreundet⁵. 1936 geht er nach Dresden, um an der Kreuzschule für ungefähr ein Jahr als Englischlehrer zu arbeiten. Zu der Familie eines seiner Schüler – Götz Büttner-Wobst, Sohn eines Dresdner Lungenfacharztes – kommt er in näheren Kontakt. Es war dieses Deutschland-Erlebnis und insbesondere die Begegnung mit dem Jungen Götz und seinem um ein Jahr älteren Bruder Wolf, die ihm das gesamte Material für seinen Roman lieferten. Von 1940 bis 1946 diente Clayton in der britischen Armee und war ab 1942 in Indien und Burma stationiert. Bei Kriegsende nimmt er die Korrespondenz zu der Dresdner Arztfamilie auf und heiratet schließlich 1948 Friederike Büttner-Wobst, die Schwester des im Krieg gefallenen Götz. In demselben Jahr tritt er im Anschluß an einen zweijährigen Aufenthalt im schottischen Edinburgh seine Professur in Exeter an, publiziert jedoch abgesehen von sehr kurzen Artikeln und zwei als Sonderbände gedruckten Festvorlesungen zur Philosophie der Stoa bzw. zu Shakespeare während seines ganzen Lebens keine einzige umfangreichere wissenschaftliche Arbeit. Dieser Umstand läßt sich nicht allein daraus erklären, daß die zeitlichen Umstände in der universitären Welt Großbritanniens andere waren als heute und Produktivität in Form von Monographien und gelehrten Aufsätzen weniger Gewicht beigemessen wurde. Wie sich dem aus unzähligen Akten bestehenden Nachlaß entnehmen läßt, brachte Clayton seine Gedanken durchaus zu Papier – allerdings ohne die Einbindung von Forschungsliteratur und in zumeist wenig systematischer oder gar leserfreundlicher Form. Daß sich unter diesen Umständen schwer am herkömmlichen Wissenschaftsbetrieb partizipieren ließ, liegt auf der Hand. Mit seiner Herangehensweise an klassische Autoren blieb Clayton jedenfalls ein Außenseiter.

2. DER ROMAN *THE CLOVEN PINE*

So wenig Clayton auch durch akademische Veröffentlichungen hervorgetreten ist, so muß man es als durchaus bemerkenswert ansehen, daß er noch vor seinem dreißigsten Lebensjahr einen Roman publizierte. Mindestens ebenso bemerkenswert ist die Thematik dieses Werkes: Ein Engländer – Clayton nennt sein *alter ego* David Beaton – geht nach seinem Studium in Cambridge in den späten Dreißiger Jahren nach Deutschland, um seine Kompetenz in der Sprache der Dichter dieses Landes zu

⁴ In einem Typoskript, in dem Clayton über seine Begegnungen mit Edward Morgan Forster in Cambridge reflektiert, bezeichnet er sich selbst als „cultural climbing plant (...), neither genuine working-class (...), nor born in King's aesthetic purple. My tastes, particularly in art and music, were hesitant, half-developed – still are. (...) Of course, I'm not a genuine son of the soil, but I played with the village-boys, and the small public library was a mile away, and I never went to a proper concert or opera or art-exhibition till I came to Cambridge (...)“

⁵ In einem handschriftlichen Entwurf eines nie abgeschickten Schreibens an Christopher Isherwood, dem er am King's College in Cambridge durch Edward Morgan Forster vorgestellt wurde, spricht Clayton von „two very attractive sons“. Im übrigen datiert Clayton in diesem Brief seine Auslandsaufenthalte in Wien und Dresden selbst auf 1935/36 beziehungsweise 1936/37.

vervollkommen und dabei in gleichsam journalistischer Manier die politische Situation dieser Zeit zu erfassen – nicht ohne missionarischen Eifer, die Deutschen vom Widersinn der nationalsozialistischen Ideologie zu überzeugen⁶. Wie Clayton selbst war auch der Protagonist seines Romans zuvor bereits in Wien, um das Deutsche zu lernen⁷. Der Ort der Handlung wird mit keinem Wort genannt⁸, ebensowenig der Name der Schule, an der Beaton eine Stelle als Hilfslehrer antritt. Seine Tätigkeit ermöglicht ihm einen umfassenden Einblick in die politischen Standpunkte seiner Kollegen, die in der Mehrzahl überzeugte Nationalsozialisten sind und ihr persönliches Credo entsprechend an ihre Schüler weiterzuvermitteln bestrebt sind.

Das eigentlich Erstaunliche an diesem Werk ist jedoch nicht so sehr die politische Komponente, sondern vielmehr der stark homoerotische Zug, der den gesamten Roman durchdringt⁹. Der Protagonist Beaton entwickelt rasch eine starke Zuneigung zu dem fünfzehnjährigen Götz; das sexuelle Ausleben dieser Empfindung ist ganz ausgeklammert, auch wenn zahlreiche Momente erotischer Spannung nicht allein zwischen Beaton und Götz auszumachen sind. Beide Charaktere lernen sich außerhalb des Schulunterrichts erstmals auf einem sonntäglichen Spaziergang näher kennen, den Beaton initiiert (S. 23). Nach anfänglichen Anlaufschwierigkeiten, miteinander die Unterhaltung in Gang zu halten, kommen beide auf die politische Situation in Deutschland zu sprechen. Beaton beschreibt England und Deutschland als zwei verschiedene Welten¹⁰, sie landen aber schließlich über einige Umwege bei deutscher Dichtung. Der Spaziergang endet – in einer Art furiosen Finale – mit einer gemeinsamen Rezitation von Goethes *Erkönig* (Kap. 4, S. 28-35). Hierin ist gleich zu Beginn mit unmißverständlicher Explizitheit die Beziehung formuliert, die sich zwischen dem Engländer und Götz anbahnt: Ein Älterer – wenngleich in Beatons Fall nicht sehr viel Älterer – fühlt sich zu einem Jüngeren hingezogen, ist fasziniert durch sein Äußeres („Mich reizt deine schöne Gestalt“). Entscheidend ist aber, daß das im *Erkönig* angedeutete sexuelle Element bis zum Schluß keine Entsprechung in der Romanhandlung findet. Die Bemühtheit, die gegenseitige Faszination zu unterdrücken, tritt gleich am Tag darauf zutage, wenn es in bezug auf Götz heißt:

⁶ „When I went to Germany this time, I suppose I regarded myself as a sort of amateur journalist. I was going to find out all about the Third Reich and what people think and say and eat in it. And I was going to convert them, too. And I was going to get a lot of work done – new ideas in Classicism and Romanticism.“ (Frank Clare, *The Cloven Pine*, London 1942, 92; nachfolgend nur durch Seitenzahlen zitiert).

⁷ „It was ostensibly to learn German for purely academic reasons that he first visited Vienna; he wanted to read certain German works on Romanticism.“ (S. 27). Zu dem österreichischen Akzent Beatons cf. S. 22.

⁸ Die Gründe dafür nennt der Verfasser selbst in einer typographischen Notiz: „I was purposely vague, even though it was war-time, with frontiers closed, about the location, in case the Nazis should possibly get hold of the book and believe some characters were identifiable. I myself had no idea that its being Dresden had added significance.“ Zu Dresden vor und nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg insbesondere Clayton & Russell (1999).

⁹ Dazu bemerkte Elizabeth Bowen in ihrer Besprechung des Romans im *Tatler and Bystander* von 1943: „This is a theme of which English fiction has, on the whole, fought shy. But it is a theme essential to the development of Mr. Clare's story (...)“ (Bowen 1943: 182).

¹⁰ „I mean, certain things must strike you.“ – „Yes. ... In fact, it's so different that one doesn't know where to begin. It's much harder than I had imagined possible. It's like two worlds. Words don't mean the same thing in them.“ (S. 32).

„After Sunday, ‚Blue‘ Monday – and never had Götz so well appreciated the description. (...) In the grey morning light he began to experience a violent revulsion of feeling, an almost physical sickness, and an intense, if obscure, shame for the day before. This shame was compounded of various elements in himself, and others out of his everyday world were soon to be added. (...) It was not what was said that caused the deepest shame. It was the sense that he had talked too much and enjoyed it too feverishly. He had given himself away with both hands. It had been an orgy, a prostitution, a violation of masculine reserve. (...) It was the Englishman – this Beaton, or whatever he was called – who had made him behave like this, who had made him unclean.“ (S. 43)

Die Verantwortung für sein Empfinden schiebt Götz dem Hilfslehrer zu: Es sei dessen Schuld, daß er im Grunde ganz gegen seinen Willen derart viel über sein Umfeld preisgegeben habe. Doch die Wortwahl verrät, daß mehr dahinter steckt als unangemessene Vertraulichkeit gegenüber einem Fremden. Das Sonntagserlebnis wird als eine „Orgie“ und „Befleckung“ beschrieben, bei der der Engländer ihn „verführt“ und gewissermaßen „Besitz von seiner Seele“ ergriffen habe.

An diese Beschreibung von Götz' psychischer Befindlichkeit schließt sich ein langer Passus über die Phasen seiner sexuellen Aufklärung an, insbesondere zum Aufkommen des Themas „Sexualität“ unter seinen Mitschülern. Für diese ist Götz ein kleiner Junge, der sich seine Unschuld bislang bewahrt zu haben scheint, was sie aber nicht an Anspielungen und Witzen hindert. Ein älterer Junge aus seiner Klasse, Lange, erwähnt ihm gegenüber den 1934 von Hitler fallengelassenen und ermordeten homosexuellen Nationalsozialisten Röhm, katholische Priester und die Sitten der Griechen, was ihm Götz' Haß einträgt (S. 45). Es ist just dieser Lange, der Götz am Montagmorgen auf seinem Weg zur Schule begegnet. Vor der Schule treffen beide den Engländer Beaton, den Lange gegenüber Götz als einen Hundertfünundsiebziger bezeichnet. Auch wenn Götz auf diese Bemerkung nichts erwidert, so hat er doch durchaus eine gewisse Vorstellung von deren Bedeutung und assoziiert bei sich Homosexualität mit einer anstößigen Krankheit (S. 46). Im wesentlichen fehlt dem Jungen aber eine echte Vorstellung von der physischen Seite gleichgeschlechtlicher Zuneigung, was ihn nur in um so größere Verwirrung stürzt. Nach seiner Rückkehr aus der Schule fühlt er sich krank und bleibt für kurze Zeit zuhause (S. 50).

Als er bald darauf wieder am Unterricht teilnimmt, begegnet er Beaton, mit dem er zunächst eher scherzhaft eine Diskussion über das Verhältnis zwischen Deutschland und England beginnt (S. 52). Einige Tage danach setzen beide ihre Unterhaltung fort, diesmal in Anwesenheit eines Klassenkameraden von Götz. Im November 1937, das vom Erzähler angesetzte Datum, ist dies angesichts der Appeasement-Politik Chamberlains gegenüber Hitler und der Entscheidung über Krieg oder Frieden ein Thema von brennendem Interesse. Vor allem die Expansionsbestrebungen Nazi-Deutschlands und deren Rechtfertigung durch die Raumideologie werden von Beaton und Götz als Propaganda eingestuft, mit der man den simplistischen Vorstellungen der Masse willfahren möchte. Der Engländer verweist zugleich auf die Widersprüchlichkeit, die zwischen dem angeblichen nicht ausreichend vorhandenen Raum

für die Deutschen und der von den Nazis eifrig betriebenen Ankurbelung der Geburtenraten ins Auge fallen muß (cf. S. 53f.). In derartigen Debatten fühlt Götz sich hier wie auch an anderen Stellen gehalten, die Doktrinen nationalsozialistischer Politik kritisch zu überdenken. Dabei fühlt er sich hin- und hergerissen zwischen deren ihm vor allem in der Schule vermittelten offiziellen Lesart, die ihre Gültigkeit allein schon aus der Unzahl von Anhängern Hitlers zu beziehen scheint, und echtem Zweifel an ihrem Sinn. Gleichwohl erscheint er als jemand, auf den die systematische NS-Propagandamaschine zumindest in einem gewissen Grade bereits ihre Wirkung ausgeübt hat (cf. z.B. S. 55).

Interessant ist nun, daß diese Begegnung mit Beaton von Götz als wesentlich weniger beunruhigend als die erste eingestuft wird. Er hat den Eindruck, weniger an Persönlichem gegenüber dem Fremden preisgegeben zu haben; doch ahnt er, daß die Sachlichkeit und Zurückhaltung, durch die ihre Diskussion gekennzeichnet war, nicht von Dauer sein kann (S. 55f.). Von noch größerer Wichtigkeit ist seine Erkenntnis, daß der Engländer im Gegensatz zu seinen gleichaltrigen Mitschülern mit ihm ein Gespräch über ein substantielles Thema geführt hat, das ihn zur Reflexion über seine Welt veranlaßt und ihm eine Selbstpositionierung abverlangt. Diesen forcierten Akt der Stellungnahme, zu der Götz gebracht wird, beschreibt er selbst als den Verlust von Jungfräulichkeit und Unschuld¹¹. Nicht nur an dieser Stelle erkennt er, daß er dabei ist, die Schwelle zum Erwachsensein zu überschreiten und damit in eine andere Welt hinüberzuwechseln, die der bislang genossenen Unbeschwertheit entbehrt. Der Junge geht sogar so weit, sich zur Selbstdisziplin zu zwingen (cf. S. 81f.: kalte Bäder im Winter) und seinen Reifungsprozeß durch die Lektüre von Klassikern – also durch die Besinnung auf das Alte und die Abwendung vom aktuellen Zeitgeschehen – bewußt zu unterdrücken (S. 94). In dem zuvor betrachteten Abschnitt bleibt auf Götz' Seite vorerst nichts zurück als Verwirrung und in gewissem Sinne zugleich Überforderung:

„He thought – everything and nothing. He was going to be – everything and nothing. He was tough and manly, soft and charming, a farmer, a parson, an explorer, Nazi and non-Nazi, believing in God and not believing in God.“ (S. 59)

Das mit Götz' Unsicherheit einhergehende Problem systematischer Indoktrination der Jugend während der Nazi-Zeit veranschaulicht Clayton sehr differenziert durch Charakterskizzen einzelner Vertreter des Lehrerkollegiums der Schule, an der David Beaton tätig ist. Einer derjenigen Lehrer von Götz, der am wenigsten die politische Situation in seinem Land begrüßen kann, ist Herr Oehme, zuständig für Geschichte und Geographie. Obwohl er Direktor seines Instituts ist, wird er von den meisten seiner Schüler aufgrund seiner Weichheit belächelt. Er verkörpert damit den Anti-Typus des

¹¹ „With schoolfriends, indeed, one hardly had conversations. One exchanged sentences which were themselves part of the background, like the writing on a tapestry (...) But this stranger, standing there, it appeared, without any background at all, had compelled a real conversation, a self-declaration, and had thereby committed Götz to views and a character, not only in his, the stranger's eyes, but also in Götz' own consciousness. Only with *him* could that character exist, properly, freely; and *he* forced it to exist. (...) Oh, why hadn't he left him alone, to preserve virginity, which was mystery and potentiality and unlimited, and to postpone choice a little longer?“ (S. 58).

idealen nationalsozialistischen Pädagogen, der zur Aufrechterhaltung der Disziplin hart durchzugreifen bereit ist. Andererseits ist er kein Widerständler, sondern beschränkt sich auf gelegentliche implizite Hinweise, die die Einseitigkeit der typischen NS-Sichtweise mindern (S. 56).

Überzeugte Anhänger Hitlers sind dagegen die zwei ganz unterschiedlichen Charaktere Professor Klinge und der noch recht junge Ludwig Kästner. Englischlehrer Klinge, der David Beaton als Hilfslehrer in Götz' Klasse einführt, liest mit seinen Schülern Bücher über Rassentheorie und nutzt auch sonst jede Gelegenheit, um seine Zöglinge in der aufdringlichsten Manier mit nationalsozialistischem Gedankengut zu infiltrieren. Um so unsympathischer und zugleich verabscheuungswürdiger macht ihn die Tatsache, daß er als Wendehals bekannt ist, der sich vor der Machtübernahme verächtlich über Hitler und dessen Programm geäußert hatte (S. 8f.). Der Religions- und Deutschlehrer Kästner, dessen Herkunft im achten Kapitel (S. 60-67) ausführlich geschildert wird, erscheint im Roman als eine Art Rivale Beatons im Werben um die Gunst von Götz. Der Erzähler verweist ausdrücklich auf Kästners homosexuelle Neigung, die er mit dem Engländer teilt (cf. S. 25) und ihn anfänglich beinahe zur Lebensaufgabe treibt (S. 61). Als Lehrer erfreut er sich bei seinen Schülern nicht zuletzt aufgrund seines Alters großer Beliebtheit und wird von ihnen seit einem gemeinsamen einwöchigen Sommerausflug in die Berge bei seinem Vornamen genannt. Götz selbst scheint er besonders gewogen zu sein und stößt bei diesem keineswegs auf Ablehnung (S. 11f.).

Schlüsselepisode für die direkte Gegenüberstellung der beiden Figuren Kästner und Beaton ist die von ihnen begleitete Ski-Freizeit von Götz' Schulklass. Diese Ski-Freizeit, deren Darstellung über fünfundreißig Seiten gewidmet sind (Kap. 12 bis 15), bildet die exakte Mitte des Romans und ist auch thematisch eine zentrale Schnittstelle. Die Abgeschiedenheit in den Bergen bringt die Gruppe in eine besondere Situation, die den Kontakt mit der Außenwelt unmöglich macht. Die Zugfahrt in die Berge wird als „moving into another world, an Arctic zone, neither sea nor land“ beschrieben. Der Marsch zur Berghütte und die dortige Einquartierung werden mit einem Gefängnisaufenthalt verglichen (S. 95). Ludwig Kästner stellt während der gemeinsam verbrachten Tage wiederholt fest, daß Götz und der Engländer in verschiedener Hinsicht vergleichbar sind und etwas gemeinsam haben. Götz entzieht sich den körperlichen Berührungen Ludwigs, der nicht zuletzt dadurch zu ahnen beginnt, daß er in der Sympathie des Jungen hinter dem Engländer wird zurücktreten müssen. Das Paradox besteht aus seiner Sicht darin, daß Götz und Beaton in der Jugendherberge kaum miteinander Kontakt haben, aber sich dennoch immer näher zu kommen scheinen (S. 101). Erschwerend kommt hinzu, daß Ludwig und der Engländer keine richtige gemeinsame Basis finden und wenig fruchtbare Diskussionen miteinander haben, was im wesentlichen durch ihre unterschiedlichen politischen Anschauungen bedingt ist. Der orthodoxe Nationalsozialist kritisiert den Liberalisten für den utopischen Charakter der von ihm vertretenen Ansichten, mit denen er in erster Linie eine klare Positionierung in zentralen Fragen zu vermeiden suche. Liberalismus müsse logischerweise in Bolschewismus enden, der die Menschen in fataler Weise auf dieselbe Stufe stelle und ihnen die Flucht vor unvermeidlichen Pflichten gestatte. Einem solchen Individualismus stehe die von Hitler vertretene höhere Idee der Sozietät, der völkischen Einheit

gegenüber, in der man gemeinsam einem erhabeneren Ziel entgegenstrebe, das sich nicht dumpf auf die Befriedigung materieller Bedürfnisse beschränke. Beaton dagegen unterstreicht, daß er skeptisches Nachdenken für wichtiger hält als voreiliges Handeln. Zudem entlarvt er die Widersprüchlichkeit des Begriffs „Nationalsozialismus“, wenn er betont, daß Sozialismus nur auf internationaler Ebene verwirklicht werden könne. Der Engländer spürt das Theatralische in Ludwigs grandios-auftrumpfender Verteidigung seines Credos und erkennt zugleich die Gefahr, die in seinen Parolen und Worthülsen steckt. Der nationalsozialistische Traum impliziert für Beaton den Alptraum (S. 104-116).

Götz deutet diese von ihm verfolgte erhitzte Debatte später als eine Art Kampf der beiden Lehrer um ihn, als deren Bestreben, ihn für die eigenen Überzeugungen und mehr zu gewinnen (S. 117f.). Sein Wissen darum, daß die beiden Erwachsenen ihn begehren, macht ihm schwer zu schaffen, und veranlaßt ihn, nicht nur Beaton und Kästner, sondern auch sich selbst als moralisch verkommen zu sehen, auch wenn er sich seine körperliche Unschuld bislang bewahrt hat (S. 119f.). Von Ludwigs politischen Ansichten und damit zugleich von Ludwig selbst fühlt der Junge sich abgestoßen¹². Am nächsten Morgen geht Götz, zunächst unbemerkt von der Gruppe, allein zum Skifahren, und eine für ihn etwas zu waghalsige Abfahrt endet mit einer Gehirnerschütterung (S. 122). Als sich herausstellt, daß es sich um nichts Ernstes handelt, beginnen Kästner und der Engländer sich über den Jungen zu unterhalten:

„They smiled, feeling a twofold relief. He was safe – and suddenly one could talk about him. ‘*Er ist sehr schön,*’ said Ludwig simply. – ‘*Ja. Sehr schön.*’ – ‘*Man muss ihn direkt lieben.*’ – ‘*Ja.*’“ (S. 123)

Es bleibt bei diesen Feststellungen; viel mehr haben sich beide nicht zu sagen, doch immerhin stimmen sie damit, wenn auch nicht in politischer Hinsicht, so doch wenigstens in *einem* ganz wesentlichen Punkt überein. Beaton erscheint bald darauf im Krankenzimmer des Jungen, um sich vor seiner Rückkehr nach England von ihm zu verabschieden. Wie er Götz gegenüber zum Ausdruck bringt, geht es ihm darum, die Dinge zwischen ihnen ins Reine zu bringen, erhält jedoch von diesem nur ein kühles Lebewohl¹³. Dem kann der Engländer, wenngleich ihm dies nicht leichtfällt, immerhin eine Art verschlüsselter, doch für Götz wohl unmißverständliches Geständnis seiner Gefühlslage entgegensetzen, bevor er endgültig den Raum verläßt (S. 125f.).

¹² Cf. besonders S. 120 unten: „Whoever might have won the argument, Ludwig had lost twice over – damned in his own darkness, or damned *for it*.“ Daß die Begegnung mit dem Engländer für Götz zugleich ein Lernprozeß ist, der ihm im Gegensatz zu seinen Mitschülern Einsichten in die zerstörerischen Elemente der nationalsozialistischen Ideologie vermittelt, zeigt eine Passage auf S. 147: „(...) he was alienated from Ludwig (...). For nobody except Götz seemed to have been much dismayed by the harshness of Ludwig’s view as revealed in the great discussion – if anything, they found it exhilarating, not understanding much, but feeling a vague thrill at the rout of weak, white-faced, falsely conciliatory ideas by tough, full-blooded ones.“

¹³ „(...) I wanted to say good-bye properly – to finish the thing properly, get it straight.’ – ‘What thing?’ – ‘Well, between us.’ – ‘I think it’s better to leave it.’ – ‘But I feel I’ve made such a mess of it. It would be a mess, anyway. This sort of thing in life hasn’t a proper shape, like a novel. But it get much more of a shape if one doesn’t end on a note of misunderstanding. I want some conclusion, even if it’s only good-bye.’ – ‘*Na also, leben Sie wohl.*’“ (S. 125).

Für Beaton scheint es nicht die Klasse als vielmehr Götz allein gewesen zu sein, die ihn dazu veranlassen, auf Ludwig Kästners Einladung hin als Begleiter aus dem Lehrpersonal mitzufahren. Lange vor diesem Schulausflug bemerkt er gegenüber Götz: „I go ski-ing with you – with your class, I mean.“ (S. 77). In demselben Gespräch bekennt er wenig später ganz offen, daß er für Götz Sympathie empfindet und an seinem Äußeren Gefallen findet, löst damit allerdings bei dem Jungen eine ablehnende Reaktion aus:

„(...) ‘You mean what I want with you, from you. I like you.’ It was like scalding water, numbing all sensation, so that extreme cold and heat seemed to fuse. ‘But why?’ Götz found himself saying. ‘Why me? I don’t ‘like’ kids in the Quinta.’ (...) ‘I like looking at you,’ said the other, rapidly, desperately. ‘Your face, your eyes. ... I like talking to you. ...’ – ‘No. It’s no good,’ said Götz, hardly knowing what he said. ‘*Das geht nicht. Das geht nicht.*’ And he fled.“ (S. 78f.)

Götz wehrt sich beständig dagegen, dem Engländer von seiner Welt zu viel preisgeben zu müssen, und verweist ihn rüde darauf, daß es besser sei, wenn jeder in einer eigenen Sphäre bleibe. Beatons Feststellung, daß Götz den Hitlergruß nicht mag, nimmt dieser zum Anlaß, ihm Deutschenfeindlichkeit vorzuwerfen (S. 78). Hier ist die primär durch die politischen Zustände bedingte Unüberbrückbarkeit des Gegensatzes zwischen den beiden Hauptfiguren des Romans antizipiert, die sich trotz deren weiterer Annäherung bis zum Schluß fortsetzt.

Im Anschluß an die Schnittstelle der Ski-Freizeit-Episode bricht der Kontakt zwischen Götz und dem Engländer nicht ab. Zunächst tauscht man sich brieflich aus, dann besucht der Junge zusammen mit einem älteren Mitschüler für zwei Monate Beaton in England. Sowohl vor als auch nach dieser Reise stehen im Vordergrund der Mehrzahl ihrer Briefe aktuelle politische Fragen wie der Einmarsch der Nazis in Österreich und die bereits schwelende Sudetenkrise. Inwieweit es angesichts der Verhältnisse im Nazi-Deutschland der späten Dreißiger Jahre realistisch ist, die beiden Charaktere Briefe mit politisch zum Teil hochbrisantem Inhalt abfassen zu lassen, bleibe dahingestellt¹⁴. Immerhin gelingt es dem Verfasser durch diese Erzähltechnik, zusätzliche Schlaglichter auf die beängstigenden Geschehnisse dieser Epoche zu werfen und damit den historischen Hintergrund seines Stoffes zu einem wesentlichen Bestandteil des Romans zu machen.

Götz’ Aufenthalt in England – zunächst in London, dann auf der Isle of Man, schließlich in Liverpool – und die erneute Begegnung mit Beaton fallen in den Juli 1938. Er reist zusammen mit Hermann Funk, einem Jungen aus einer höheren Klasse, der in jeglicher Hinsicht als Gegenbild zu Götz gezeichnet ist: taktlos, platt und ständig darauf bedacht, England in Vergleichen mit Deutschland als unterlegen erscheinen zu

¹⁴ Cf. die Briefe auf S. 138-140, 142f., 149f., 161f., 200, 214, 221 und 224f. Es muß der Vollständigkeit halber angemerkt werden, daß Clayton die tatsächliche Gefahr eines solchen Unterfangens bewußt war, wie eine Szene im Roman belegt, in der sich Götz’ Schwester Gisela nach dem Inhalt des allerersten Briefs von Beaton erkundigt: „‘Is it about politics?’ she asked suddenly. ‘A bit.’ – ‘The idiot! He mustn’t do it. You must stop him.’ – ‘Oh, it’s all right. What *he* says doesn’t matter. It’s what *I* say. And I shall be very careful. Trust me.”“ (S. 141).

lassen¹⁵. Götz verwarft sich vor derart plumpen Verallgemeinerungen, da ihm die Verschiedenheiten der Individuen bewußt ist; zugleich er spürt er aber auch, daß man die Eingebundenheit in eine Nation letztlich nur schwer abschütteln kann:

„‘Sometimes,’ he said once to David, ‘I think there are only people, you and I and Hermann. I feel, to hell with being English and German and all that. Other times I feel there things in one, national things, that one can’t escape from.’“ (S. 172)

Hermann ist von Anfang der störende Dritte (cf. bereits S. 162 unten), der allerdings durch seine Anwesenheit Götz’ Sensibilität um so deutlicher hervortreten läßt. Durch den England-Besuch reift Götz in seinen politischen Ansichten. Zugleich hat er offenbar, wie Beaton in einem Brief an einen Freund schreibt, für den Engländer eine echte Sympathie entwickelt, was diesem große Zufriedenheit verschafft – auch wenn er ahnt, daß er sein eigentliches Ziel der körperlichen Annäherung an Götz niemals wird erreichen können. Und so versucht er, sich mit der Annäherung auf geistiger Ebene zu begnügen¹⁶.

Im Anschluß an den Inselfaufenthalt verbringt der Junge einige Tage im Hause der Beatons in Liverpool. Gleich zu Beginn dieses Szenenwechsels signalisiert der Erzähler, daß trotz der entstandenen Freundschaft etwas darüber Hinausgehendes nicht möglich sein wird (S. 188). Beaton ist sich darüber im klaren, daß Götz schon bald nach Deutschland zurückkehren muß, und gerät über den Sinn und Zweck des Besuchs in Zweifel; der bevorstehende Abschied erfüllt ihn mit Schmerz (S. 191f.). Es wird deutlich, daß die diesmalige Trennung eine endgültige, irreversible Zäsur markieren wird (S. 193). Gleichwohl bleibt der Eindruck, daß in der Beziehung beider Charaktere zueinander etwas ganz Wesentliches offenbleibt und nicht zu Ende gebracht wird: Beaton spielt am letzten gemeinsamen Abend eine Schallplatten-Aufnahme der Unvollendeten Symphonie Franz Schuberts, die beide zutiefst anrührt. Die Symbolik, die in dieser Szene liegt, ist unübersehbar:

„He put on some Mozart first, and then the Unfinished Symphony. ‘Yes, that’s it!’ Götz almost found himself crying after the first bars. He felt that he had never understood music till now. It was not a tune, a lot of

¹⁵ Cf. besonders S. 171 und 185. Dieser Gegensatz, der sich selbst auf sprachlicher Ebene manifestiert, wird besonders nachdrücklich von Beatons Mutter in einem Brief formuliert: „‘It is difficult,’ she wrote, ‘to imagine a greater contrast than between him and the other one.’ Yes, the other one, this Hermann Funk or whatever he was called. David seemed to think he was a joke, worth having for that alone, but to her he was an uncouth, haunting monster, always at one’s elbow when something was boiling over, dropping guttural bricks like rain. It was curious that Götz’ imperfections in the English tongue should be attractive, like those of a child, while Hermann seemed to mangle it into harsh, obscene croakings.“ (S. 184).

¹⁶ „But, above all, I know now that he likes me, and that certitude is something I’ve been after so long that it became an end in itself and now satisfies rather than excites. (...) Oh, I won’t be a hypocrite (...) The end, the aim, the motive is physical. But do I really delude myself into thinking that that end will be even once attained? Hardly. (...)“ (S. 181). Es ist aber andererseits nicht so, daß Beaton keinerlei Versuche macht, sich dem Jungen auch physisch zu nähern: „Once or twice he repelled advances of David’s that seemed to go too far, but he did so without horror and without disgust; rather with something akin to the guilty pity with which we deny alms and a sort of queer gratitude to David for allowing himself to be repelled so easily.“ (S. 180).

notes, a clever pattern. It was David and himself, it was the funeral-triumph march of all desires, a thing whose glory and sadness was that it did not, could not, exist, could not be pushed into being more explicit, into possession and satisfaction, without breaking into pieces. ... Yes. Ludwig Kästner, if he had appreciated irony, might have smiled wryly at this scene. ... 'Well, that's all,' said David, jumping up to take off the needle. 'And it's high time we were going.'" (S. 193f.)

Die verbleibenden sechs Kapitel des Romans konzentrieren sich auf Götz' Rückreise nach Deutschland, die als eine Fahrt zurück in die unentrinnbare Realität und zugleich in die Unfreiheit umschrieben ist¹⁷. Dort reflektiert der Junge über seinen England-Aufenthalt, politische Fragen und vor allem seine Position zu Beaton, deren Einschätzung ihm kaum Ruhe läßt. Sein Hingezogensein zum eigenen Geschlecht erkennt er um so klarer, als er zusammen mit seinem Mitschüler Lange einige Tage bei einem Bauern zur Heuernte untergebracht ist. Lange bezeichnet ihn als Mädchen (S. 205) und spielt, wie schon zuvor (S. 197), auf die für Außenstehende zweideutige Freundschaft zwischen Götz und dem Engländer an (S. 206). Da bei dem Bauern Gäste eintreffen, müssen Lange und Götz eine Nacht in demselben Bett verbringen. Götz wünscht sich insgeheim sexuellen Kontakt mit Lange und ärgert sich über die verpaßte Chance, David während des England-Besuchs näherzukommen. Obwohl auch zwischen ihnen nichts passiert, so definiert Götz doch erneut das Erlebte als den Verlust seiner Unschuld:

„Innocence was dead (...) He had always shrunk from admitting that there was anything about David which even the ill-informed could call 'abnormal' – as he shrank from thinking about the whole thing. But it suddenly struck him now that the world no doubt would call Lange 'normal', and David and Ludwig 'abnormal'. He did not resent this. The idiocy of men seemed nothing to the idiocy of God. He felt foul – yet no fouler than others. He despised himself – yet no more than he despised all life.“ (S. 208)

Bald darauf werden die Anzeichen für das allmähliche Rüsten Deutschlands zum Krieg immer deutlicher. Das von Deutschland, Großbritannien, Frankreich und Italien unterzeichnete Münchener Abkommen (29. September 1938) bringt Hitler die gewünschte Räumung des Sudetenlandes durch die Tschechen. Daß es dabei nicht bleiben wird, sondern schon bald der Einmarsch in die Tschechoslowakei als ein weiterer Vorbote des Zweiten Weltkrieges folgen wird, ahnen alle in Götz' Familie. Der Roman endet in den denkbar dunkelsten Tönen mit dem Selbstmord von Götz' Vater. Dessen tiefer Pessimismus angesichts der politischen Entwicklungen hatte sich bereits zuvor abgezeichnet (S. 216, 219, 223) und wird in seinem Abschiedsbrief an Götz auf den Punkt gebracht: Gegenüber einem Regime wie dem Hitlers glaubt er sich gänzlich machtlos, so daß er in seinem Freitod die einzige Lösung sieht – für sich

¹⁷ Cf. S. 195, aufgegriffen und ausgeweitet auf S. 196: „This was reality, the other was a dream. There were two worlds, and one must live on one's own world. Perhaps it would have been wiser – whatever wisdom was worth – to have kept to one's own world, not to have known or dreamt ... Ariel, indeed! Ariel in the cloven pine. *Erlkönig hat mir ein Leids getan.*“

selbst wie auch für die Familie (S. 228f.). Nachdem Götz den Brief verbrannt hat, verläßt er das Elternhaus und geht in den Wald. Ihm kommt zu Bewußtsein, wie sehr die nationalsozialistische Diktatur ihn und seine ganze Umwelt unterjocht hat und ein echtes eigenes Wollen radikal verhindert. Es ist das Regime, an dem letztlich auch die Beziehung zu Beaton scheitern muß. Freiheit ist in einer solchen Welt eine blanke Illusion, der Mensch ist gefangen (S. 230-232) – ganz so wie der Luftgeist Ariel aus Shakespeares *Tempest* in dem gespaltenen Kiefernbaum, „The Cloven Pine“¹⁸. Es bleibt nur die vage angedeutete Hoffnung, daß sich vielleicht eines Tages die Eigenständigkeit in Denken und Handeln wiedergewinnen läßt¹⁹.

Fassen wir das Bisherige zusammen: Es wäre zu einseitig, in *The Cloven Pine* eine Art Coming-Out-Roman zu sehen. Doch läßt sich nicht in Abrede stellen, daß der Protagonist Beaton durch seinen Deutschland-Aufenthalt trotz der mehr als angespannten politischen Lage eine innere Befreiung durchlebt. Zwar gelingt es ihm nicht, sein Vorhaben einer Beschreibung der Zustände in Nazi-Deutschland in Form von Berichten in die Tat umzusetzen und so „die Wahrheit über Deutschland zu erfahren“; ebensowenig unternimmt er es, unter Deutschen politische Überzeugungsarbeit zu leisten. Wahrheitsfindung könne sich höchstens auf einer anderen Ebene vollziehen: in der Einordnung seines Verhältnisses zu Götz und vor allem dem Weg zu sich selbst (S. 92f.). Dabei ist das Paradox, das Gefühl von Freiheit in einem Land zu empfinden, das sich ganz und gar nicht mit Freiheit assoziieren ließ, folgendermaßen formuliert:

„... his relations with his home environment had something to do with every visit after the first [sc. to Vienna, cf. n. 10]. He was seeking freedom of a sort in freedom's most unlikely habitation. There was no one who knew him watching; in an alien world and an alien tongue he could escape from humour and parody and the phrases in inverted commas. He would find out, perhaps, what he really felt and thought.“ (S. 27f.)

An dieser Passage zeigt sich, daß Beaton seinen Auslandsaufenthalt als eine befreiende Loslösung vom Eingebundensein in eine allzu vertraute Gesellschaft begreift und somit als Chance zu einer Redefinition seines Selbst. Daß dies ein ganz entscheidender Grund für ihn war, England für eine Weile zu verlassen, signalisiert er sogar gegenüber Götz bei ihrer ersten ausführlicheren Begegnung während des Spaziergangs²⁰. Der Neuansatz zu einer Standortbestimmung verläuft seiner Ansicht nach

¹⁸ Cf. William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* vv. 250-293: Die Hexe Sycorax schließt Ariel in die Kiefer ein, Prospero befreit den Luftgeist.

¹⁹ „Our actions are not our own, in living or dying, killing or being killed. They are an occupied territory. But something we can deny them, obstinately and uncompromisingly, and perhaps some day, if we are lucky, from this little corner we have clung to we may return to full sovereignty, over thought and word and act. – He went down into the forest.“ (S. 232).

²⁰ „I suppose you can't go home yet,“ he [i.e. Götz] said. – „I don't want to. If half of me is homesick, the other half is almost afraid of going home. It's like – well, it's one of those ways of being unhappy that seem to be leading somewhere, to some deeper understanding or – or something. The only way out of them is back to earth, but one won't believe that. One feels it's terrifying to have left the land, but now – one must go on to the other shore.“ (S. 34). Cf. auch die Worte Beatons auf S. 125: „And then one feels irresponsible abroad.“

interessanterweise über die Befreiung aus dem Netz der Muttersprache, so als müsse er mit dem Erlernen des Deutschen sämtliche hinter den Begriffen stehende Konzepte neu überdenken. So ist es nicht verwunderlich, daß der englische Text eine Reihe von deutschen Wörtern enthält, die nach Auffassung des Autors offenbar etwas spezifisch Deutsches symbolisieren und kein wirkliches englisches Äquivalent aufweisen.

Vollends unverhüllt teilt Beaton seinen Seelenzustand nur Alan Reade, seinem in Großbritannien verbliebenen Freund aus der Studienzeit, in Briefform mit. Diese Figur, die im Roman ausschließlich als der Empfänger von Beatons Briefen fungiert, nicht aber selbst in Erscheinung tritt, dürfte durch Claytons Freund Alan Turing, den bekannten britischen Mathematiker (1912-1954), inspiriert sein, der homosexuell war und durch Selbstmord endete²¹. Reade hatte Beaton während ihres gemeinsamen Studiums in Cambridge auf den Kopf zugesagt, daß sich dieser vor seinen eigenen Gefühlen fürchte, und ihm geraten, sich zu verlieben (S. 27). Genau dies ist Beaton mit Götz widerfahren, wie er Reade in einer Mischung aus Brief und Tagebuchnotiz schreibt, und zwar zum allerersten Mal:

„(...) all this talk seems silly, when I ought to be able to say, quite simply, 'I am in love.' The very unorthodoxy of the passion proves its genuineness. I have not been ogled and coaxed by a bevy of match-making aunts into a factitious affair. It has just happened – for the first time, and rather overwhelmingly.“ (S. 91)

Den Versuch, im Verlauf seines Deutschland-Aufenthaltes seine Liebe zu einer früher von ihm verehrten Frau namens Renate zu redefinieren, erklärt Beaton als gescheitert. Denn im Vergleich zu all dem, was er nun für den Jungen empfinde, nähmen sich sämtliche früheren Gefühle für Renate schal aus. Er betont in seinem Brief an Reade, daß er durch das Bekennen seiner Gefühlslage gegenüber sich selbst einen Reifungsprozeß durchlaufen hat (S. 91f.), auch wenn die Ereignisse ihm alles andere als innere Ruhe und Ausgeglichenheit verleihen. Götz nimmt sein ganzes Denken in Beschlag, und Beaton erhofft sich jede Möglichkeit, seine Zeit mit ihm zu verbringen (S. 92). Wie sich zuvor gezeigt hat, durchläuft auch der Junge durch den Kontakt mit Beaton und die Auseinandersetzung mit dessen Ansichten ganz entscheidende Phasen des Erwachsenwerden und des Erkennens. Der Schritt zu einer endgültigen inneren Befreiung beider Charaktere scheitert letzten Endes vor allem an den politischen Umständen, die die Angehörigen zweier Welten nicht zueinander finden lassen.

3. BEZÜGE ZU CLAYTONS SONSTIGEM LITERARISCHEN WERK

Neben dem im Jahre 1942 publizierten Roman *The Cloven Pine* existieren einige weitere unveröffentlichte, erst kürzlich entdeckte Werke aus Claytons Feder: Vier Kurzgeschichten mit den Titeln *Little Man. A Short Story* (Typoskript von knapp 21 A4-Seiten), *The Course of True Love. An Artificial Romance* (21 Seiten), *A Pound of*

²¹ Zu Einzelheiten cf. die ausführliche Biographie von Hodges (1983), weniger dagegen die von Turgings Mutter Sara verfaßte Monographie über ihren Sohn (Turing 1959).

Chocolate (13 Seiten) und *The Return* (gut 5 Seiten), ferner die zwei Dramen *The Foolish Virgin. A Comedy in Three Acts* und *Small Mercy or The Sponge: Fantasia on a Theme of Judgement* sowie eine Tragödie, die in den zwei unterschiedlichen Versionen *Vienna. Tragedy in Three Visits* und *A Visitor in Vienna* vorliegt. Die Entstehungszeit dieser Werke ist unsicher, mit größter Wahrscheinlichkeit hat Clayton sie aber allesamt nach *The Cloven Pine* verfaßt, vermutlich während seiner Zeit in Exeter.

Von besonderem Interesse für die in diesem Beitrag verfolgte Thematik sind die beiden Versionen des Schauspiels über Wien. Wie alle sonstigen Werke Claytons ist auch dieses Drama stark autobiographisch geprägt und basiert auf Erlebnissen während seiner Wien-Besuche²². Auf die inhaltliche Struktur sowie auf die Unterschiede zwischen den beiden Versionen kann in diesem Rahmen nicht im Detail eingegangen werden; vieles deutet darauf hin, daß es sich bei *Vienna* um eine spätere Fassung als *A Visitor in Vienna* handelt. Hier wie dort steht das Thema des Antisemitismus im Vordergrund, das in dem Roman *The Cloven Pine* nur gelegentlich angedeutet war. Die drei Akte des Dramas entsprechen drei Besuchen des anfangs einundzwanzigjährigen Engländers Macdonald in den Jahren 1931, 1934 und 1936. Wie sein Landsmann Watson hat Macdonald, der sich vordergründig zu einem Studienprojekt in Wien aufhält, bei der großbürgerlichen Familie Doktor Wilhelms²³ Quartier gefunden. Durch die zeitliche Versetzung der einzelnen Akte gelingt es dem Autor, die politischen Entwicklungen und dabei vor allem die Wirtschaftskrise, die hohe Arbeitslosigkeit sowie die sich immer weiter verschärfende Rassenverfolgung ins Visier zu nehmen, die sich in Österreich schon vor dem Einmarsch der Nazis im März 1938 abzeichneten. Der weit verbreitete Judenhaß ist exemplarisch an der Beziehung und späteren Heirat der ebenfalls im Hause der Wilhelms lebenden Jüdin Else und Ernst, dem zweiundzwanzigjährigen Sohn der Wilhelms, dargestellt. Vater Wilhelm ist als überzeugter Antisemit von Anfang an gegen diese Verbindung und befürwortet gar eine staatliche Gesetzgebung gegen Mischheiraten (*Vienna*, Typoskript S. 7, 18); mit der Idee eines Großdeutschland sympathisiert er stark (*ibid.*, S. 11). Macdonald dagegen weist in Diskussionen mit Doktor Wilhelm dessen kühne physiognomische Konstrukte von sich und unterstreicht hier wie an anderen Stellen, daß Judenhaß und überzogener Patriotismus allein auf Dummheit und Vorurteilen beruhen (*ibid.*, S. 15-20, 53, 56, 72, 93f.). Ernsts und Elses Heirat wird trotz der Widerstände des alten Wilhelm geschlossen, doch da das Paar kinderlos bleibt, ergeben sich Konflikte. Nach einem Streit verschwindet Else und begeht schließlich Selbstmord (*ibid.*, S. 87-89). Ernst hat sich inzwischen von seiner Umwelt vergiften lassen und die verbreiteten antisemitischen Stereotype übernommen: Daß seine Frau den Freitod gesucht hat, ist aus seiner Sicht durch ihre Schuld bedingt gewesen, ihn mit einem anderen betrogen und ein Kind von diesem empfangen zu haben (*ibid.*, S. 99). Die Figur des Ernst, die eine radikale geistige Wandlung von sozialdemokratisch gefärbten Ideen der kompromißlosen Ablehnung rassistischen Gedankengutes zur Akzeptanz nationalsozialistisch beeinflusster

²² Wie Clayton selbst stammt auch der Protagonist des Dramas, Macdonald, aus Liverpool (*Vienna*, Typoskript S. 14; *A Visitor in Vienna*, Typoskript S. 14) und hat in Cambridge studiert, in der wahrscheinlich späteren Version des Dramas offenbar Klassische Philologie (*Vienna*, Typoskript S. 61f., 68).

²³ In *Vienna* ist Doktor Wilhelm ein höherer Staatsbeamter, in *A Visitor in Vienna* dagegen ein Rechtsanwalt.

Ideologien durchläuft, steht als ein Beispiel für viele, die sich in den Dreißiger Jahren von dem „allgemeinen Wahnsinn“ anstecken ließen²⁴. Zudem ist es die Zugehörigkeit zu zwei verschiedenen Welten, die zwei Liebenden kein dauerhaftes Glück vergönnt; eine gewisse Parallele zu *The Cloven Pine* ist damit durchaus vorhanden. Das homoerotische Element ist in den Wien-Dramen allerdings ohne Bedeutung: Freilich verbringt der Gast Macdonald viel Zeit mit den beiden Söhnen des Hauses und ist für den älteren Ernst ein anregender Gesprächspartner. Für den zu Beginn achtjährigen, am Ende fast vierzehnjährigen Karl hat der Engländer eine ganz besondere Sympathie²⁵, doch entbehrt gerade das vermutlich spätere der beiden Stücke jeglicher gleichgeschlechtlicher Zwischentöne²⁶.

Die Frage danach, was in Claytons Werk reine Fiktion und was kaum oder gar nicht verhüllter Tatsachenbericht ist, mag für ein besseres Verständnis der Person und Vita des Autors von zentraler Bedeutung sein. Daß er beispielsweise ein Pseudonym für seinen Roman wählte²⁷, hatte seine Gründe, wie er selbst in einer typographischen Notiz schreibt: Mit seiner Entscheidung wollte er in erster Linie den Verdacht einer überzogenen Deutschenfreundlichkeit vermeiden, wie sie sich an der Liebe der Figur des Engländers David Beaton zu dem deutschen Jungen Götz manifestiert. Sympathie für alles, was mit Deutschland zu tun hatte, mußte angesichts der politischen Weltlage der Vierziger Jahre bei der Mehrzahl der Briten den Eindruck einer ganz und gar deplazierten Haltung erwecken²⁸.

Die Berechtigung eines eingehenderen Blickes auf die Vita gerade eines Verfassers wie Clayton zeigen vergleichbare Fälle wie zum Beispiel die Werke aller Vertreter der Familie Mann, für die Parallelisierungen von literarischem Gehalt und biographischen Elementen zu neuen Einblicken geführt haben²⁹. Möglich und zulässig

²⁴ Cf. die Worte Macdonalds in *Vienna*, Typoskript S. 100: „God! How contagious this madness is, like their whole silly propaganda – so mad and yet so simple and straightforward.“

²⁵ Cf. besonders die Worte Frau Wilhelms in *Vienna*, Typoskript S. 83: „Karl and she [i.e. Else] and I are the people he comes to Vienna to see – in that order.“

²⁶ In der vermutlich früheren Version *A Visitor in Vienna* ist das homoerotische Element nur an vier Stellen vage angedeutet, zum einen in dem folgenden kurzen Dialog (*A Visitor in Vienna*, Typoskript S. 14): „Frau Wilhelm: ‘Karl wants to take you to the pictures on Saturday.’ – Macdonald: ‘That’s very nice of him.’ – Frau Wilhelm: ‘You seem to have made quite a conquest there.’ – Macdonald: ‘Er – yes.’“. In *Vienna* ist es dagegen Macdonalds Idee, Karl ins Kino einzuladen (*Vienna*, Typoskript S. 36). In einer anderen Passage bemerkt Ernst gegenüber Macdonald auf dessen Bemerkung, er sei von Natur aus promisk: „You! I never knew anyone whose conversation with women was more sexless.“ (*A Visitor in Vienna*, Typoskript S. 36). Schließlich wird Macdonalds Sympathie für Karl Gegenstand eines Gesprächs zwischen Herrn und Frau Wilhelm (*ibid.*, S. 87). Cf. außerdem den Hinweis Ernsts am Schluß (*ibid.*, S. 104).

²⁷ Zur Verwendung von Pseudonymen in homoerotischer Literatur allgemein cf. Popp (1992: 32f. und 279) sowie Woods (1998: 336-338).

²⁸ „I had, I admit, hidden behind a pseudonym. I did not want to have to defend myself all over the place against criticism.“ Wie Clayton andeutet, folgten in der Tat negative Kritiken seines Romans, die dem Autor fehlenden Patriotismus und in einem Falle sogar das Befürworten Hitlers vorwarfen. Daß es Ausnahmen in der Einschätzung seines Werkes gab, zeigt eine andere Passage in einem Typoskript: „In 1942 (...) we were as a nation still sane and civilised and tolerant enough for a young English soldier to write, for an English publisher to produce, for some leading English critics and readers to praise, a book which deliberately offended both patriotic and moral prejudices in order to state that it was possible to love deeply a boy brought up under the Nazi regime (...)“.

²⁹ Aus der unübersehbaren Fülle an Arbeiten cf. besonders Reich-Ranicki (1987) und zuletzt Krüll (1991), beide mit zahlreicher weiterer Sekundärliteratur.

sind derartige Rückschlüsse jedoch nur dann, wenn das private Denken und Fühlen eines Literaten anhand von geeigneten Quellen wie Tagebüchern, Briefen und sonstigen persönlichen Aufzeichnungen rekonstruierbar ist. Im Fall Clayton ist das Korpus solcher Texte knapp bemessen, bietet aber zumindest einige Anhaltspunkte dafür, daß eigenes homoerotisches Empfinden für den Autor nicht in Abrede gestellt werden kann. Den zugänglichen Niederschriften läßt sich entnehmen, daß seine eigene Sexualität ihn zeit seines Lebens beschäftigt und zugleich beunruhigt hat. Inwieweit aber beispielsweise seine Heirat, aus der immerhin vier Kinder hervorgingen, eine Flucht vor sich selbst und eine Verdrängung seiner gleichgeschlechtlichen Neigungen war, maßen wir uns hier nicht zu beurteilen an.

4. BEZÜGE ZU LITERARISCHEN WERKEN ANDERER AUTOREN

Verbindungslinien zwischen Claytons Roman *The Cloven Pine* und anderen britischen, aber auch deutschsprachigen Autoren derselben Generation sind augenfällig. Wir können uns in diesem Beitrag nur auf die wichtigsten Aspekte beschränken, um den spezifischen Charakter des hier im Vordergrund stehenden Werkes zu extrapolieren. Die Behandlung von Einzelfragen muß künftigen Untersuchungen vorbehalten bleiben.

4.1 Britische Autoren: Isherwood – Spender – Auden

Bemerkenswert ist zunächst, daß Clayton sich in eine Art Gruppe britischer Schriftsteller einordnen läßt, die ebenfalls ihre Deutschland-Erlebnisse literarisch verarbeitet haben. In das Zentrum ihrer Frühwerke rückten Autoren wie Christopher Isherwood (1906-1986) und Stephen Spender (1909-1995), zum Teil auch Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1974), insbesondere die Gefahren Hitlers; zugleich sind wie bei Clayton autobiographische und dabei vor allem homoerotische Elemente stark ausgeprägt³⁰. Doch kann diese oberflächliche Gemeinsamkeit kaum über die zahlreichen Unterschiede hinwegtäuschen: Isherwood wie auch Spender haben Deutschland vor der nationalsozialistischen Machtübernahme im Jahre 1933 verlassen, Clayton dagegen kommt erst im Jahre 1936 nach Deutschland. Sein Roman dokumentiert somit nicht das unübersehbare Heraufziehen der neuen Machthaber, sondern Hitler auf dem Höhepunkt seiner Diktatur sowie die ersten Anzeichen seiner aggressiven Expansionsbemühungen und deren absehbare Auswirkungen. Von einem literarischen Werk dieser Epoche zugleich eine umfassende Analyse der politischen Verhältnisse in Deutschland und Europa zu erwarten, wäre vermutlich zu viel verlangt; dies vermag beispielsweise

³⁰ Besonders wichtig für die hier verfolgten Aspekte sind Isherwoods *Mr Norris Changes Trains* (1935), *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939), *Prater Violet* (1945), aber auch die späteren Bücher *Down There on a Visit* (1962) und *Christopher and His Kind* (1977), ferner Spenders *Vienna* (1934), das antifaschistische Versdrama *Trial of a Judge* (1938), *The Temple* (1988) und seine *Journals 1939-1983* (veröffentlicht 1985). Die Sekundärliteratur zu den beiden Autoren einschließlich Auden und ihrem Kreis ist umfangreich; verwiesen sei hier nur auf Page (2000) und Leeming (1999), zu Isherwood cf. den Kurzüberblick bei Popp (1992: 305-319).

eine non-fiktionale Dokumentation weit eher zu leisten. Und obwohl weder *The Cloven Pine* noch die beiden Wien-Dramen diese Aufgabe eines objektiven Reports übernehmen können oder wollen, erfassen sie doch die Tragik Nazi-Deutschlands in ausgesprochen luzider Weise. Dennoch bleibt festzuhalten, daß sich Clayton in seinem Roman bei aller Differenziertheit eine gewisse Beschränkung in der Perspektive selbst dadurch auferlegt, daß er seine Charaktere im wesentlichen nur einer einzelnen sozialen Schicht entstammen läßt, nämlich dem am Beispiel der Arztfamilie Biehl-Bodenhausen und ihrem Umfeld dargestellten gehobenen Bürgertum³¹. Freilich diskutieren seine Romanfiguren laufend über Politik, nehmen aber dabei nur wenig divergierende Positionen zu Hitler und dem Nationalsozialismus ein. Radikalere Figuren sind lediglich die Lehrer Ludwig Kästner und Professor Klinge. Obwohl das wohlhabendere Bürgertum auch in den beiden Versionen der Wien-Tragödie dominiert, ist dort das Spektrum der politischen Überzeugungen insgesamt facettenreicher, vor allem durch den zunächst sehr ausgeprägten innerfamiliären Gegensatz zwischen Vater Wilhelm und seinem Sohn Ernst. Verglichen damit, deckt beispielsweise Isherwoods Personnage in *Goodbye to Berlin* das gesamte soziale Spektrum ab und ermöglicht so die literarische Abbildung einer Fülle unterschiedlicher politischer Standpunkte.

Auch der zweite Aspekt, das gleichgeschlechtliche Empfinden, hat bei Clayton einen anderen Stellenwert: Es ist nicht die Vorliebe für deutsche „working-class boys“, die sein *alter ego* David Beaton etwa in eine Metropole wie Berlin als Inbegriff homosexueller Ausschweifung zöge, auch wenn vielleicht bei seinem Protagonisten wie bei ihm selbst der Wunsch nach dem Ausleben seiner Sexualität seinen Deutschland-Aufenthalt mitbeeinflusst hat. Das Motiv der Großstadt als Ort des Lasters und erst recht käufliche homosexuelle Liebe, wie sie allerdings auch Isherwood nur in seinem weit expliziteren Buch *Christopher and His Kind* und Spender in *The Temple* thematisiert haben, fehlen in *The Cloven Pine* vollständig. Wie zuvor gezeigt, ist bei Clayton die Ebene des Sexuellen keineswegs vollends ausgespart, doch wird sie auf einer ausgesprochen subtilen Ebene behandelt, die das Körperliche höchstens andeutet³².

Von Bedeutung ist in diesem Zusammenhang, daß Clayton Isherwood einige Male begegnet ist und möglicherweise auch das eine oder andere Werk von ihm, wenn nicht durch eigene Lektüre, so doch zumindest indirekt kannte. Inwieweit er sich durch seinen Roman mit diesem und mit Spender in eine Reihe stellen wollte, läßt sich schwer beurteilen. Ein später konzipierter, jedoch nie abgeschickter und noch dazu unvollständig erhaltener Brief Claytons an Isherwood hilft in dieser Frage kaum weiter.

³¹ Eine Ausnahme bilden der nazibegeisterte Bauer, dem Götz kurzzeitig zur Hilfe bei der Heuernte zugeteilt ist (S. 202-204), sowie der betrunkene Maler am Ende von Kapitel 20, der Lehrer Oehme und ein paar Schülern einschließlich Götz über seinen Aufenthalt in einem Konzentrationslager berichtet und dabei an den Pädagogen appelliert, seinen Schülern über die eklatanten Mißstände und Gewalttaten im NS-Staat die Augen zu öffnen (S. 157-159).

³² Das wohl beste Beispiel dafür ist die Szene einer gemeinsamen Buchlektüre von Götz, David und Hermann während des Aufenthaltes auf der Isle of Man. Während die drei nebeneinander auf einer Bank sitzen, berühren sich Götz' und Davids Hände: „So, in learning English, Götz learned something else. He learned how interesting and exciting it is to have it assumed by someone that every inch of yourself is interesting and exciting, each separate finger, chewed nail, grubby palm. He learned the peculiar electric contact set up by intertwined fingers.“ (S. 177).

4.2 Deutschsprachige Autoren: Das Beispiel Ödön von Horváths

Mit dem Nationalsozialismus haben sich bereits während der späten Zwanziger und der Dreißiger Jahre zahlreiche deutschsprachige Autoren literarisch auseinandergesetzt (cf. Müller-Seidel 1988: 450-453). Zu nennen wären hierbei in erster Linie Klaus Mann, Heinrich Mann, Ernst Toller, Ödön von Horváth, Lion Feuchtwanger und Bertolt Brecht. Es ist davon auszugehen, daß Clayton einige Werke dieser Autoren kannte. Freilich diente ihm für *The Cloven Pine* niemand aus dieser Reihe als ein unmittelbares thematisches und motivisches Vorbild. Dennoch dürfte Clayton die eine oder andere Anregung aus dieser Richtung empfangen haben.

Wir lenken im folgenden den Blick exemplarisch auf Ödön von Horváths Werk *Jugend ohne Gott*. Es ist denkbar, daß Clayton bei der Abfassung von *The Cloven Pine* in manchen Punkten von diesem Roman Horváths beeinflusst wurde, auch wenn keine direkten Hinweise darauf erhalten sind, daß Clayton mit Horváths literarischem Schaffen vertraut war³³. Die dargestellte Perspektive ist in beiden Fällen die eines jüngeren Lehrers, der mit Unbehagen feststellt, welche Folgen die geistig-moralische Infiltration seiner halbwüchsigen Schüler durch die nationalsozialistische Ideologie hat. Während jedoch in *The Cloven Pine* eine vollends überzeugte, glühende Identifikation mit der NS-Doktrin und dem totalitären Staat unter den dargestellten Schülern kaum auszumachen ist, schildert Horváth seine Vierzehnjährigen ungleich drastischer. Die Figur des Lehrers als Protagonist des Romans beschreibt sie als entmenslichte Wesen, die Maschinen gleichen und bereits so weit konditioniert sind, daß sie sich dem Terrorstaat blind opfern würden³⁴. Die grenzenlose Indoktrination der Schüler und ihre Erziehung zum Haß reicht zugleich so weit, daß sie all diejenigen eliminieren wollen, die sich auch nur die kleinste Abweichung von dem offiziellen Verhaltens- und Glaubenskodex leisten wie ihr Lehrer. Das Kapitel „Das Brot“ (op. cit., S. 21-23) beschreibt die Verschwörung der Klasse gegen ihren Lehrer, den sie systematisch boykottieren und endgültig abservieren wollen, weil er Schwarze als Menschen ansieht und damit aus ihrer Sicht als echter Staatsfeind „Sabotage am Vaterland“ betreibt (cf. S. 19). Kommunikation mit seinen Schülern ist dem Lehrer nicht möglich, weil sie eine „andere Sprache“ sprechen als er (S. 16). Die Verblendung dieser neuen Generation ist bereits so weit gediehen, daß ihre Unzugänglichkeit für jegliche vermittelnde

³³ In Claytons nachgelassener Bibliothek sind Horváths Werke nicht vertreten, was aber kein Beleg dafür ist, daß er nie auf diese aufmerksam geworden wäre. Da er sich in den Jahren 1935/36 in Wien aufgehalten hat, ist es nicht unwahrscheinlich, daß er während dieser Zeit mit früheren Arbeiten Horváths bekannt wurde. „Jugend ohne Gott“ erschien allerdings erst im Jahre 1937 bei dem niederländischen Verlag Allert de Lange, eine englische Übersetzung im Jahre 1939 (*A Child of our Time and Being Youth without God*. Translated by R. Wills Thomas. With a Foreword by Franz Werfel, and an appreciation by Stefan Zweig, London 1939).

³⁴ Ödön von Horváth, *Jugend ohne Gott* (Gesammelte Werke, Band 13. Hrsg. von Traugott Krischke), Frankfurt am Main 1983, 24: „Alles Denken ist ihnen verhaßt. Sie pfeifen auf den Menschen! Sie wollen Maschinen sein, Schrauben, Räder, Kolben, Riemen – doch noch lieber als Maschinen wären sie Munition: Bomben, Schrapnells, Granaten. Wie gerne würden sie krepieren auf irgendeinem Feld! Der Name auf einem Kriegerdenkmal ist der Traum ihrer Pubertät.“ (cf. auch S. 112). Diese Einschätzung wird von einem anderen Lehrer im weiteren Verlauf des Romans folgendermaßen in offizielle Nazi-Formulierungen übersetzt: „Die heutige Jugend, meinte er, sei keineswegs verroht, sie sei vielmehr, dank der allgemeinen Gesundung, äußerst pflichtbewußt, aufopferungsfreudig und absolut national.“ (S. 83).

Argumentation und das fehlende Verständnis für alles Andersartige ausgeprägter nicht sein könnte (S. 23).

Bei Clayton wie bei Horváth wird zudem der Blick auf einzelne Lehrer und deren Haltungen gegenüber den nunmehr geltenden Spielregeln eines diktatorischen Regimes gerichtet. In *Jugend ohne Gott* sind der Schuldirektor wie auch der Protagonist selbst als Opportunisten gezeichnet, die sich in unterschiedlichem Grade mit dem Totalitarismus abfinden, um nicht ihre soziale Absicherung zu verlieren. Der Schuldirektor äußert gegenüber seinem jüngeren Kollegen bei einem Gespräch unter vier Augen:

„Junger Mann (...), merken Sie sich eines: es gibt keinen Zwang. Ich könnte ja dem Zeitgeist widersprechen und mich von einem Herrn Bäckermeister einsperren lassen, ich könnte ja hier gehen, aber ich will nicht gehen, jawohl, ich will nicht! Denn ich möchte die Altersgrenze erreichen, um die volle Pension beziehen zu können.“ (S. 20).

Der Protagonist selbst beschränkt sich bei der Besprechung von Schulaufsätzen mit politischen Themen auf Bemerkungen zu Form, Grammatik und Stil und vermeidet es auf diese Weise, Position beziehen zu müssen (S. 16f.). Seine Ablehnung von Stereotypen und ausgrenzenden Ideologien behält er weitgehend für sich. Von seinem beißenden Spott, den er für alle überzeugten Nazi-Anhänger übrig hat, erfährt nur der Leser³⁵. Erst im weiteren Verlauf des Romans macht er eine Wandlung durch, die ihn die existenzbedrohenden Konsequenzen seines Strebens nach Wahrheit ignorieren lassen.

Die in *The Cloven Pine* beschriebene Ski-Freizeit ließe sich höchstens strukturell in eine gewisse Verbindung zu dem Zeltlager in *Jugend ohne Gott* setzen, da beide Abschnitte in den jeweiligen Werken eine Mittelposition einnehmen und somit das zentrale Kernstück bilden. Inhaltlich werden jedoch gänzlich andere Akzente gesetzt; außerdem trägt Horváths Zeltlager im Gegensatz zu der Episode bei Clayton einen deutlich paramilitärischen Charakter.

Insgesamt läßt sich festhalten, daß sich trotz mancher motivischer und gedanklicher Verwandtschaften die Parallelen zwischen Claytons *The Cloven Pine* und Horváths *Jugend ohne Gott* in Grenzen halten. Somit mag man höchstens von einer indirekten Beeinflussung Claytons durch Horváths Werk sprechen, ohne daß sich diese jedoch stringent nachweisen ließe. Eine pazifistische Grundüberzeugung wohnt ohne Frage beiden Autoren ebenso inne wie das Bekenntnis zu Individualismus und zu kritischem Bewußtsein in politischen Fragen. Außerdem entlarven beide die sinnentleerte Phrasenhaftigkeit nationalsozialistischer Ideologie³⁶.

³⁵ Cf. Passagen wie die folgende: „Bäckermeister N horcht auf meine Stimme hin gehässig auf. Er könnt mich wahrscheinlich erschlagen. Mit einer altbackenen Semmel.“ (S. 88). Des weiteren etwa S. 13 oben, 14 unten, 22 oben, 40f., 89 unten.

³⁶ In *Jugend ohne Gott* wird dieser Punkt gleich zu Beginn des Romans in der Szene deutlich, in der der Lehrer die Aufsätze seiner Schüler zu dem von oben verordneten Thema „Warum müssen wir Kolonien haben?“ korrigiert (S. 12f.). Einer der Schüler vertraut später dem Lehrer an: „Ich mag nicht mehr marschieren und das Herumkommandiertwerden kann ich auch nicht mehr ausstehen (...). Und dann die faden Ansprachen, immer dasselbe, lauter Blödsinn!“ (S. 116). Manche Figuren des Werks wie z.B. der Bäckermeister N sind geradezu eine Personifikation rhetorischer Hohlheiten (cf. besonders S. 18f.).

5. Zusammenfassung

Es konnte hier lediglich die Aufgabe sein, in einem kurzen Durchgang die wichtigsten Aspekte des Romans *The Cloven Pine* wie auch der beiden Wien-Dramen Claytons zu diskutieren und diese durch einen Vergleich mit thematisch und motivisch verwandten Werken literaturgeschichtlich zu situieren. Daß bislang keinerlei interpretative Analysen zu diesem Werk existieren, ist vor allem auf die zeitlichen Umstände seines Erscheinens zurückzuführen. Was wie der Roman in Kriegs- und Krisenzeiten gedruckt wird, kann oft nicht mit einer breiten Rezeption rechnen und ist der Gefahr ausgesetzt, rasch dem Vergessen anheimzufallen. Ein weiterer Punkt kommt erschwerend hinzu: Da Clayton seine sonstigen literarischen Werke nie publiziert hat, war das Erstlingswerk offiziell zugleich das einzige aus seiner Feder; für die literarisch interessierte Öffentlichkeit blieb er damit weitestgehend ein Unbekannter. Wir haben es hier mit dem seltenen Fall einer Neuentdeckung in mehrfacher Hinsicht zu tun, die eine breitere Beachtung verdient und für die Literaturwissenschaft Möglichkeiten zu einer eingehenden Erforschung eröffnet³⁷.

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Andererseits sind es bei Horváth – hier wie auch in seinen anderen Werken – keineswegs ausschließlich negativ gezeichnete Charaktere wie Nazi-Sympathisanten, deren Äußerungen mit banalen Phrasen ohne eine echte Bedeutung durchsetzt sind (cf. beispielsweise S. 11, 94f., 107 unten, 138 unten). Zu dieser Eigenart in Horváths Schaffen ausführlicher z.B. Kienzle (1977: 15f.) und Hildebrandt (1975: 80-85).

³⁷ Im Herbst 2003 erschien eine deutsche Übersetzung des Romans *The Cloven Pine* unter dem Titel *Zwei Welten* (Übers. von Dino Hecker. Hrsg. und mit einem Nachwort versehen von Thorsten Fögen) im Verlag MännerschwarmSkript (Reihe „Bibliothek Rosa Winkel“, Hamburg).

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INSTANCES OF SIMPLIFIED STYLE IN TEN ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF DANE ZAJC

Nada Grošelj

Abstract

The article compares five poems by the Slovenian poet Dane Zajc and two translations of these poems into English. Focusing on the structures which are stylistically marked in Slovenian but neutralised in translation, the article categorises the translation solutions into groups according to how closely they correspond to the original and each other in syntactic form and in organisation of information (the functional sentence perspective), examining the instances from each group in detail and determining their relative frequency. It concludes by isolating the three types of marked Slovenian structures which tend to be neutralised in translation: marked word order, structural ambiguity, and non-basic constructions, including rhetorical devices.

This article examines contrastively the syntactic structures employed in five poems by the Slovenian poet Dane Zajc, and their equivalents as found in two translations of these poems into English. Each of the five poems – “Krokar”, “Mleko”, “Škorpijoni”, “Ujeti volk”, and “Zvonci novega dne” – has been translated once by Erica Johnson Debeljak, a native speaker of (American) English (referred to in the text as D), and by Sonja Kravanja, a native speaker of Slovenian (referred to as K).

With the exception of “Krokar”, published in the later collection *Dol dol*, the texts are taken from the edition *Dane Zajc v petih knjigah*: “Mleko” appears on p. 261, “Škorpijoni” on 264, “Ujeti volk” on 79, and “Zvonci novega dne” on pp. 76–77. The translations by Johnson Debeljak are taken from the anthologies *The Imagination of Terra Incognita* (“Bells of a New Day”, 200–201; “The Captive Wolf”, 195; “The Crow”, 197–198, and “Scorpions”, 202–203) and *The Fire under the Moon* (“Milk”, 111). Kravanja’s texts, on the other hand, follow the edition *Scorpions*, where they appear under the titles “Bells of a New Day” (37–38), “Captive Wolf” (39), “Milk” (29), “Raven” (32–33), and “Scorpions” (36).

The aims of the article are:

(1) to determine to what extent the English translations correspond to the original in terms of (un)markedness of the structures employed, i.e. of style. It focuses on the examples of those structures which are marked in Slovenian but neutralised in translation;

(2) to establish which types of Slovenian structures appear to be problematic in this respect, and to point out the translations which, although departing from the origi-

nal in their form, nevertheless preserve both the original organisation of content and level of style; these are important because they may serve as guidelines for future translations;

(3) to categorise all the translation solutions which are unmarked in English into a number of translation types, according to how closely they correspond to the original in their form and organisation of content; establish the relative frequency with which the different translation types are employed; and discover if there is any link between the frequency of a type and its stylistic difference from the original.

Each translated structure is assessed in respect to the following three parameters: (1) form, (2) the degree to which a sentence or clause element contributes new or important information to the content – or, if a stretch longer than one element is analysed, which of its parts are more and which less informative; and (3) markedness. “Form” subsumes (1) sentence / clause structure, (2) the type of structure (e.g. finite vs. non-finite clauses), and (3) “word order”, or, more precisely, the ordering of sentence / clause elements, sometimes also of participants. Since it is only the syntactic aspect that is examined, word choice is not addressed. The only exceptions occur when, for example, a pronoun is replaced by a much more meaningful noun phrase, as the latter carries more informative weight and potentially a different markedness.

In my approach to the organisation of content, or the distribution of information value among sentence / clause elements, I follow Firbas, adopting also the term “functional sentence perspective” (FSP) for this principle. According to Firbas, the higher or lower information value of an element depends on the words realising it¹ and on its role in the sentence / clause² (i.e. on its semantics); on the context, since an item which has already been referred to usually has a low degree of information value irrespective of other factors; and on its position, since the elements are often arranged from the less informative, or thematic, to the most informative, or rhematic, ones. FSP is in fact the main guideline for the ordering of clause elements in Slovenian, there being but a few strictly grammatical restrictions (among them belongs the requirement that clitics be placed after the first clause element). English, by contrast, demands a relatively fixed sequence of elements, irrespective of FSP. However, it has other means of expressing FSP: in addition to the – rather restricted – variations in word order, there are also articles, word choice, and special information-packaging structures, such as extensive use of passivisation or existential sentences.

Since the actual degrees of information value are thus not necessarily reflected in the linear order of elements, I adopt Firbas’ designation of “theme” / “rheme” for the less / more informative items regardless of position, in contrast to the approaches which automatically attach the label of “theme” to the initial element. However, since initial position is considered appropriate for the theme and final for the rheme, I do refer to these positions as “typically thematic” or “rhematic”.

¹ Certain pronouns and the definite article, for example, typically signal that a given item of information is already familiar and thus of little informative importance.

² For example, a context-independent adverbial adjunct, subject complement, object complement, or object usually has a higher degree of information value than the predicator, which typically serves as the transition between the theme and rheme.

The analysis is based on the following principles. In cases where one or both translations diverge from the original or each other in form, FSP, or markedness, the original structure and both its translations are analysed and compared along all three parameters. The label of "markedness" is attached to: (1) structures which fulfill an unusual role (e.g. an infinitival clause as an independent sentence); (2) non-finite structures employed where a finite form could be used equally well; (3) some, but not all, information-packaging constructions; (4) all examples of structural ambiguity, as opposed to the unequivocal – and thus simpler – variants. As for (5) word order, the criteria for English and Slovenian differ: in Slovenian, the marked order of elements is one which does not reflect the FSP (unless, of course, it is dictated by the fixed word order rules), while in English it is the order which diverges from the basic grammatical one (e.g. the initial position of objects, subject complements, and most types of adverbial adjuncts), or the order which flouts the end-weight principle, according to which longer and more complex structures tend to come last.

The total of Slovenian structures whose translations differ from the original or each other in one or more of the three above-mentioned aspects (form, FSP, markedness) is 124. This corresponds to 248 English examples in two translations. However, 33 out of the 248 are omitted from the subsequent discussion as irrelevant to this article. These comprise additions or omissions of words, phrases, and even of entire clauses, or else they cannot be analysed in regard to some aspect of the original structure because they are reformulated so that they do not contain it. An example of the latter are comparisons between the sequencing of the predicator and direct object in the original and in one translation, while the other translation has recourse to the passive and thus contains no direct object. This is the case in e.g. "Zvonci novega dne" 26: *S temno grožnjo ga [i.e. nebo] zagrinjajo* : "It [the sky] is blanketed by a dark threat" (D) / "Shroud it with a dark threat" (K).

The number of English structures addressed in this article is thus 215. Of these, 121 are unmarked and 94 marked. A comparison with Slovenian reveals that, of the 121 unmarked ones, 26 (cca 21,5 %) are in fact marked in the original, and of the 94 marked ones, 43 (cca 45,7 %) are originally neutral. The focus of this discussion is on the former, minor, group, i.e. marked Slovenian structures translated as unmarked in English. In regard to how closely they correspond to the original form and FSP, as well as to the form and FSP of the parallel translation, all 121 unmarked English translations may be divided into a number of groups. Seven of these groups (arranged from the most "faithful" to the "free" ones) contain examples which diverge from the original marked quality:

1. The form and FSP are the same as in the original. The contrastive analysis has yielded 24 unmarked English examples. With the exception of one pair which corresponds to a single Slovenian example, all others (22) represent one Slovenian structure each, so that the group corresponds to 23 Slovenian examples. This means that – with the above-mentioned exception – every Slovenian example has been translated once in a way which preserves the original form and FSP, and once in a way which is in some respect different.

Of these 24 structures, only one is – potentially – marked in the original: “With this lament, the broken bells / of the sheep herd / toll **the new day**” (K) : *V njegovo tožbo zvoní nov dan / s počenimi zvonci / ovčje črede* (“Zvonci novega dne” 35–37). The role of *nov dan* is slightly out of the ordinary because of its ambiguity: if the verb *zvoní* is interpreted as a subjectless expression, *nov dan* is its direct object, but it might also be a finite verbal form with *nov dan* as its subject. (The latter interpretation is admittedly marginal but not impossible, particularly as Zajc often places subjects after their predicators.) Since the English translations circumvent the problem by adopting the direct object interpretation (K) or making *nov dan* an adjunct: “the broken bells / ... / ring in the new day” (D), their structure is transparent, and thus rendered simpler, unmarked, by comparison.

2. The form is the same as in the original, but the FSP differs from both the original and the other translation. There is only 1 such example in the corpus, i.e. “Krokar” 9 (D), and its original is marked, again due to structural ambiguity:

Kadar leti, leti skoz samoto.
 Kakor skoz votlino v votlini,
ki gre z njim in se sproti obnavlja. (7–9)

(*ki gre z njim* could refer equally well to the first or second *votlina*)

When he flies, he flies through solitude.
 As if through a cavern into another cavern,
which goes with him, eternally renewed. (D)

(“which goes with him” can only refer to the second “cavern”)

When he flies, he flies through solitude.
 As through a hollow within a hollow,
that escorts him, perpetually recreating itself. (K)

(“that escorts him” could refer to the first or second “hollow”)

The uncertainty whether the first or second *votlina* / “cavern” / “hollow” should be understood as the antecedent of the (first) relative clause is preserved only in the latter version. In the former, the disambiguation is achieved at the expense of not only the original structure but also the meaning, since *v votlini* in translation (D) is no longer a postmodifier expressing location but an adjunct expressing direction.

3. The form of one translation differs from the original but parallels the other translation; its FSP is the same as in the original. Insofar as they have the same degree of markedness as the original, these deserve closer study because they appear to represent a favoured translation solution which conveys the same organisation of information at the same level of style as the original. Thus they may be of contrastive interest, serving as a guideline for the translation of structures which may not admit an equally idiomatic rendering of word for word.

There are 39 English examples belonging to this category. 1 of them stands apart in that it admits a comparison of the form but not the FSP. The structure compared is the subject – predicator sequencing in *Tudi takrat je njegov let / padanje v*

kroge samote ("Krokar" 16–17). Both translations have the order subject – predicator, different from the Slovenian predicator – subject. The validity of the comparison, however, is doubtful because the sentence is completely restructured in translation (D), the copula being replaced by a full lexical verb: "Even then **his flight / dives** into orbits of solitude."

The remaining 38 instances may be divided into:

(1) 34, i.e. 17 pairs representing 17 Slovenian structures. In these cases the parallel structures in English result in the same FSP, so that they may be viewed as adequate translation solutions;

(2) 4 examples whose counterparts in the alternative translations display a different FSP despite structural similarity. Once, in the case of translation (K) of the already discussed lines 16–17 from "Krokar", the different FSP displayed in the parallel version (D) is due to restructuring. Twice it stems from a difference in the articles (which contribute toward the representation of information as old or new but do so below clause element level), and once from the choice of words, where the meaning itself may contribute to higher or lower information value.

Out of these 39 examples, 5 are marked in the original. Before addressing those, however, it is worthwhile to survey the ones which are originally unmarked and thus represent stylistically adequate translations. Of the 34 English examples which are unmarked in the original as well, there are 15 pairs and 4 single examples, corresponding to 18 Slovenian ones.³ The types of structure represented are:

(1) Word (or rather clause element) order:

(a) The sequencing in Slovenian and English differs because of the fixed word order rules in both languages; where these exist in Slovenian, they override the FSP requirements without resulting in markedness. An example is the position of clitics, which always follow the first clause element in Slovenian, while their position in English is determined by their syntactic role. A typical structure is the placement of a pronominal object in front of the predicator in Slovenian and behind it in English (as in "Škorpijoni" 2: *svetloba jih boli* : "light hurts **them**" (D and K)). Both structures are in strict keeping with grammatical rules, and their different ordering affects neither the markedness nor the FSP, the thematic character of the pronouns (a reference to something familiar) being inherent in their very category and in their clitic status. There are 8 such English examples, 6 of them paired and 2 isolated (corresponding to 5 Slovenian ones).

(b) The sequencing in Slovenian and English differs because Slovenian has, in the interests of FSP, a clause-initial or final element that is less usual or impossible in this position in English. There are 12 such examples in English, 10 of them paired and 2 isolated ones, corresponding to 7 Slovenian ones. Of these, 4 Slovenian examples (the originals of 6 English structures) have a final or post-verbal subject and 2 (the originals of 4 English structures) an initial adverbial adjunct, while the issue in 1 (again the original of 2 identical English structures) is the distribution of two adverbial adjuncts over the clause. In all these cases, the order of the elements is changed so

³ Two of the examples treated as single because they differ in FSP belong to the same original, namely to "Krokar" 16–17.

that the neutral English patterns are preserved, with the subject preceding the predicator etc. An example is line 1 from "Mleko" (*že skož špranje lije svetloba*), where the order of Slovenian elements reflects their order of informative importance: the setting, being the lowest, occurs first; next comes the predicator, which presents the existence or appearance of a certain phenomenon; and the final position is occupied by the most salient element, the phenomenon to be presented. The translations, by contrast, employ the grammatical English word order, starting with the subject and putting the adjunct last: "light pours through the cracks."

(c) The sequencing remains the same but the participants are given slightly different roles. The example in question are lines 35–37 in "Zvonci novega dne", which originally begin with an adjunct of direction: *V njegovo tožbo zvoní nov dan / s počenimi zvonci / ovčje črede*. An initial adjunct of direction is less usual and therefore marked in English (cf. Quirk et al. 515). The translations, however, begin the sentence with an element which is still an adverbial adjunct, so that it is classed as the same structure, but stands in a looser relationship with the sentence and is quite common in initial position. This is a supplementive *with*-clause, which expresses "a vague notion of accompanying circumstance" (Quirk et al. 1124): "And with this solace [sic!], the broken bells / of a herd of sheep / ring in the new day" (D) / "With this lament, the broken bells / of the sheep herd / toll the new day."

(2) Passivisation (6 paired examples corresponding to 3 Slovenian ones).

(3) Restructuring due to other factors, mostly to the choice of words which demand clause elements other than the original ones to complement them (6 paired examples corresponding to 3 Slovenian ones).

The conclusion is that a change of word order is by far the most frequent adaptation made in such cases; moreover, it does not affect the original FSP.

The remaining 5 examples (3 in Slovenian), on the other hand, are originally marked, so that the English translations are in a way simplified. The markedness of the Slovenian structures is due to word order (in 2 Slovenian examples, namely in 1 pair and 1 single structure in English), and to predicator ellipsis,⁴ made possible by the presence of the correlative conjunct *tedaj* (1 Slovenian example, 2 English ones).

Both Slovenian examples displaying marked word order begin with the sequence setting – predicator – subject. This order is typical of clauses where the emphasis is on a phenomenon presented as existing or appearing on the scene. In the two examples under discussion, however, the subject is subsequently revealed not to be the centre of interest after all, since it is followed by yet another element (a subject complement or adjunct) as the rheme proper. Therefore the postposing of the subject has a slightly marked effect in Slovenian, as it seems to convey undue prominence. In English, on the other hand, the subject is placed in the usual position in front of the verb. Yet the higher information value implied by its position in Slovenian may still be conveyed through the use of articles.

⁴ Predicator ellipsis or reinserion does not result in a changed FSP since the slots of syntactic roles and the degrees of information value are unchanged, its role of "transition" between theme and rheme still being present as the "zero transition", cf. Toporišič (660). The stylistic effect, on the other hand, may well be different.

An example are lines 8–11 from “Zvonci novega dne”: *kjer se zvija megla / v klobčič zlobe, / v klobčič slabosti, / v klobčič histeričnega smeha*. The higher rhematicity allotted to the fog is lost in translation (D) because of the definite article, which establishes it as another predictable part of the scenery (“where **the fog swirls round**”), but better preserved in (K) through the use of the zero article (“where **fog furls up**”). The zero article simply presents fog as a category, not linking it to the previous discourse.

The Slovenian example with an ellipted predicator are lines 28–30 from “Krokar”: *Če oponaša, tedaj sebe, / tedaj svoje glasove, zapleteno / govorico vijugastih klicev*: “If he mocks, he mocks **only** himself, / his own voices, the interwoven / speech of meandering calls” (D) / “If he imitates, he echoes himself, / his voices, intricate / language of curved calls” (K). The Slovenian is marked not only because of the (repeated) *tedaj*, which is a rhetorical and emphatic device according to Toporišič (637), but also because of the accompanying ellipsis of the predicator, which helps to form a terse, striking statement. In English, on the other hand, the conjunct is omitted altogether or replaced by “only”, and the verb is reinserted.

4. The translation differs in form both from the original and the other translation, but its FSP is the same as in the original. There are 16 such examples in English, corresponding to 15 Slovenian ones (only one Slovenian structure has both translations belonging to this category). Before concentrating on the examples which diverge from their originals in markedness, it may again be worthwhile to explore the ones which are unmarked in Slovenian as well, as these appear to fulfill the original function (i.e. convey the same FSP and markedness) through recourse to a different structure; of further interest are the solutions of their – structurally different – English counterparts.

There are 9 English examples which correspond to 9 unmarked Slovenian ones. 4 of them contain the structure discussed in 3. (1) (a), namely the different sequencing of the predicator and the pronominal direct object in English and Slovenian, which stems purely from the different grammatical requirements of the two languages. The reason why the English variant of the structure is not repeated in the other translation is the reformulation of the latter, which is such that it contains no direct object – in 3 instances, the passive is used instead, and once the entire clause originally containing this structure is omitted.

In the remaining 5 examples, the difference in form is due to the restructuring of the clause elements. In 2 instances (“Krokar” 4 and 9) the original middle voice is replaced by the passive in translation (D) but retained in (K). Once, in “Krokar” 10, the original adverbial adjunct of direction is arbitrarily replaced by an adjunct of position in translation (D): *Kadar se spusti nizko*: “When he flies **low**” (D) / “When he swoops **down**” (K). This change is interesting in that it results in a figure not present in the original: the clause is repeated verbatim in line 31, where it is a faithful rendition of the Slovenian, and as both lines appear at the beginning of a stanza (of stanzas 3 and 7, respectively), their parallelism is quite striking. In Slovenian and translation (K), on the other hand, there is no such figure because it is only line 31 (*ko leti nizko* / “When he flies **low**”) that contains a position adjunct, the one in 7 expressing direction. In another instance (“Krokar” 18–19), the original pattern copula – obligatory

adjunct is replaced by a full lexical verb plus direct object in translation (K): *Tista ... / je v tih razdalji* / “She ... **remains in the quiet distance**” (D) / “She ... **keeps a quiet distance**” (K). This is due to word choice, both translations showing a preference for a lexically fuller verb. Despite restructuring, however, the FSP of (K) parallels the original because the object is just as necessary for the complementation of the verb as the original adjunct.

The last example concerns the restructuring of the lengthy final direct object in lines 12–13 of “Mleko”: *in sonce ti butne v obraz / slapove žarkov in mlečne svetlobe* : “and the sun strikes your face / **water falls of beams and milky light**” (D) / “and the sun strikes your face / **with the waterfalls of rays and milky light**” (K). The structure pertaining to the group under discussion is (K), where the direct object is replaced by an instrument adjunct. This is a consequence of word choice, which demands a different complementation of the verb; however, the restructuring does not affect the FSP because the adjunct is just as important for the complementation of its predicator as the object. The other English translation, on the other hand, is restructured in such a way that even its FSP differs, as the link of the phrase to the context is so loose that the relationship is unclear (an independent sentence? a supplementive adverbial clause?), and the structure is heavily marked.

The conclusion is that the examples belonging to this group diverge from the originals because of grammatical word order requirements, the English tendency toward passivisation, or different word choice. Since they succeed in reflecting the FSP and stylistic effect of the original through their choice of form, the question arises why the other translation opts for a different form; most often this is due to the fact that the structure is not present in the other translation at all (the 4 cases with word order), or that the other translation is even more faithful to the original, preserving its form as well (4 examples); in one instance, however, the alternative translation is so free as to diverge from all aspects of the original.

The remaining 7 English examples have marked originals (6); with the exception of one original which is marked because of ambiguity, the others are marked because their word order does not reflect the FSP. This quality is smoothed over in the translations, not by following the FSP but by observing the grammatical English word order. 5 translations, that is 1 pair and 3 single ones, avoid markedness by placing an originally initial adverbial adjunct in final position, and 1 by moving an adverbial adjunct from the front of the direct object behind it.

The one structure which is ambiguous in Slovenian and changed into a more neutral one in English is the already discussed role of *nov dan* in “Zvonci novega dne” 35–37; translation (D) rephrases the direct object or even potential subject *nov dan* as an adverbial adjunct (“in the new day”), thus changing the form and simplifying the structure. The information value of the element, however, does not change by itself because the importance of the direct object to its verb is comparable to that of the adjunct in this case.

The example which displays a difference between adjunct – object sequencing is “Krokar” 1–2: *Požira navsezgodaj zvezdne oči* : “Devours / the star eyes **at daybreak**” (K). In Slovenian, the adverbial adjunct of time (a typical setting) would be expected to appear initially; its position in the sentence quoted above is marked, either because

its thematic character fails to be reflected in its position, or because the element is in fact given unusual informative prominence. Moreover, one possible interpretation of the sentence is that the subject is unexpressed, and in such cases (with the “zero theme”) the most common solution in Slovenian would be to begin with an adverbial as departure point, regardless of FSP (Davis 316); the sequence is thus again marked. In English, on the other hand, the order object – adjunct is a set pattern, particularly when the adjunct is realised by a longer structure such as a prepositional phrase.

The remaining five examples may be illustrated by the two translations of “Zvonci novega dne” 26: *S temno grožnjo ga zagrinjajo* : “It is blanketed by a dark threat” (D) / “Shroud it with a dark threat” (K). The original is marked because the only truly new, therefore the most salient, item of information is placed initially. This order would be marked in English as well, for the reason that process adjuncts, which include instrument adjuncts, are normally predicationals and therefore final (Quirk et al. 556). While translation (K) is limited to rearrangement, translation (D) employs passivisation as well; the latter occurs in one more example.

As for the English alternatives of the 5 single translations, 3 are likewise unmarked and thus different from the original; in 2 cases, however, the alternative translation follows the original in all respects, since it is identical in form and FSP, and marked to boot. Both concern an initial adverbial adjunct whose thematic position is marked in Slovenian because it is the most informative element in the given clause; the preservation of this order in English has a corresponding marked effect as well, not because of FSP considerations but because this is not the canonical order of clause elements. An example is “Zvonci novega dne” 24–25: *V medvedjem plesu / zagrinjajo nebo*. While the semantics itself ensures that the FSP in translation remains the same, regardless of form, translation (D) employs a different structure and stylistic level through passivisation and through the final, unmarked repositioning of the adjunct: “The sky is blanketed in [/] the dance of bears.” Translation (K), on the other hand, retains not only the active form but also the initial placement of the adjunct, which has the same marked effect as in Slovenian: “In a bear dance they shroud the sky.”

5. The translations differ from the original, but parallel each other, in both form and FSP. There are 9 such English examples, 4 pairs and 1 single, corresponding to 5 Slovenian ones. (The counterpart of the single example has not been included in this group because its FSP is ambiguous: judging by the articles, it could be different from Slovenian and parallel to the other translation, or the same as in Slovenian.) Of these, 2 English examples are the translations of a single Slovenian structure which is originally marked, namely of the sentence structure of lines 28–30 from “Krokar”, quoted above. Originally, *tedaj svoje glasove* etc. is an appositive clause (to the preceding clause *tedaj sebe*), which contains a correlative conjunct, an ellipted predicator, and a direct object with an appositive noun phrase (*zapleteno govorico vijugastih klicev*). With the omission or restructuring of the conjunct, however, the equivalent of *svoje glasove* is perceived as an appositive noun phrase – not clause! – to “himself”, followed by another appositive noun phrase, the equivalent of *zapleteno govorico*, within the same clause. In short, the Slovenian clause is reinterpreted as two noun phrases

within a larger framework; in comparison with the original text, marked because of the repeated *tedaj* and ellipsis, the English versions are unmarked and simplified.

6. One translation differs from the original in form but parallels its counterpart; its FSP, however, differs from both. There are 2 such examples (belonging to 2 different Slovenian ones); their divergence in FSP from their structurally parallel English counterparts is due once to a different, much more explicit and thus rhematic word choice, and once to the use of articles. The example with articles is translation (D) of the lines 8–11 in “Zvonci novega dne”, which have been discussed in 3. The higher rhematicity of the fog, which is conveyed in the original and in translation (K), is lost (hence a different FSP); the structure – word order – itself, on the other hand, is unmarked as opposed to the Slovenian markedness.

7. Finally, there are 21 English examples (1 pair and 19 single ones, corresponding to 20 Slovenian structures) with **both the form and FSP differing from the original and the other translation**; of these, 9 (answering 9 Slovenian ones) have marked originals. Of the total, 14 English (i.e. 13 Slovenian) examples show restructuring, 4 lose their original ambiguity by settling for a clearly definable structure, and in 3 a change in the order of elements brings about a different FSP as well. These three types of change are represented also in the group with marked originals, which includes all 4 instances of disambiguation, 4 instances of restructuring, and 1 structure with changed word order.

An example of original structural ambiguity which is smoothed over in one translation are lines 6–7 from “Škorpijoni”: *stisnjeni pod kamni / v razpokah špranjah* : “squeezed **between the stones / in cracks, crevices**” (D). The relation of *v razpokah špranjah* to *kamni* could be either one of coordination (a listing of locations) or of subordination, with *kamni* as the headword further defined by the subsequent prepositional phrase. Translation (D), by contrast, clearly suggests only one interpretation through its use of articles, namely the second. The definite article is used only with the potential headword, whereas the other two location nouns are shown to play a different syntactic role by the use of the zero article. The definite article with “stones” is unexpected as such, the stones being as new to the discourse as the cracks or crevices; however, its use is perfectly natural if the following prepositional phrase is interpreted as a postmodifier further defining the “stones”. Thus the English text encourages the latter reading.

The 4 restructured instances originally contain marked structures: right dislocation, repetition of the predicator, punctuation which separates an apposition from the rest of the sentence with a full stop, and the emphatic correlative conjunct *tedaj*. The example of right dislocation is *Nanjo se spusti, na posteljo nočno ...* (“Krokar” 5), which is preserved in translation (K) as “He dives **on it, the night bed ...**” but replaced by the basic sentence pattern in (D): “He alights **upon the bed of night ...**” The example with changed word order is likewise to be found in “Krokar”, in the already discussed lines 1–2: *Požira / navsezgodaj zvezdne oči*. If the unusual position of the adjunct in Slovenian is understood to reflect a greater informative prominence, translation (D) departs from the original FSP by placing the element in initial position and

thus establishing it as the setting: “**In early morning** / he gulps down starry eyes” (D).

Conclusion. The findings discussed above may be summarised in the following table:

GROUP	NO. OF UNMARKED ENGLISH EXAMPLES	NO. AND % OF UNMARKED EN. EXAMPLES WHICH ARE MARKED IN SLOV.	NO. OF EXAMPLES UNMARKED IN EN. BUT MARKED IN SLOV. IN (D)	NO. OF EXAMPLES UNMARKED IN EN. BUT MARKED IN SLOV. IN (K)
1.	24	1 (4 %)	0 / 14 ⁵	1 / 10
2.	1	1 (100 %)	1 / 1	0 / 0
3.	39	5 (13 %)	2 / 18	3 / 21
4.	16	7 (44 %)	3 / 7	4 / 9
5.	9	2 (22 %)	1 / 5	1 / 4
6.	2	1 (50 %)	1 / 2	0 / 0
7.	21	9 (43 %)	8 / 16	1 / 5
TOTAL	112 ⁶	26	16 / 63 (25,3 %)	10 / 49 (20,4 %)

The two translators are fairly balanced in their replacements of marked Slovenian structures with neutral English ones, with Johnson Debeljak being slightly in the lead: such examples constitute 25,3 % of all unmarked structures in her translations, as compared to Kravanja's 20,4 % in hers. A group-by-group comparison of the two translations, limited to these diverging instances, shows that the seven groups are represented with very similar figures in both. The most conspicuous discrepancy is the last category, of very free and individual translation solutions, which appear to be much more common in Johnson Debeljak.

A comparison of the groups which takes into account all examples reveals that the largest group is 3., namely the one where the two translations differ from the original but parallel each other in form, at the same time preserving the original FSP. The next two choices are the absolutely faithful translations (1.) and their opposites, namely the most individual choices (7.). On the other hand, the percentage of examples which differ stylistically from the original is in inverse proportion to this scale, since groups 1. and 3. contain the fewest. In the smallest groups, by contrast, which are represented merely by 1 or 2 examples (2. and 6.), the latter mostly differ from the Slovenian. It may be concluded that the more “anomalous” translation solutions are more likely to deviate from the original.

⁵ The second figure represents the sum of all unmarked English structures contributed to the group by one translator.

⁶ It may be noted that the sum total yields fewer than 121 structures, which is the total number of unmarked structures found in the two translations. The missing examples belong to groups other than the seven discussed above; those groups contain no instances of diverging markedness and were therefore not considered.

Final, and perhaps most crucial, is the question which marked Slovenian structures tend to become stylistically neutral in translation. There are 22 cases in which an unmarked English translation belongs to a marked original; it is to be noted, however, that the actual number of Slovenian examples is slightly lower because some of them are matched by translations belonging to two different categories, in which case they are counted twice. These 22 Slovenian originals all fall into 3 groups: (1) those displaying marked word order – 9 examples; (2) those with structural ambiguity – 7 examples; (3) those with marked internal structure which are rephrased in translation – 6 examples.

In the first, most numerous group, the Slovenian texts are marked because they do not reflect the FSP (e.g. by placing a new, highly informative adjunct in initial position) or show an unusual FSP; the translations, on the other hand, are adapted to the requirements of the grammatical word order in English. Nevertheless, the original FSP is most often still preserved through factors other than word order, such as the meaning of the words and the context. The frequency of this type may be ascribable to the fact that the un/marked word order criteria differ in the two languages, and that, as a consequence, a less usual organisation of elements in a “free word order” language like Slovenian is perhaps not perceived as important enough to warrant a translation marked from the grammatical point of view. Moreover, determining to what extent the order of elements reflects the FSP, which is the first step towards deciding if it is marked or not (and if it should be accordingly rendered marked in translation as well), sometimes requires careful linguistic analysis, such as is probably rarely undertaken by translators.

The tendency toward disambiguation, which furnishes examples of the second best represented type, is understandable, since English may not have the same linguistic possibilities at its disposal, ambiguity may be considered a flaw to be corrected rather than imitated, or the possibility of an alternative interpretation is simply not noted. More difficult to explain are the instances where a structure is changed and simplified although it could be replicated in English, such as the deletion of right dislocation or of repetitions. A common denominator of these changes, however, appears to be a desire to provide a fluent, readable, “acceptable” text, rather than follow – or indeed explore – the twisting nuances of the original poem.

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UNSER KULTURGUT SPRACHE – REMINISZENZEN AN JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER (1744 – 1803)

Siegfried Heusinger

Abstract

Der Beitrag erinnert anlässlich des 200. Todestages (18. 12. 1803) an den Geschichts- und Religionsphilosophen, an den Sprach- und Kunsttheoretiker Johann Gottfried Herder. Im Zentrum der Abhandlung stehen seine Ideen und Erkenntnisse zu Wesen und Leistung der Sprache, zur Herausbildung der menschlichen Vernunft durch Sprache. Sie ist für jedes Volk ererbtes Gut, Kulturgut. Deshalb sind wir in besonders hohem Maße für ihre Pflege und nützliche Entwicklung verantwortlich.

Kulturgut Sprache, Kultursprache, Sprachkultur sind gewiss selten gewählte Vokabeln, weil wir auch nur selten über das Phänomen „Sprache“ nachdenken. Wir begreifen sie als ein Mittel zur Verständigung, ob wir es nun gut oder mangelhaft beherrschen. Einige unserer Vorfahren haben die uns eigene Sprache eine „göttliche Gabe“ genannt. In unserer frühesten Kindheit sprachen wir bereits die ersten Wörter und erfüllten sie mit Sinn. Das gelang uns nicht immer sofort, denn *Ball* konnte auch den Apfel, ein Ei oder die Tomate meinen. Aber wir haben unsere Muttersprache gelernt und sie im Laufe der Jahre immer perfekter sowohl inhaltlich als auch grammatisch und phonetisch ausgebaut. Ohne das Kommunikationsmittel Sprache können wir uns keine menschliche Gemeinschaft mit ihrer Lebensweise, ihrer Schöpferkraft, ihrer Kultur, ihren Fortschritten in Wissenschaft und Technik vorstellen. Sprache macht die Existenz des Menschen als gesellschaftliches Wesen erst möglich.

Sprache ist uns allgegenwärtig. Sie formt unsere Gedanken, die zunächst in eine komplizierte mentale Struktur eingefügt sind und vermittels der Sprache bringen wir sie als grammatisch organisierte Lautkette zum Ausdruck. In dieser (oft auch noch ästhetisch bearbeiteten) Ausdrucksform werden unsere Gedanken von Mensch zu Mensch übertragen. Diese Lautkette - nennen wir sie Text oder Äußerung - muss nicht nur ein momentaner Hauch oder Schriftzug bleiben, denn sie kann gespeichert und bewahrt werden.

Es ist hier nicht der Ort, die Funktionen der Sprache in Kommunikation und Kognition zu nennen. Sprache in ihrer Beschaffenheit, ihrer Anpassungs- und Erneuerungsfähigkeit ist ein Phänomen für sich und deshalb Gegenstand vieler

Lobpreisungen, von denen hier nur ein Beispiel aus der Feder Johann Gottfried Herders angeführt sein soll:

Ein Hauch unseres Mundes wird das Gemälde der Welt, der Typus unserer Gedanken und Gefühle in des anderen Seele. Von einem bewegten Lüftchen hängt alles ab was Menschen je auf der Erde menschlicher dachten, wollten, thaten und thun werden (J.G. Herder, 1853, Bd. 28, S. 354)¹

Sprache in Beziehung zur *Kultur* zu setzen ist nur folgerichtig und auch keinesfalls neu. Erinnert sei an die theoretische und praktische Arbeit der Prager Linguistik zur Sprachkultur und namentlich an die Arbeiten von Karl Horálek, Bohuslav Havránek und Jaroslav Kuchař, die bis in die zwanziger Jahre des 20. Jahrhunderts zurückreichen. Auch in der einstigen DDR wurden die „Grundlagen der Sprachkultur“ mit Verweis auf die Prager Linguistik in der breiten Öffentlichkeit diskutiert und als Forschungsprojekt der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin angelegt. Federführend waren hier vor allen Erika Ising und Jürgen Scharnhorst.

Unserem entlehnten Wort „Kultur“ liegt das lateinische Verb *colere* (Perfekt-partizip *cultus*) mit den Bedeutungen *bauen, anbauen* zugrunde. Davon zeugen die in Land- und Forstwirtschaft gebräuchlichen Lexeme *Agrikultur, Bodenkultur*, die als Oberbegriffe auch die Pflege und Bearbeitung des Bodens einschließen. Bereits im Lateinischen vorgezeichnet ist die metaphorische Verwendung für „Ausbildung und geistige Vervollkommenung des Individuums“. Zur Ausweitung der Bedeutung von „Kultur“, wie wir das Wort heute gebrauchen, haben namentlich Immanuel Kant und Johann Gottfried Herder im Rahmen der bürgerlichen Emanzipationsbewegung des 18. Jahrhunderts beigetragen.

Im Verständnis Herders hat sich der Gebrauch der *Vernunft* nicht ohne *Sprache*, die *Kultur* nicht ohne Vernunft ausbilden können. Dazu schreibt er 1774 in seinem Werk zur „Ältesten Urkunde des Menschengeschlechts“ (die thematisch als Enträtselung der Schöpfungsurkunde angelegt ist), dass „von der Sprache nun aller Gebrauch der Vernunft und aller Unterscheidungscharakter der Menschheit“ abhängen (J.G. Herder 1852, Bd. 3, S. 269). Diese Abhängigkeit ist begründet in der Rolle der Sprache, die sie als Medium der verallgemeinernden Denktätigkeit einnimmt. Wir binden unsere Gedanken und unsere Denkprozesse an lautliche Hüllen, die wir zusammen genommen Sprache nennen. Wir planen unser Handeln, wenngleich die individuellen kognitiven Prozesse grammatisch ungeordnet sind und nicht jede gedankliche Struktur, die wir aktivieren, auch sprachlich ausgeformt ist. Die Denkkraft unseres Verstandes bedarf einer Sprache und die Vernunft ist ohne Sprache nicht denkbar. Allerdings müssen wir auch erkennen, dass Form und Bedeutung des Sprachlichen nur eine relative Einheit bilden, denn der gleiche Gedanke, den wir denken und den wir ausdrücken wollen, kann über verschiedene sprachliche Formen vermittelt werden. So ist auch Herder zu verstehen, wenn er die Sprache mit dem sprachlichen Inhalt gleichsetzt: „*Nicht der Schall, sondern der Geist, die Seele der Worte ist Sprache*“ (Bd. 33, S. 67).

¹ In Grammatik und Orthographie der Buchausgabe von 1853 wörtlich übernommen.

In seiner berühmten Schrift „Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit“ (erste Veröffentlichung 1784) wiederholt er den Gedanken, dass die Sprache den Menschen „zur Vernunft gebracht habe“:

„Nur die Sprache hat den Menschen menschlich gemacht, indem sie die ungeheure Fluth seiner Affecte in Dämme einschloß und ihr durch Worte vernünftige Denkmale setzte.“ Die Sprache habe Städte errichtet und Wüsten in Gärten verwandelt (ebenda 1853, Bd. 28, S. 355). Und er zitiert Sokrates: *„Die Sprache ward, wie Sokrates sagt, die Bezähmerin der wilden, und, wie man dazu setzen kann, eine bildende Schöpferin in den Wissenschaften“* (J. G. Herder 1853, Bd. 18, S. 24).

„Vernunft“ ist ein Grundbegriff in der klassischen Philosophie und Literatur. Er ist aus der Übersetzung des lateinischen *intellectus* hervorgegangen und stand zunächst neben und auch für die bereits gewählte deutsche Übersetzung „Verstand“. Vernunft ist nicht schlechthin die Fähigkeit des Menschen, mit Hilfe von Begriffen, Urteilen, Regeln geistig tätig zu sein und das Erfahrene zu „denken“ (also „Verstandesdenken“). „Vernunft“ ist mehr. Sie erfordert Verstand, setzt sich aber kritisch mit Erkanntem auseinander und ist letztlich geistige Tätigkeit, die das menschliche Tun und Handeln lenkt. Vernunft ist, wie Herder euphorisch vermerkt, „die höhere Besinnung“, zu der das „fein organisierte Geschöpf“ Mensch fähig ist, „wenn äußere Umstände des Unterrichts und der Ideenweckung dazu kommen“ (ebenda 1853, Bd. 28, S. 126). Und es ist die Sprache in ihrer Gestalt als Rede, „die die schlummernde Vernunft erweckt.“ Die angeborene Fähigkeit zur Vernunft wird durch die Sprache „lebendige Kraft und Wirkung“ (ebenda, S. 140). Mit dieser Sicht auf das Verhältnis von Sprache und Vernunft nennt Herder die Sprache wie auch ihre Formung zur Rede „ein göttliches Geschenk“ (ebenda, S. 140).

Der klassische Begriff der Vernunft hat sich bis zum heutigen Tag nicht wesentlich verändert, aber er wird heute mit erweiterter Referenz verwendet. Mit „Vernunft“ meinen wir den bewusst gebrauchten Verstand, aber es können auch allein die Bedeutungen *Besonnenheit* und *Einsicht* gemeint sein. Die Aufforderung „Nimm doch Vernunft an!“ erwägt ein Korrigieren der Gedanken im Hinblick darauf, einzulernen und Einsicht zu zeigen. Ob in dieser alltäglichen Version oder in der Erwartung bewusst hervorgebrachter neuer Ideen und Entscheidungen – wer vernünftig denkt und handelt, ist kreativ.

Ist die Sprache im Sinne Herders ein göttliches Geschenk? Sie ist es – auch für ihn – nicht im wörtlichen Sinne. Er nennt sie eine „Erfindung“ des gesellschaftlichen Menschen (Bd. 27, S. 36 und S. 93), zu der er Kraft seiner Vernunft in der Lage war und es beständig ist. Wir können Herder mit unserem heutigen Wissen und unseren sprachwissenschaftlichen Erkenntnissen nicht widersprechen, wenn er die Sprache und in ihr jedes Wort als das Ergebnis von Abbildungsprozessen erklärt. Er gebraucht für „Abbildung“ die Begriffe Reflexion oder auch Besonnenheit. Die Sprache entstand mit der Herausbildung der menschlichen Gesellschaft über abstrahierte Merkmale des sinnlich Wahrgenommenen. Die „besonnen sich übende Seele“ des Menschen „sucht ein Merkmal; das Schaf blöcket, sie hat ein Merkmal gefunden; der innere Sinn wirkt“ (Ebenda, S. 37).

Ich „betrachte eine ganze Sprache als einen großen Umfang von sichtbar gewordenen Gedanken, als ein unermeßliches Land von Begriffen.

Jahrhunderte und Reihen von Menschenaltern legten in dieses große Behältniß ihre Schätze von Ideen ..., neue Jahrhunderte und Zeitalter prägten sie zum Theil um ... und vermehrten sie; jeder denkende Kopf trug seine Mitgift dazu bei“ (J. G. Herder in seiner Schrift „Fragmente zur deutschen Literatur“ [1767], in der Veröffentlichung von 1853, Bd. 18, S. 27).

Der Hinweis auf Merkmale in der semantischen Struktur insbesondere der Lexik, die den „inneren Sinn“ aktivieren, ist für die semantische Beschreibung von Lexemen um die Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts zur Methode der Bedeutungsanalyse entwickelt worden. Sie lässt sich allerdings nicht auf J. G. Herder zurückführen. Das auch nur zu behaupten ist falsch, denn für Herder ist der „innere Sinn“ die *Reflexion*, das Abbild im Kopf, das durch äußere Merkmale geweckt wird. Ein Tier, das blökt, ist eben ein Schaf, und allein der Gedanke daran lässt es als sinnliches, als inneres Bild entstehen. Die Bedeutungsanalyse (Merkmalanalyse) der strukturellen Semantik „zerlegt“ das Abbild in Abbildelemente, sog. Seme. Für den Begriff SCHAF können die folgenden wesentlichen Seme angenommen werden:

- Tier (animal)
- Säuger
- Pflanzenfresser
- In der Herde lebend
- Nützling (Wolle, Fleisch)
- charakteristische Lautäußerung (blöken)

Für die Herausbildung einer Sprache zur Verständigung in einer Gesellschaft oder Gruppe von Menschen war der Weg von der ersten bezeichnenden Lautäußerung bis zum vereinbarten oder überlieferten „Mitteilungswort“ (Begriff bei Herder, Bd. 27, S. 48) sehr lang. J. G. Herder ist wohl zuzustimmen, dass die Nachahmung von Naturlauten wie auch Empfindungsäußerungen über lange Zeit die einzigen Verständigungsmittel waren (vgl. Bd. 27, S. 16 und S. 21 ff.).

In allen ursprünglichen Sprachen tönen noch Reste dieser Naturtöne; nur freilich sind sie nicht die Hauptfäden der menschlichen Sprache. Sie sind nicht die eigentlichen Wurzeln, aber die Säfte die die Wurzeln der Sprache beleben (ebenda, S. 13).

Ohne Zweifel entstand die Sprache als ein spezifisch menschliches Kommunikationsmittel mit der Notwendigkeit und dem Bedürfnis zur Kommunikation. Dieser Urgrund wiederum setzte die Existenz einer sozial organisierten Gruppe von Lebewesen mit intellektuellen und physiologischen Fähigkeiten zur Bildung und zum Gebrauch eines sprachlichen Instrumentariums voraus. Wenn man auch annehmen kann, dass die ersten Sprachäußerungen auf einer noch sehr primitiven Entwicklungsstufe im langen Prozess der Anthropogenese vieles bedeuten konnten, also semantisch weniger differenziert waren als heute, so waren es doch schon Verständigungssignale, die auf intellektueller Vereinbarung und nicht mehr auf instinktivem Verhalten beruhten. Nach der Konventionstheorie war es aber letztlich der Mensch selbst, der - wie Johann Gottfried Herder schreibt - sich seine Sprache erfand „*vermöge der eigentümlichen*

Kraft des Verstandes“. Alles Natürliche, das der Mensch erkannte, regte seine „inneren Kräfte“ an, es zu benennen: Die Sprache ward an „Gegenständen, sie anerkennend, erfunden“ (J. G. Herder, 1853, Bd. 37, 136).

Die sprachschöpferische Kraft des menschlichen Geistes zu betonen genügt allein sicherlich nicht zur Erklärung der Sprachentstehung. Was vielleicht einmal individuell hervorgebracht wurde, musste auch der sozialen Kommunikation dienen können. Erst dann wurde es zum sprachlichen Zeichen. Insofern ist die Sprache bereits in ihren Anfängen nur als soziales Phänomen zu begreifen. „*Sprache, im weitesten Sinne des Wortes, ist der Ausdruck unserer Gedanken durch willkürliche Zeichen*“. Diese Anmerkung Johann Gottlieb Fichtes (1982, Bd. 3, S. 97) bezieht „Ausdruck“ auf den kommunikativen Akt der Entäußerung von Gedanken, und sie kennzeichnet die Lautform als nicht motiviert und willkürlich.

Gewiss könnte es so sein, dass die lautliche Bildung vieler sprachlicher Primärformen willkürlich (arbiträr) hervorgebracht wurde, z.B. *Mama* (als kindersprachliches Lallwort), *Haus* (zu ide. *[s]keu: bedecken, umhüllen); zumeist sind es einsilbige Wörter, die einen Teil des Kernwortschatzes² ausmachen. Etymologisch motiviert hingegen und insofern nicht arbiträr sind affixlose Ableitungen z.B. zu „Haus“: *Haut*, *Hose*, *Hort*, *Hütte*. Häufig erfolgte die Ableitung in indoeuropäischer Zeit oder auch noch früher durch Wurzeldeterminative, z.B. durch s- oder t-Erweiterung bei *Haut*, *Hose*, *Hütte*. Das Lexem *Hort* aus ide. *kuzdho- zeigt neben der s-Erweiterung auch grammatischen Wechsel. Oft aber ist es schwer, arbiträr gebildete Formen von motivierten abzugrenzen, weil uns sichere Kenntnisse zu willkürlich gebildeten Lautformen lexikalischer Zeichen fehlen.

Man muss bedenken, dass sichere Erkenntnisse nur aus schriftlichen Quellen geschlossen werden können, und die ältesten sind etwa 6000 Jahre alt, sofern man die phonetisierte Wortbildschrift (Keilschrift, ägyptische Hieroglyphen, chinesische Schrift) und die Anfänge der Lautschrift (semitische und griechische Schrift) als Untersuchungsgrundlage wählt. Die erste Stufe des homo sapiens in der Anthropogenese (nach Meier/Meier 1979, 21) begann vor etwa 700 000 Jahren (der Petralonamensch, Fundort Saloniki), die Anfänge der menschlichen Sprache dürften aber noch weiter zurückliegen, wenn man anerkennt, dass „tönende Verba“, wie Herder schreibt, „die ersten Machtelemente der Sprache“ gewesen sind (Bd. 27, S. 51). „*Der Mensch erfand sich selbst Sprache, aus Tönen lebender Natur*“ (ebenda, S. 50 f.).

Wissenschaftler am Max-Planck-Institut in Leipzig glauben, dass ein Gen namens FOX P2 die für die Sprache notwendigen biologischen Entwicklungen steuert. Sein erstes Auftreten wird auf etwa 200 000 Jahre zurückdatiert. Es steigert die Kapazität unseres Gehirns, steuert die Bewegungen unseres Gesichts, der Kehle und der Stimmbänder. Diese Leistung hat die Sprachfähigkeit entwickelt.

Eine der biologischen Voraussetzungen war auch der aufrechte Gang, denn mit ihm erweiterte sich der Rückenmarkkanal und er konnte mehr Nerven aufnehmen. Der aufrechte Gang hatte aber auch zur Folge, dass sich der Rachenraum des Menschen vergrößerte und der Kehlkopf veränderte seine Lage, was wiederum für die Ausbildung der Stimmbänder notwendig war (nach Informationen der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft im Deutschen Magazin „Stern“, Hamburg, vom 7.11.2002, Seiten 76 ff.).

² Zum Kernwortschatz des Deutschen rechne ich die Primärstammwörter des Grundwortschatzes

Eine der Folgerungen aus den neuesten Erkenntnissen ist wohl, dass sich die natürliche menschliche Sprache in ihrer sich bedingenden Einheit aus Phonetik, Lexik und Grammatik und mit ihren Hauptfunktionen, Mittel der Kommunikation und Medium der verallgemeinernden Denktätigkeit zu sein, im Prozess der Menschwerdung erst verhältnismäßig spät herausbilden konnte. Annahmen, dass sie jünger als 200 000 Jahre sei, sind sicherlich zu relativieren, denn es muss ein zeitlich sehr lang andauernder Entwicklungsprozess bis zu jener Reifestufe vorausgegangen sein, in der wir das Verständigungsmedium als *differentia specifica* des Menschen gegenüber allen anderen Lebewesen bezeichnen können. Selbst unter Voraussetzung einer einleuchtenden Definition des Begriffs „Sprache“ (als Sprachfähigkeit oder auch als Einzelsprache) ist es müßig, die Anfänge aus einem Kontinuum heraus genau bestimmen zu wollen.

Auch J. G. Herder hat sich aus den Erkenntnissen seiner Zeit mit den biologischen Dispositionen der Sprachentstehung befasst. Er beschreibt Zusammenhänge zwischen der „Bildung der Glieder zum aufrechten Gange“ und der Formung des Hauptes, denn „mithin gewann das Hirn ... völligen Raum sich auszubreiten und seine Zweige abwärts zu versenden“ (Bd. 28, S. 131).

Jedes Volk ist in seiner ererbten Sprache verwurzelt. Diese Aussage ist unter mehreren Aspekten näher zu erklären. Jede Sprache, so schreibt Herder, ist ein „Landesgewächs“ und bildet „sich nach den Sitten und der Denkart ihres Volkes“ (Bd. 18, S. 34). Die Sprache ist neben ihrer Funktion, Mittel der Kommunikation zu sein, auch ein autonomes System für kognitive Prozesse, so dass unsere Sicht auf die Welt, unsere Denkart, zunächst an eine Sprache gebunden ist, in die wir „hineingeboren“ wurden. Daraus zu folgern, dass unsere Weltansicht muttersprachlich geprägt ist (ich verweise auf Leo Weisgerbers Theorie von der „inneren Sprachform“, aber auch auf Benjamin Lee Whorfs Beiträge zur Sprachphilosophie) ist strittig, aber auch nicht klar widerlegt.

Auch einige Philosophen und Dichter haben sich dazu geäußert. Nach Erkenntnissen des Philosophen Ludwig Wittgenstein denken wir in den Grenzen unserer Sprache. Er meint nicht die Innovationskraft unseres Verstandes, sondern unsere Denkweise, mit der wir unsere Welt aufgenommen und an Sprache gebunden haben. Der deutsche Dichter Johann Wolfgang Goethe lässt in seinem Drama „Faust“ den Weltgeist auf Faust' Zuneigung „Ich bin's, bin Faust, bin deinesgleichen“ die Erwiderung sprechen: „Du gleichst dem Geist, den du begreifst, nicht mir!“ Der Dichter und Historiker Friedrich Schiller schreibt in seinem Fragment aus Vers und Prosa „Deutsche Größe“: Die Sprache ist der Spiegel einer Nation; wenn wir in diesen Spiegel schauen, so kommt uns ein großes treffliches Bild von uns selbst daraus entgegen.“ Es sind Worte von nationaler Gesinnung in einer Zeit, in der sich die deutsche Nation herausbildete. Deshalb sind sie nicht frei von ideologischen Hintergründen und demzufolge in ihrer Wahrhaftigkeit zu relativieren.

In unserer Zeit, in der interkulturelle Kontakte über die Massenmedien, über die Internationalisierung der Wirtschaft, über den Tourismus intensiviert werden, in einer Zeit also, in der Fremdsprachenkenntnisse und das Wissen über andere Kulturen bereits in Gymnasien vermittelt werden und in die Allgemeinbildung eingehen, geht unsere Sicht auf die Welt über einstige Horizonte hinaus.

Wir haben mit der uns überlieferten Muttersprache ein Erbe übernommen, das mehr ist, als nur ein Verständigungsmittel. Es bewahrt und vermittelt über sprachliche

Einheiten Bezeichnungsmotive, Wertungen, Gliederungen und Abstufungen in der dem Sprachträger eigenen Weltsicht. Es sind Eigenheiten, die sich mit dem Werden einer Volkssprache herausgebildet haben. In Zeiten, in der ein Volk auseinander gerissen war, wird das einigende Band der Sprache, „das Band der Seelen“ (J.G. Herder 1853, Bd. 27, S. 142) beschworen. Erst unter solchen Bedingungen wird mehr denn je bewusst, wie sehr eine Sprache Kulturgut ist und ein Volk verbindet. Die Sprache jedes Volkes ist ein Teil seines kulturellen Erbes; aber auch seine Geschichte, seine Religion, Sitten und Bräuche, Verhaltensgewohnheiten in der Kommunikation, überkommene Regularitäten im Zusammenleben der Menschen sind kulturell geprägt.

Bei etymologischen Untersuchungen zur Bezeichnungsmotivation stoßen wir immer wieder auf Lexeme unserer Gegenwartssprache, deren Benennung auf einen Volksglauben oder auch nur auf wiederholte Beobachtungen zurückgeht. Beispielsweise geht das Benennungsmotiv von dt. *Schmetterling* und engl. *Butterfly* auf den Volksglauben zurück, dass Hexen die Gestalt eines Falters annehmen, wenn sie Sahne oder Butter stehlen wollen. Das im Deutschen nicht mehr gebräuchliche Wort, das Bestimmungswort *Schmetter-*, bedeutete „Sahne, Rahm“ (im Slow., Tschech. Russischen erhalten ist „smetana“) und bewahrt den Volksglauben. Mit gleicher Etymologie ist *Butterfly* (aengl. „butorflēge“) belegt. Mundartlich im Deutschen bekannt sind auch „Molkendieb“ und „Buttervogel“.

Figurativ motiviert ist hingegen franz. *papillon* (zu lat. „papilio“, was etymologisch auf die ide. Wz. *pel- „fliegen, flattern“ zurückgeht). Die Benennung *papillon* beruht auf einem Vergleich des Falters mit den nach außen umgeschlagenen Enden eines Soldatenzeltes (afz. „paveillon“), ist also eine Metapher. Ebenso ist slow. *metulj* (zu urslaw. *meto „fegen, kehren, werfen“) auf einen Vergleich mit den scheinbar richtungslosen Flugbewegungen des Falters zurückzuführen.

Viele der Motive sind heute nicht mehr durchsichtig und geben deshalb auch keine Aufschlüsse mehr über die „Sicht auf die Welt“. Aber hin und wieder ist das noch möglich, vor allem dann, wenn Wertungen die Bezeichnungsmotive waren. Derlei Motive können gegebenenfalls unter dem Einfluss gesellschaftlichen Wertewandels plötzlich nicht mehr akzeptiert werden. Man denke nur an die noch immer geläufige Benennung *Altersheim* (mit mehr Komfort auch *Altenheim* genannt) - Wohn- und Pflegeheim für alte Menschen. Das Motiv ist durchsichtig und deshalb für viele Menschen, die mit dem Altsein negative Gefühle verbinden, nicht akzeptabel. In der ehemaligen DDR ersetzte man es mit dem Nomen *Feierabendheim*. Es hat sich als „offizielle Bezeichnung“ nie recht durchsetzen können. Bessere Aussichten auf Akzeptanz hat heute *Seniorenheim*.

Sprache ist nicht sächliches Kulturgut wie eine bedeutsame Gemäldesammlung, die man betrachten kann, von der man sich angezogen fühlt und sich inspirieren lässt. Natürlich, auch Gemälde haben ihre „Sprache“. Aber die Sprache, die wir meinen, ist vielmehr ein Instrumentarium zum Austausch oder auch nur zum Ausdruck von Gedanken, Gefühlen, Mitteilungen, Wertungen. Sie ist vor allem ererbtes geistiges Gut und materialisiert durch ihre Lautung. Sie ist einer Sprachgemeinschaft zur Nutzung und weiteren Entwicklung überliefert. Aber „Nationalschatz“ (Begriff bei Herder, Bd. 18, S. 29) ist sie nur zu einem wesentlichen Teil. Viele der heute im Deutschen

gebräuchlichen Lexeme sind bekanntlich aus anderen, vornehmlich europäischen Sprachen entlehnt.

Aber nicht jede Entlehnung und nicht jede Neubildung ist eine Bereicherung für den Lexembestand der Sprache. Das mag auch Herder gemeint haben, wenn er sich gegen die „Sprachverderber, Sprachkünstler und Wortgrübler“ stellte, ebenso gegen die „unseligen Kunstrichter und Regelschmiede, die unserer rüstigen und tüchtigen Sprache“ ihrer Bildlichkeit berauben und ihr die Anpassungsfähigkeit nehmen (ebenda, Bd. 18, S. 25).

Der Zustrom von Anglizismen in die deutsche Gegenwartssprache wird - und nicht nur über die Medien - oft beklagt. Wer hier urteilt, muss differenzieren. Gewiss ist nicht einzusehen, warum ein Friseurgeschäft ein *Hair Studio* genannt, Kinderbekleidung als *kids fashion* bezeichnet, der Anstieg der Geburtenrate mit *Baby-Boom* überschrieben werden muss. G. Gringmuth-Dallmer bringt es auf den Punkt, wenn er schreibt: „Die größten Multiplikatoren von Trends in der Gesellschaft, die Medien, und mit ihnen die Werbung, können sich ohne die Hilfe des Englischen nicht mehr verständlich machen. *Layouter*, *Cutterinnen* und *Reporter* sind im *Teamwork* damit beschäftigt, ihren *Time Planer* zu begreifen. Die Fernsehsender jagen in der *Prime-Time* den Zuschauern hinterher, damit die Industrie *Spots* schaltet. (...) Die Zukunft wird uns mit *Teleshopping* und *Video on demand* beglücken“ (1995, 29).

Weniger kritisch wird man sich zu fachsprachlichen Entlehnungen äußern können, denn die allgemeine Tendenz zur Internationalisierung der Fachsprachen ist eine Folge globaler Entwicklungen in Wissenschaft, Technik, Wirtschaft und auch in Bereichen der Kultur und des Sports. Waren einst Latein und Griechisch die Sprachen der Wissenschaften in Europa – die Terminologie mehrerer Wissenschaften folgt noch heute dieser Tradition –, so ist das Englische heute die Hauptsprache der internationalen Verständigung. Die Sprache eines Volkes leidet nicht darunter, wenn sie Termini entlehnt. Bereits im 19. Jh., mehr noch im 20. Jh. wurde vornehmlich von der Jugend Neues in Sport, Musik, Tanz und Geselligkeit aus dem Amerikanisch-Englischen nachgeahmt und mit der fremden Bezeichnung übernommen: *Blues*, *Boogie-Woogie*, *Beat*, *Swing*, *Band*, *Bowling*, *Smoking* – um nur wenige Entlehnungen zu nennen.

Die für Entlehnungen sehr offene deutsche Sprache wird wohl kaum *Smoking*, *Software*, *Hardware*, *Computer* in der Standard- und auch nicht in der Fachsprache entbehren wollen. Neuerungen in der Sprache fordern Kritiker heraus, und das ist gut so, denn der Sprachschatz eines Volkes – sinnvolle Entlehnungen und gelungene Neubildungen sind darin eingeschlossen – darf nicht verwildern. Man muss aber auch dem Sprachgebrauch gegenüber tolerant und nachsichtig sein können, wenn beispielsweise Modewörter aufhören lassen oder sich die Jugend mit eigenen Kreationen ins Gespräch bringt. Das sind Momente in der Entwicklung einer Sprache, die ihr aber nicht schaden. „Jugend muss sich austoben“, hört man oft im Volksmund. Das ist eine Erfahrung, die auch in der Sprachverwendung zu beobachten ist. Viele der Modewörter gelangen aus der Jugendsprache in die Umgangssprache und nur selten auch in die Standardsprache. Oft steckt dahinter nur ein Hang zur Nachahmung und manchmal auch innovatives Denken oder einfach nur die Neigung „in zu sein“.

Herder nennt Modewörter und modische Phrasen eine „Modelectüre der Zeit“.

Sie gedeihen wie „Sodomsäpfel³, auswendig schön, inwendig voll Staub und Asche. Ein Jüngling, der, was und wie etwas sogenannt schönes gedruckt erscheint, es begierig verschlingt, hält gewiß ungesunde Mahlzeit: gutes und böses ißt er durcheinander, und da das meiste süß und üppig ist, so wird sein Geschmack verdorben und verwöhnet“ (J. G. Herder, Abhandlungen und Briefe zur schönen Literatur und Kunst [I. Teil 1773]. In der Veröffentlichung von 1853, Bd. 24, S. 323).

Indem wir Sprache als überliefertes und sich beständig entwickelndes Kulturgut sozialer Gemeinschaften begreifen und sie als solches auch angenommen haben, tragen wir ihr gegenüber auch die Verantwortung für ihre Pflege und ihre Entwicklung. Ebenso verantwortlich sind wir für das Funktionieren der Sprache innerhalb einer sozial differenzierten Sprachgemeinschaft und im Kontakt mit anderen Sprachgemeinschaften. Wir haben gelernt, Entlehnungen aus anderen Sprachen aufzunehmen und wie Eigentum zu behandeln, wenn sie unsere eigene Sprache bereichern. Es wäre beispielsweise nicht einzusehen, wenn wir das aus der englischen Sprache übernommene Wort *Sport* durch das veraltete deutsche Wort *Körperertüchtigung* ersetzen wollten. Die Entlehnung ist mit ihrer heute in vielen Sprachen gebräuchlichen Bedeutung nicht nur frei von Konnotationen, sie ist als Formativ auch kurz und rationell (engl. *Sport* bedeutete noch im 19. Jh. „Vergnügen, Kurzweil“).

Anders und zwar negativ zu bewerten ist die Flut von Anglizismen (siehe oben!), die unbegründet für gleichwertige (zum Beispiel deutsche) Ausdrücke verwendet werden, um einer fragwürdigen Mode zu genügen oder sich davon Werbewirksamkeit zu versprechen. Denken wir nur an das aus dem Englischen (eigentlich dem Slang) entlehnte *Kids*, das wohl wegen seiner Kürze das deutsche Wort *Kinder* zu verdrängen scheint.

Jede Sprache – so J. G. Herder – „ist eine Tochter des Geistes“ aus dem heraus sie sich entwickelt hat. Und das Wort einer fremden Sprache zu gebrauchen sei „löblich, solange Geister mit Geistern, Nationen mit Nationen umgehen. ... Plerrt aber eine Nation der anderen sinnlos nach, denkt sie nicht die Gedanken in eigener Weise, so bekennt sie sich als ihr unterthänig Gefangene, die nicht anders als nach und aus ihrem Munde zu sprechen weiß“ (Bd. 33. S. 68). Verbindet der Gesprächspartner „mit meinem Wort nicht ganz und im genauesten Umriss meinen Begriff, warum sollte ich, um ein schlaffes Missverständniß zu vermeiden, nicht lieber das fremde Wort zu nützen, mit dem er meinen Gedanken denkt?“ (ebenda, S. 68)

Der Kulturbegriff hat – wie bereits dargelegt – eine sehr weite Extension angenommen. Er steht unter anderen für ein reiches Erbe an materiellen und geistigen Gütern, auch für jede nützliche Neuentwicklung. Und er wird in Beziehung gesetzt zur Sprache, die gleichfalls als Schöpfung des Menschen in seiner langen Geschichte entstanden ist. Der Kulturbegriff wird aber auch auf soziale Erwartungen und Normen bezogen, die in ihrer Sonderheit vom Ethos, von Sitten und Bräuchen abhängen.

³ Wortbildung – Bezug auf die biblische Stadt „Sodom“, die von Gott wegen ihrer Lasterhaftigkeit zur Strafe mit Feuer und Schwefel zerstört wurde. Der Sodomsapfel, eine giftige Art der Nachschattengewächse, gedeiht in Afrika und an den Küsten des Mittelmeers. Die Früchte des bestachelten Strauchs sind gelb und etwa zwe cm dick.

Solcherart Verhaltensnormen tragen Benennungen wie Esskultur, Streitkultur, Wohnkultur, Verkaufskultur, Sprachkultur. Selbst der Begriff „Standardsprache“, der für die kodifizierte (verbindlich festgelegte) Norm einer Nationalsprache steht, ist gegen das Synonym „Kultursprache“ austauschbar.

Allerdings lassen sich die geläufigen Sekundärbegriffe „Kulturträger“ und „Kulturtradition“ nur als Metaphern auch auf die Sprache beziehen, denn „Sprachträger“ und „Kulturträger“ stehen zueinander in keiner synonymischen Relation. Auch der Traditionsbegriff hat keinen direkten Bezug zur Sprache, denn wir bewahren sie nicht wie ein überliefertes Gut, sondern übernehmen sie als Erbschaft, die wir stets und ständig weiter entwickeln, weil wir sie unseren aktuellen Bedürfnissen nach zweifelsfreier Verständigung anpassen müssen. Um als Mittler in der Kommunikation intakt zu bleiben, unterliegt sie diesen notwendigen internen Veränderungen.

Aber es gibt auch Korrelationen zwischen der Geschichte einer Sprache und der Tradition einer Kultur. Man muss nicht unbedingt auf große Kulturtraditionen verweisen, etwa auf jene

Tradition, die mit dem Verfall des Rittertums aufhörte, sich fortzusetzen. Mit dem Untergang der ritterlichen Institutionen und Lebensformen hatten auch die tragenden Begriffe (besser: die ritterliche Terminologie) keine kommunikative Existenz mehr. Das Rittertum geriet aus dem Blickfeld des allgemeinen Interesses und der Terminologie blieb nur noch der historische Wert. In der Regel geht die Hinterlassenschaft einer Kulturepoche nicht plötzlich unter, aber sie gerät in Vergessenheit, weil dafür nur noch ein spezielles (ein museales) Bedürfnis besteht. So ergeht es auch dem Wort. Mitunter aber verändert es nur seine Bedeutung. Wörter wie *Harnisch*, *Hellebarde*, *Barte* zur Bezeichnung der Ritterrüstung und zweier Waffen sind uns als Historismen erhalten geblieben und erinnern uns an jene Kulturepoche. Das Wort *Ritterzehrung* hingegen lässt uns nur vermuten, dass es in dieser Epoche geläufig war. Es bezeichnet ein Almosen, das man einem verarmten, bettelnden Ritter reichte beziehungsweise weit öfter von ihm erpresst wurde. Es kündigt bereits vom Verfall des Rittertums und ist mit ihm als Wort untergegangen. Kurz gesagt, sind es kulturgeschichtliche Veränderungen, die zu Systemveränderungen (insbesondere) im Wortschatz geführt haben.

Nicht selten ist einzig die bisherige Wortbedeutung untergegangen, während die Lautform eine neue Bedeutung angenommen hat. War *Mut* (ahd. *muot*) noch auf das Gefühlsleben und die Gesinnung zunächst nur der Angehörigen des Adels, so auch der Kreuzritter, bezogen und bezeichnete deren Gemütszustand, die innere Erregung (dazu auch die heute noch geläufigen Lexeme *Übermut*, *Mutwille*), so nahm es bis zum 16. Jh. die heute noch geläufigen Bedeutungen „Kühnheit, Unerschrockenheit“ an.

Sprache ist uns Medium in mehrfacher Hinsicht: Sie ist uns Träger und Mittler unserer Gedanken, sie ist Medium zur Bewahrung unserer Geschichte und der kulturgeschichtlichen Entwicklungen, und sie ist als humane Schöpfung ein Teil des kulturellen Erbes. Aber sie ist kein Erbe, das man übernimmt und in seinem Urzustand beibehält. Sie ist geistiges Erbe, das man bewahrt und es nützt, indem man es entwickelt. Für die Sprache lebt dieser Gedanke in J. W. Goethes Wort (aus seinem Drama „Faust“, Teil 1) „*Was du ererbt von deinen Vätern hast, erwirb es, um es zu besitzen.*“

Es ist der Anspruch an das Erbe, es auch nützlich verwenden zu können. Sonst sei es nur „eine schwere Last“ (ebenda). Dieser Nützlichkeitsgedanke impliziert sowohl den Willen zur zweifelsfreien Verständigung als auch den Anspruch auf einen der Situation angemessenen Sprachgebrauch. Die jeweils kommunikative Situation, einschließlich der Gesprächsthematik, entscheidet darüber, ob es angemessen ist, Dialekt, Umgangssprache, Gruppenjargon oder Hochsprache (Kultursprache) zu wählen. Der Begriff der kommunikativen Situation ist in diesem Kontext recht weitreichend. Er umfasst

1. die Tätigkeitssituation (z.B. die Kommunikation unter Wissenschaftlern in einem wissenschaftlichen Forum. Es lassen sich unter anderen solche Bereiche unterscheiden wie Wissenschaft, Alltag, Publizistik, Verwaltung/Direktive, Justiz, Kunst),

2. die soziale Situation (wer kommuniziert mit wem?; Interessen, Wünsche, weltanschauliche/religiöse Bindung, sozialer Status der Partner),

3. Begleitbedingungen wie Raum, Zeit, momentane Verfassung der Partner.

Mit dieser Sicht auf eine der kommunikativen Situation angemessene Sprachverwendung bewegen wir uns in einem Erwartungsrahmen, der „Sprachkultur“ fordert. Ein kulturvoller Umgang mit der Sprache setzt nicht nur die treffende Einschätzung der Situation, sondern auch einen hohen Grad der Sprachbeherrschung sowohl des Senders wie auch des Empfängers voraus. Im Allgemeinen reicht es aber auch nicht aus, nur zu „sichern“, dass der Empfänger die Äußerung auch verstehen kann. J. G. Herder sieht zudem auch sprachästhetische Ansprüche. Aus der Rede müsse die Schönheit der Seele sprechen. „Einheit ist Vollkommenheit, sowohl ... im Gedanken wie im Ausdruck“ (In „Ursachen des gesunkenen Geschmacks. Preisschrift 1773. In der Veröffentlichung von 1853, Bd. 24, S. 332).

„Ein Mensch, der schön denkt und schlecht handelt, ist ein mißgebildetes, unvollkommenes Wesen als ein anderer, der richtig denkt und sich krumm und elend ausdrückt“ (ebenda, S. 332). Ebenso „wäre es die äußerste Schande, leer Stroh zu dreschen“ (ebenda, S. 334). „Gedankenlose Worte, der schönste leere Ausdruck ist eine verwelkte Blüthe“ (ebenda, S. 333).

Eine Kultur der Sprachverwendung verlangt nicht nur Angemessenheit und Treffgenauigkeit in der Formulierung, sie verlangt auch einen zweckmäßig vermittelten Inhalt. Es sind Anforderungen an Stil und Inhalt, aber auch an Inhalt durch Stil. Es ist schon ein Unterschied in der Ausdruckswahl, ob jemand beispielsweise ein Gemälde als *schön* und *beeindruckend* bewertet oder sich im gewohnten Jargon mit der lapidaren Feststellung äußert: *Einfach cool!*“

Wir begreifen Sprachkultur als eine soziale Fähigkeit, die uns bewusst ist und unser sprachlich-kommunikatives Handeln lenkt. Deshalb können Sprachschluderei, Missachtung der kommunikativen Situation, leere Klischeewörter nur auf mangelhaft ausgebildete kommunikative Fähigkeiten und unzureichende Spracherziehung zurückgeführt werden. Wir müssen diesen Mangel natürlich in erster Linie auf den Gebrauch der Muttersprache beziehen. Wer eine bestimmte Fremdsprache nicht beherrscht, sich aber dennoch in der fremdsprachlichen Kommunikation übt, verdient unbedingt Respekt.

Die Theorie der Sprachkultur wurde schon Ende der zwanziger Jahre vom Linguistenkreis der Prager Schule entwickelt. Auf ihrem 1. Internationalen Slawistenkongress in Prag 1929 standen die „Allgemeinen Grundsätze der Sprachkultur“ im Mittelpunkt der Diskussion. Grundlage ihrer Forschungen zur Sprachkultur war allein die Literatursprache (Kultursprache), also die kodifizierte Standardvarietät, heute in der Linguistik auch als Standardsprache bekannt. Von dieser Position abweichend meine ich, dass sprachliches Verhalten auch dann kulturellen Ansprüchen genügt, wenn in einer typischen Alltagssituation ein Gespräch in der Umgangssprache geführt wird. Jugendliche unter sich empfinden es als kommunikativ angemessen, wenn sie ihren aktuellen Sonderwortschatz gebrauchen, ohne dabei gleich ins Obszöne, Vulgäre, Seichte abzugleiten.

Jugend ist *irre drauf, alles ist total cool, partymäßig geht's voll ab, es fetzt ein*. Schnell wird auch 'mal ein neues Wort erfunden. Der dürre *Typ* wird mit ironischem Hintergrund *Spargeltarzan* genannt, weil er sich wohl zu wichtig nimmt. Vielleicht auch, weil dieser *Wolkenpuster* einen *Lungentorpedo* (Zigarette) nach dem anderen abschießt. So tönt es, wenn junge Leute ganz unter sich sind. Aber so „tönt es“ auch nicht immer, wenn man „unter sich ist“. Nicht jedes Gesprächsthema lässt sich mit jugendsprachlichem Stil behandeln. Das weiß in der Regel auch der jugendliche Sprecher.

Wir wollen nicht übersehen, dass sowohl die Umgangssprache als auch die Jugendsprache nicht nur in einer Stilschicht verwendet wird. Die Schichten (Ebenen) reichen von der gehobenen Variante bis zur niederen, ja bis zur vulgären Ausdrucksform. Die meisten Menschen beherrschen alle Ebenen und mischen sie auch, wenn sie es für angemessen halten. Wer sich allerdings nur auf der niederen Ausdrucksebene bewegt oder sich auch nur dort bewegen kann, muss mit sozialen Nachteilen rechnen. Ihm wird nachgesagt, er habe keine Kultur. Seine Sprache verrät ihn.

In der ehemaligen DDR wurde mit dem Begriff der Sprachkultur auch der Begriff „Sprachpflege“ belebt. Gegenstand der Sprachpflege war allein die kodifizierte Norm der Standardsprache. So notwendig es auch ist, Normen der Grammatik, der Phonetik und der Rechtschreibung zu beherrschen, einen reichen Wortschatz zu besitzen, sich angemessen ausdrücken zu können, so unerlässlich ist es ebenso, dass die Bewertung des Sprachgebrauchs nicht auf die enge Sicht der Sprachpflegerei vergangener Zeiten zurückfällt. Unsere Sprache ist reich und vielschichtig. Die Standardvarietät ist zwar weitgehend normativ festgelegt, aber auch Dialekte, regionale Umgangssprachen und Sondersprachen haben in ihrer Entwicklung usuelle Verbindlichkeiten ausgebildet. Zudem sind diese Subvarietäten ebenso Teile unseres Kulturgutes Sprache.

Das Lexem „Sprachpflege“ kann vieldeutig verwendet werden. Es eignet sich allerdings nicht als Synonym für Sprachreglementierung. Ich wurde beispielsweise in der DDR einmal heftig von einem Schulleiter gerügt, weil meine Tochter in einem Deutschauufsatz die polnische Stadt *Danzig* nicht mit der polnischen Bezeichnung *Gdansk* benannte. Die widerrechtliche „Eindeutschung“ sei historisch überlebt.

Auf einer ganz anderen Ebene liegt die Bewertung von stilistischen Entscheidungen. Beispielsweise schrieb die gleichnamige Zeitschrift „Sprachpflege“ 1970: *Die Feststellung „er verspätet sich häufig zum Unterricht“ klingt etwas gehoben. Gebräuchlicher ist: „Er kommt häufig zu spät zum Unterricht.“* Welcher Stilschicht der

Vorzug gegeben werden sollte, hängt vom situativen Kontext ab. Ohne ihn zu berücksichtigen sind Angemessenheitsbewertungen „ohne Wert“. Als sehr gehoben empfunden vor allem im Norden Deutschlands wird heute das Lexem *Gemahlin*. Aber es ist auch nicht in jeder Situation unpassend. Gewiss, die Sprache kennt Wandlungen, aber es sind meistens allmählich verlaufende Vorgänge. Sprachpflege, die am Einzelwort klebt, keine Toleranz kennt und blind ist gegenüber Veränderungen, hat nichts mit Sprachkultur zu tun. Es besteht sogar die Gefahr, dass sie die Herausbildung von Fähigkeiten zum kreativen Umgang mit der Sprache behindert.

Sprachpflege kann nur und muss sich orientieren am jeweiligen Umgang mit der Muttersprache. Kritik ist geboten

1. an konservativen Einstellungen zum aktuellen Sprachgebrauch,
2. an mangelnder Toleranz gegenüber der Alltagskommunikation und der Gruppenkommunikation,
3. bei groben Verstößen gegen grammatische, lexische und stilistische Normen vor allem in der schriftlichen Kommunikation,
4. an schwer verständlichen überlangen Sätzen und lexischen Kompositionen,
5. an verbaler Verletzung der Menschenwürde,
6. an der Ignoranz sprachkultureller Werte (der Streitkultur) selbst im Meinungsstreit, ob nun im zwischenmenschlichen Verhalten oder im Streit der politischen Parteien,
7. an der Überfremdung der Muttersprache, wenn sie ohne einsehbare Gründe voranschreitet (die Entlehnung aus fremden Sprachen kann auch ein Gewinn sein, z.B. für die Fachsprachen).

Die sprachkulturelle Arbeit ist nicht nur eine Aufgabe des Muttersprachunterrichts, sie sollte auch Lehrprinzip im Fremdsprachenunterricht sein, denn sie fördert die Bewusstheit beim Erwerb und dem Gebrauch der fremden Sprache. Beiträge dazu leisten nicht nur normgerechte Texte, sondern auch und vor allem das Bewusstsein der Einheit von Sprache und der im Volk tief verwurzelten Kultur.

Magdeburg

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‘NADA SE PIERDE’ EN *EL CIELO PROTECTOR* Y *CITA EN TOMBUCTÚ*

Santiago Martín

Como viajero, no estás obligado a ayunar pero
debes mostrar de alguna otra manera tu
sumisión al Creador.

(Amin Maalouf, *León el Africano*, p. 22)

Abstract

El presente trabajo pretende comparar dos novelas distantes en el tiempo y en el espacio, a saber, *The Protecting Sky* (1949), de Paul Bowles, y *Cita en Tombuctú* (1996), de Joseph Subirós. La novela española remite en más de una ocasión a la obra americana. Varios temas, presentes en ambas obras, que quisiéramos destacar: La fascinación por el continente africano; el desierto como telón de fondo; el viaje (especialmente interior) como formación del hombre civilizado en un entorno hostil; el amor carnal entre la mujer civilizada y el hombre salvaje; la huida del hombre civilizado de su *habitat* en busca de otros valores; y, la derrota, debida al desequilibrio (físico, mental y temporal) del hombre civilizado. Así, comparando las obras, y mediante una frase (‘Nada se pierde en el desierto’) que *Cita en Tombuctú* presta de *The Protecting Sky*, la novela española ofrece alternativas a los problemas planteados en la novela americana. Si en Bowles hay resignación, en Subirós hay esperanza.

Introducción

Refiriéndose a su particular concepto de la intertextualidad, Juan Goytisolo comenta que desde el siglo XIX para la casi totalidad de los novelistas y críticos, lo más importante de una novela es su relación exterior (social, sociológica) que pretende representar. No obstante, la conexión de una novela con el corpus general de las obras publicadas anteriormente a ellas es siempre más intensa que la que le une a la ‘realidad’. (Goytisolo en Gould Levine 27-28)

El presente trabajo pretende relacionar dos novelas dispares en el tiempo y en el espacio: *El cielo protector* (1988)¹, de Paul Bowles (Nueva York, 1911), y *Cita en*

¹ Título original: *The Sheltering Sky* (London: Lehmann & Owen), 1949. El matrimonio norteamericano Katherine y Porter Moresby, acompañados de un amigo común, George Tunner, viajan al Norte de África para, primero, escapar de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, y, segundo, salvar el matrimonio. En África, Port muere de tifoidea; Kit es secuestrada por un jinete árabe, Belqassim. Al final, Kit, mentalmente derrotada, sigue errando en África. Tunner vuelve sano y salvo a Estados Unidos.

Tombuctú (1998), del autor catalán Joseph Subirós (Figueres, 1948)². Ambas novelas sienten gran atracción por el negro continente africano. No es casualidad que los personajes de ambas novelas decidan refugiarse, ya que para dar nueva vida a su apagada relación y salvar su amor, tanto Linda y Andrés como Kit y Port huyen del agitado mundo occidental. En el Norte de África se ven confrontados con otro mundo, otros valores. Predomina, así, la función terapéutica del desierto que, en una entrevista, Subirós ilustra de la siguiente forma: “[i]r al desierto es como ir a ver el mar para quien no lo ha visto nunca” (Rey 7).

Una frase (re)creativa

Cita en Tombuctú –además de narrar el (re)encuentro entre dos personas, intenta recuperar el espíritu aventurero y misterioso de las crónicas de viaje de los grandes exploradores pioneros (Alexander Gordon Laing, René Caillié, Heinrich Barth...) de la África profunda– hace dos referencias explícitas al libro *El cielo protector* de Paul Bowles. Andrés, al principio de la novela, preocupado por la súbita desaparición de Linda, descubre “la nota manuscrita bajo el libro de Paul Bowles que ella tenía en la cabecera de la cama” (Subirós 16). Más adelante, atando cabos, concluye que “la pista del libro de Bowles junto a la cama era demasiado obvia” (28). La lectura de un libro de cabecera empírico le sirve de estímulo a un personaje ficticio para emprender su particular viaje (si bien ficticio, salpicado, andando el libro, de crónicas históricas...) a Tombuctú. Una obra condiciona a otra: Un libro real se vuelve un libro de culto en una novela.

La enigmática frase, pronunciada al final de *El cielo protector* por Miss Ferry, delegada del consulado norteamericano –“el desierto es enorme, pero en él nada se pierde” (Bowles 281)– se cita dos veces casi textualmente en *Cita en Tombuctú*, cuando Linda, desde África, le escribe una postal a Andrés, pidiéndole que vaya en su busca: “Nada se pierde en el desierto” (Subirós 16). Más tarde, haciendo balance positivo del viaje, Linda evoca la misma frase en una de sus cartas a Andrés (240). Si las alusiones al libro de Bowles revelan el espíritu inspirador, el motor que tiene que arrancar a Andrés de su bufete de abogado adinerado y marcharse a África en busca de Linda, la ‘cita’ ajena insertada sobre el desierto hace algo más. Conlleva un desarrollo creativo; crea nuevas dimensiones en el nuevo contexto; trastoca el significado original de *El cielo protector*. Así, con Gérard Genette, cuyo concepto de hipertextualidad, elaborado en *Palimpsestes* (1982) –simpatizamos, dicho sea de paso, además con su noción de ‘crítico y/o lector bricolaje’–, sería el más próximo para relacionar el ‘hypertexto’ (Texto B; texto posterior) *Cita en Tombuctú* con el ‘hypotexto’ (Texto A; texto anterior) *El cielo protector*. (cf. Genette 11 y ss.). Además, sin entrar en la enrevesada polémica

² En España, Linda, hastiada por el aburrimiento de su relación con Andrés, decide escaparse a Tombuctú para allí darse cita con él. En África, Linda intima con Ahmed, contrabandista. Andrés, por su parte, guiado por el servicial autóctono Amadou y la obsesiva lectura de las crónicas de viaje, no logra llegar hasta Tombuctú y tiene que volver a España. Linda, no obstante, sí logra llegar a Tombuctú.

sobre el término de ‘intertextualidad’³ sabemos que “le langage n’est jamais innocent: les mots ont une mémoire seconde qui se prolongue mystérieusement au milieu des significations nouvelles” (Barthes 16). Julia Kristeva definiría esta ‘prolongación’ como “une transposition d’un (ou de plusieurs) syst me(s) de signes en un autre” (59)⁴.

En la obra de Paul Bowles, la frase sale –finalizando la novela– de la altiva y desagradable Miss Ferry, sorprendida por la pérdida del equipaje de Kit. Es, en definitiva, una frase banal, de relleno, destinada a una persona que acaba de salir del desierto y que “es realmente un deshecho” (Bowles 280). La frase tiene un matiz irónico, un consuelo estúpido porque, más tarde, Kit huye en un tranvía de la Avenue Galli ni y es de suponer que, tanto en sentido metafórico como literal, la americana sigue dando vueltas por África *ad infinitum*. Al principio de *Cita en Tombuct *, sin embargo, Linda le escribe la misma frase a Andr s con el fin de reunirse juntos en Tombuct . El objetivo de la frase, ahora, es el (re)encuentro: As , “cada palabra (...) es una especie de intermitente que parpadea hacia algo”, escribe Foucault (68). La frase banal de antes se convierte en una frase esperanzadora. Tambi n es una frase enigm tica, po tica (en el sentido de Jakobson). Si en Bowles se pierden tanto Kit como su equipaje, en Subir s, tras un largo viaje, Linda vuelve espiritualmente enriquecida; la segunda menc n de la frase, dicha por Linda, nos revela su veracidad: “...porque en el desierto nada se pierde,  te acuerdas?, ahora lo s  con toda seguridad” (Subir s 240). Si bien las andanzas de Linda y Andr s siguen con relativo  xito la forma de bucle (separaci n, reencuentro, reconciliaci n), la figura de los “r pidos y repetidos ochos” (Bowles 20) que Port traza con nerviosismo no es m s que una premonici n simb lica de las desgracias que les esperan a  l y a Kit. Linda, por su parte, tras la separaci n y el recorrido por el desierto, se ha (re)encontrado a s  misma; vuelve hecha otra persona, y debemos suponer que se reconcilia con su nueva situaci n (Andr s, embarazo...).

El respeto por el hombre salvaje

El ‘signo’/ topos del desierto en *El cielo protector* adquiere otro significado en *Cita en Tombuct *: derrota y catarsis, respectivamente. El desierto de Bowles –“the villain of the piece” (Shir 67)– como tratamiento terap utico, se convierte en “un espacio que puedes llenar con todas tus ilusiones y terrores”, seg n el propio Subir s (Pi ol 9). Los personajes huyen al desierto en busca de otros valores y otras concepciones. Pero los efectos son distintos: Kit y Porter sucumben; Andr s, tambi n sucumbe, pero Linda, empe ada en “[a]cabar el viaje, el de dentro” (Subir s 363), sale moralmente enriquecida de la aventura des rtica.

Kit enga a a Port, primero con Tunner y, m s tarde, una vez muerto Port, con Belqassim⁵. Linda tiene relaciones con Andr s y con Ahmed. Entre Andr s y Amadou s lo hay confidencias, lo cual, tambi n puede considerarse infidelidad. Andr s, que al

³ Ya que, como concepto, “plunges one into a series of oppositions and questions” (Allen 2000: 59). Para un *status quo*, con distintos enfoques, remitimos al libro *Intertextuality* (1991) con una amplia bibliograf a.

⁴ Graham Allen (2000), en busca de sin nimos de ‘transposici n, ofrece “exchange and permutation, repositioning (...), arrangement, appropriation, structuring” (54).

⁵ Al principio de la obra, Port tambi n tiene relaciones con la prostituta Marhnia.

principio tanto desconfía de la palabra, le cuenta su vida, a través del viaje y de forma fragmentada, a su único amigo y guía en el desierto, Amadou. Tanto Ahmed como Amadou cumplen la función de maestros. Ambos les enseñan nuevos valores (del tiempo, de la tierra) a Linda y Andrés. Son, en cierto modo, sus 'protectores', sus iniciadores. Sin Amadou, Andrés habría abandonado mucho antes el proyecto, y probablemente habría muerto en África. Su derrota, como la de Port, habría implicado la muerte. Linda, sin Ahmed, se habría perdido en el desierto, como Kit.

Tanto Kit y Port como Linda y Andrés viajan a África para dar nueva vida a sus respectivas apagadas relaciones. Insatisfechos con el amor que reciben (o han recibido) de sus compañeros (es significativo el alto status social de Port y Andrés: si bien vencedores en Occidente, derrotados en el desierto), Kit y Linda tienen amores con nativos (Belqassim y Ahmed, respectivamente, cuya ocupación es el contrabando), hombres primitivos, salvajes (véase Evans 1963: 140 y ss.). Si bien Kit tiene una fugaz relación con Tunner, la relación está destinada al fracaso porque entre ellos no hay respeto⁶. En cambio, Kit sí respeta a Belqassim justamente porque es completamente diferente. Es otro tipo de amor (primitivo, salvaje, desgarrador) en el que había:

Una especie de animalidad en la firmeza con que la abrazaba, afectuoso, sensual, totalmente irracional, suave pero tan decidido que sólo la muerte podía vencerlo. (L) Había en su manera de actuar un perfecto equilibrio entre la suavidad y la violencia, que le daba un particular deleite. (Bowles 244)

El "particular deleite" de Kit es una "extraña paz" (Subirós 134) para Linda cuando hace el amor con Ahmed. Más tarde, Linda escribe en su diario que "Ahmed me ha hecho y yo me he dejado hacer lo que nunca había permitido a nadie" (202)⁷ Kit Moresby, en el fondo, no tiene paz, sino deleite y pierde el norte porque, según ella misma dice, "no ha sido hecha para vivir" (Bowles 70). Ella se escapa del cautiverio de Belqassim para caer al final en los brazos casuales de Amar y errar y perderse, así, definitivamente. Mientras que Linda experimenta la vida (y, en particular, el sexo) con Ahmed como una iniciación:

Yo he sido una tierra seca, sedienta, que se ha esponjado con una lluvia inesperada, casi olvidada, pero claramente deseada. (Subirós 130)

Viajero vs. Turista

A raíz de la novela de Paul Bowles, Oliver Evans escribe que "the civilized traveler should suffer defeat at the hands of a nature, or of a 'natural' (i.e. primitive) society which he has insisted upon 'improving'" (140)⁸. En ambas novelas, el hombre

⁶ Kit opina de Tunner que meramente es un "objeto de excitación" (Bowles 40).

⁷ Se refiere a la sodomía.

⁸ El viajero occidental siempre intenta 'evangelizar' al Otro. Andrés, hablando de los libros de viaje que lleva a cuestas, opina que no sobran: "Sembraré el camino de libros, a medida que los vaya leyendo. Quizá alguien me lo agradecerá. Los europeos siempre llevamos la civilización por allá donde pasamos" (Subirós 65).

civilizado –salvo Linda y Tunner– se pierde (léase: sucumbe) en el Norte de África, digamos, por no haberse dejado esponjar con la lluvia inesperada. En *El cielo protector*, Port muere a causa de tifoidea; Kit, mentalmente destrozada, erra consigo misma. En *Cita en Tombuctú*, Andrés, enfermo, tiene que suspender el viaje a medio camino y regresar a España⁹. En la obra de Bowles, el hombre occidental –desequilibrado física y mentalmente, desarraigado de los instintos más básicos de la vida–, hastiado de su propia civilización, cuando busca redención en un ambiente natural y primitivo, no logra más que la derrota (Kit) o la muerte (Port)¹⁰. Es curioso que un hombre como el teniente d' Armagnac –comandante del puesto militar en Bou Noura, en la novela de Bowles– sí sabe cómo sobrevivir:

La vida es asombrosa. Nada ocurre como uno lo imaginaba. Aquí esto se ve con la mayor claridad. Todos los sistemas filosóficos se desmoronan. A cada paso tropezamos con lo inesperado. (Bowles 224)

Parece que Linda ha hecho suya esta frase del teniente D' Armagnac. Port, Kit y Andrés, inflexibles a lo inesperado, sufren la derrota porque no entienden que el sistema filosófico se desmorona porque hay otras leyes, otro ritmo, el tiempo de los nativos: “¿Qué es una semana para ellos? Para ellos el tiempo no existe” (157), como observa George Tunner, el amigo común de los Moresby que sale ileso de la aventura africana. Aunque, paradójicamente, justo el olvido del tiempo promueve el desinterés entre Kit y Port (cf. 118). George Tunner, hombre escéptico, mitad primitivo, mitad civilizado logra salir sano y salvo de la aventura por su incapacidad de arriesgarse, su falta de ideales y su “healty egotism” (Evans 142)¹¹. Tunner, en palabras de Kit, es mediocre, cobarde, “por naturaleza poco desconfiado” (Bowles 234); prefiere vivir de forma parásita a sacrificarse. Hablando de los tres protagonistas americanos, McAuliffe (1992) clasifica a Tunner, Port y Kit como turista, viajero y mitad turista mitad viajero, respectivamente. Port intenta explicar(se):

No se consideraba un turista; él era un viajero. Explicaba que la diferencia residía, en parte, en el tiempo. Mientras el turista se apresura por lo general a regresar a su casa al cabo de algunos meses o semanas, el viajero, que no pertenece más a un lugar que al siguiente, se desplaza con lentitud durante años de un punto a otro de la tierra. (Bowles 13)

Con irritación, Kit le reprocha que parece olvidar que “algún día regresaremos a Nueva York” (Bowles 18). El destino de Port es el más trágico: insatisfecho consigo mismo, busca la muerte. Kit, erradicada, se ve condenada a la perdición y al vaga-

⁹ Podría decirse que no es bueno aligerar el camino: Port, huyendo de Tunner y arrastrando a Kit en el autobús (cap. XX), enferma y, finalmente, muere. Andrés, por su parte, ansioso de llegar a Tombuctú, también cae enfermo y tiene que abandonar el proyecto.

¹⁰ Otros personajes que también se han quedado “dando vueltas por aquí” (51) es la pareja inglesa Leyle, madre e hijo. El hijo, Eric, comparte con Port el amor por los mapas militares. La madre es escritora de libros de viaje. Primero se lee que su relación es de madre e hijo, hasta que un camarero, Mohammed, le confiesa a Port que los atrapó juntos en la cama. Eisinger (1963) cree que su función en la obra es reforzar la decadencia de Occidente (287).

¹¹ Eisinger (1963), sin embargo, no ve tan clara la figura de Tunner porque “Bowles fails to explain why this conventional young man deserves so kind a fate” (286).

bundeo. Pero, especulando, en condición de turista, es decir, hombre que recorre un país por distracción, por falta de compromiso y porque “thinks about going home as soon as he arrives” (McAuliffe 420), Tunner, parásito, sabe aprovechar la estancia en África y salvarse (regresar) a tiempo.

Andrés, en *Cita en Tombuctú*, aprende en carne propia las advertencias de su compañero de viaje, Amadou¹². Sin embargo, su sistema filosófico de Occidente todavía sigue en pie porque se ha “pasado la vida intentando ordenar el pensamiento” (Subirós 50). No logra llegar a la meta por comportarse como un “snob con la población indígena” (Bowles 131)¹³, como diría el propio teniente d’ Armagnac de *El cielo protector*. A Andrés, en el fondo, no le interesa el viaje:

Si pudiese cerrar los ojos y dejarme caer en el centro de Tombuctú, como un paracaidista, me iría con las manos en los bolsillos. (Subirós 65)

En cambio, adaptarse a la nueva cultura, al nuevo ambiente del desierto, hace que Linda sí logre llegar a la meta, Tombuctú. El viaje le sirve para saber lo que quiere:

Saber dónde estoy, dentro de mí. Rehacer los planos de mi geografía interior. Localizar los pliegues, seguir los ríos, los valles, sentir los vientos. (34)

El fracaso de la fascinación

Si bien la fascinación a veces es negativa, los personajes de *El cielo protector* y *Cita en Tombuctú* sienten una gran atracción por el negro continente de Africa, “el Bronx del mundo” (261)¹⁴. Para Kit Moresby y Andrés, África es un mundo de mal augurio, presagios que se anuncian para materializarse. En Tánger, cansada de esperar a Port de sus andaduras nocturnas, Kit “dedicaba gran parte de su vida a establecer categorías de presagios” (Bowles 38). Andando la novela, Kit asume el poder de crear su propio mal agurio: a falta de consejeros, Kit adopta el cielo como protector. Más tarde, en el desierto, al divisar una caravana de camellos, Kit sale a su encuentro y razona que “en vez de sentir los presagios, ahora los creaba, *era* los presagios” (240), y es violada por los camelleros. En una de sus crónicas de viaje, Andrés lee –para más tarde comprobar en carne propia– que el descubridor René Caillié muere en 1838 “consumido por algún oscuro mal que arrastró a su regreso de Africa” (Subirós 229).

Andrés si bien va cargado de libros de viaje, buscando refugio en ellos, fracasa porque le falta la devoción, como nos intenta explicar el abuelo de Amadou (cf. Subirós 365). Es notable el fracaso de los descubridores que confundieron la meta (la gloria, el

¹² Amadou, a su manera, le avisa a Andrés, pero éste hace oídos sordos: “Todos sufren del mismo mal. Tienen dinero a espuestas, pero nunca tienen tiempo. (...) Habría podido decirle que el tiempo no se tiene. Que es el tiempo el que nos tiene” (Subirós 200 y 201).

¹³ Para Port, “otra importante diferencia entre el turista y el viajero es que el primero acepta su propia civilización sin cuestionarla” (Bowles 13). Vid. también página 98.

¹⁴ Tombuctú, en particular, es “... la imaginación enfermiza de Europa” (Subirós 81).

reconocimiento...) con la iniciación del propio viaje. Para el explorador Alexander Gordon Laing, por ejemplo, no es de sumo interés alcanzar Tombuctú: “Obtendré mucho más del viaje, y lo haré mucho más interesante, avanzando lentamente y con tranquilidad” (159). Con esta filosofía, Laing alcanza Tombuctú el 13 de agosto de 1826. Lo mismo vale para el primer viaje de exploración (hasta el Níger) del joven médico escocés Mungo Park. Su segundo viaje, en cambio, misión oficial del gobierno británico (es decir, motivos extrínsecos), está destinado al fracaso. Linda, al saber que Andrés ha vuelto derrotado y enfermo a España, le objeta, por vía epistolar, que enfermó porque tenía demasiada prisa por llegar, que no le interesaba nada, ni siquiera Tombuctú. A su vez, Amadou, el guía, buscando las razones del fracaso de Andrés, le amonesta:

Te lo dije muchas veces, ¿recuerdas?, tú siempre tenías prisa y yo te decía que aquí es absurdo tener prisa, porque el tiempo no corre (L) Si hubieses tenido más tiempo, y algo más de paciencia, la habrías encontrado, a tu amiga. (L) No te fíes de los viajeros que tienen prisa. Regresarán a su casa sin otra cosa que el cabello sobre su cabeza. (382)

Últimas palabras

Señalar relaciones y reminiscencias intertextuales no es un fin, sino un medio de interpretación, un intento de acercamiento. Hemos querido demostrar que si bien *El cielo protector* y *Cita en Tombuctú* son distantes en el tiempo, la segunda obra le debe a la primera, pres(en)tando varias características de la norteamericana para, a su vez, reinterpretarlas y remodelarlas; acudiendo, pues, casi a términos extáticos, con Gérard Genette (1969), con el fin de “chercher quel bonheur elle entraîne” (91/92). Añadirle, en suma, un valor más. La fascinación por el continente africano y el desierto como telón de fondo; el viaje (tanto geográfico como interior) como núcleo del argumento; el amor entre la mujer civilizada y el hombre salvaje; la huida del hombre civilizado de su *habitat* en busca de otros valores; y, por último, la derrota, debida al desequilibrio (físico, mental y temporal) del hombre civilizado.

Port y Andrés fracasan por confundir el viaje con la meta: la prisa enceguedora. Kit, ultrajada, se pierde, tanto literal como metafóricamente, por no saber lo que quiere. En *El cielo protector*, no obstante, el único que parece haber adoptado el ritmo del desierto es el teniente d’ Armagnac, aunque él tampoco se libra de ciertos “incidentes” (vid. cap. XVIII) con la población autóctona.

En *Cita en Tombuctú*, Linda es la viajera que encuentra lo que busca porque se sacrifica para (re)encontrarse a sí misma. Ella corre con todos los riesgos; pone en balanza su vida, sus creencias, su integridad, su trabajo, su relación con Andrés. Es de suponer que Tunner, finalmente, vuelve sano y salvo a Estados Unidos. Pero él, a diferencia de Linda, no ha ganado nada porque tampoco ha perdido nada; Tunner, paradójicamente, se salva porque no muestra necesidad de ser rescatado. El viaje de Linda es una iniciación. Un rito perdido que (se) intenta recuperar. En cierto sentido, con el personaje de Linda, *Cita en Tombuctú*, le muestra a *El cielo protector* que sí hay

un camino de redención para el hombre occidental que viaja a Africa. Con adaptación y flexibilidad, nada se pierde en el desierto.

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LES VISAGES AMBIGUS D'ANDRÉ BRETON

Mimi Podkrižnik

Abstract

L'article porte sur une machinerie d'images du célèbre pilier du mouvement surréaliste français André Breton. Cette figure extraordinaire, mais aussi contradictoire, a d'un côté changé la vie et la vision de tous ceux qui l'ont connue, et n'a en même temps cessé de changer aussi sa propre façon d'être. Une personnalité hors du commun, qui écrit des livres et des lettres, qui parle à haute voix, qui s'engage politiquement, qui s'exile, qui est cible de ses adversaires, reste souvent dogmatique en public, mais parle beaucoup plus librement en privé. *Père fouettard* qui a ses interdits, ses tabous, qui crie *familles je vous hais* et ne peut supporter la métamorphose de ses disciples, se métamorphose en un père et (plus tard) fils aimable. Celui qui veut appartenir à la famille des grands indésirables, trouve sa place parmi les plus grands désirables du 20^e siècle.

«Vous savez, je ne suis pas dadaïste,» dit Simone Collinet à André Breton après les présentations au mois de juillet 1920 au jardin du Luxembourg. «Moi non plus,» répond Breton à sa future femme (1921–1929), à la manière de Marx, en pleine époque dadaïste. «Il répondit avec ce sourire qu'il sut garder toute sa vie quand il faisait des réserves sur une de ses positions doctrinales.»¹

La plupart de ceux qui ont écrit sur André Breton (Julien Gracq, Marguerite Bonnet, Sarane Alexandrian, Maurice Nadeau) avaient personnellement connu cet auteur extraordinaire. Lucides, ils ne sont pas toujours d'accord avec leur modèle, ils refusent le terme de *pape* pour éviter l'idolâtrie, et se taisent parfois sur quelques épisodes pénibles de sa vie, tout en manifestant une profonde admiration à l'égard de Breton et formant de lui une légende quasi mythique. Ceux qui ne l'ont jamais rencontré, et qui prétendent découvrir le «vrai» Breton dans cette machinerie d'images², se rendent peut-être compte que la postérité tend à fausser les données «réelles», soit par ignorance, soit par préjugé. Toutefois, la contemporanéité ne les déforme pas moins.

Notre existence, ce n'est pas simplement la surface de notre visage face à ceux qui dirigent leur regard sur nous, c'est tout ce qui est dans notre

¹ A. et O. Virmaux, *André Breton, qui êtes-vous ?*, Manufacture, 1996, p. 103. Simone Collinet ajoute que Marx disait volontiers à ses adeptes : «Je ne suis pas marxiste.»

² Il est à la fois admiré et haï. D'un côté pape, fauve, dictateur implacable, passionné d'intrigue et de complot, de l'autre, un personnage de culte. On lui fait grief de son autoritarisme, mais on n'oublie pas la prodigieuse vitalité du mouvement qu'il anime.

histoire et peut être gardé secret ou peut être révélé. Il y a cette virtualité du révélé et du secret, il doit y avoir une réserve des profondeurs en nous... nous sommes des êtres qui vivent en regard des autres, et en regard de circonstances diverses.³

Que ce portrait soit compris ainsi.

Il y a plusieurs Breton, celui qui écrit des livres (les manifestes étant sa spécialité) et des lettres (sa correspondance fut considérable)⁴, celui qui parle (très éloquent, il parlait comme il écrivait), celui s'engage politiquement, celui qui s'exile, celui, aussi, qui fut cible de ses adversaires ; attirant et autoritaire, voire despotique (*Staline au petit pied*⁵), ce «voyant parmi les invisibles»⁶ fut un homme contradictoire.

Surprennent, en premier lieu, la contradiction entre son extrême courtoisie et ses déchaînements subits d'une violence inimaginable, ainsi que son passage facile de l'exaltation à la rupture, soit sur le plan idéologique (dadaïsme, communisme), soit sur celui de l'amitié (Péret et Jacques Vaché exceptés, il rompit avec tous ses compagnons), soit encore dans l'amour (ce chanteur de l'*amour fou* et unique, qui condamnait la vie dissolue et le donjuanisme, se maria trois fois et se lança dans de nombreuses liaisons orageuses⁷).

Breton crache sur les morts, insulte les proches... on lui donnera, par conséquent, des coups de téléphone nocturnes, on lui délivrera des couronnes mortuaires au petit matin. Breton, père fouettard.

La *Jeanne d'Arc* de Joseph Delteil fut traitée dans une lettre de Breton⁸ de *vaste saloperie*, et son auteur de *porc* et de *con*. La fin de la lettre fut encore plus intéressante, car elle annonça son intention

de me borner, au cas où vous deviendrez gênant, voyez Cocteau, à prendre les mesures nécessaires pour réduire votre activité à ses justes proportions, ce qui tout de même, vous n'y songez pas assez, est en mon pouvoir.⁹

Etre expulsé du mouvement, c'était se voir sur l'instant coupé de tout. André Breton mit en pénitence de cette manière André Masson, qui resta surréaliste de 1924

³ Jean Starobinski, *Le Point*, 26 octobre, 2001.

⁴ «Je pense qu'il n'aimait pas beaucoup écrire», disait Julien Gracq (M. Murat, *André Breton*, Editions de l'Herne, 1998, p. 20).

⁵ Ribemont-Dessaignes, 1929; A. et O. Virmaux, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁶ I. Isou, *Réflexions sur André Breton* (dans A. et O. Virmaux, *op. cit.*, p. 38).

⁷ Dans la première édition de *Nadja* (1928), on lit : «Nous y descendons vers une heure du matin, à l'Hôtel du Prince de Galles» (*OC*, t. I, p. 1551). Dans l'édition de 1962, entièrement revue, cette phrase a disparu. La suppression est interprétée comme un moyen possible de préserver l'ambiguïté de *Nadja* qui doit rester *une âme errante, un génie libre*. La prostitution (comme l'homosexualité) faisait horreur à André Breton, qui détestait l'ambiguïté de Cocteau, tandis que René Crevel resta proche de lui jusqu'à sa mort.

⁸ Maurice Nadeau, *L'Histoire du surréalisme* (dans A. et O. Virmaux, *op. cit.*, p. 17); voir aussi *le Second manifeste du surréalisme*.

⁹ L'affaire de Delteil se situe en 1925, au moment où le jeune surréalisme pratique systématiquement la violence (*Cadavre contre Anatole France*, 1924; *Lettre ouverte à Paul Claudel*, 1925). Cette pratique fut en partie héritée de Dada, mais poussée plus loin encore. En ce temps-là Breton et les surréalistes ne respectent aucune règle, rejettent l'opinion publique, les notions de bon goût et de décence; ils crient, dans un contexte patriotard, «à bas la France». Dans les années qui suivent, les scandales sur la place publique se font moins nombreux, c'est le temps des procès internes et des exclusions.

à 1930 et se réconcilia avec Breton en 1935. S'étant expulsé lui-même, il perdit tous les amateurs de ses tableaux, même le célèbre mécène Jacques Doucet ne l'achetait plus. Il est possible que ces sanctions économiques eussent un arrière plan, car matériellement, la vie resta difficile pour Breton pendant toute sa vie. Ses études finies lui auraient permis de trouver un emploi au retour d'Amérique au printemps 1946. Ses grandes déclarations sur le refus du travail en 1947 n'avaient plus guère de sens poétique.¹⁰ Breton reprocha avec véhémence à ses amis de gagner leur vie par des moyens douteux (en tant que journalistes, critiques, littéraires), mais en même temps, d'après Robert Desnos, il assura lui-même ses moyens de subsistance par la vente de tableaux (il vendit un tableau de Giorgio de Chirico, *Le cerveau de l'enfant*, au musée de Stockholm).

André Breton apparaissait chaque soir à six heures devant son groupe (où il était question de politique, de ce que disait les journaux, de manifestes, de revues), il recevait les gens rue Fontaine, mais aussi, il entretenait des relations personnelles en dehors de toute préoccupation officielle. Ce dernier Breton, «non-dogmatique», parlait plus librement:

On pouvait le faire parler de Paul Claudel par exemple, qu'il appréciait – ce qui aurait été difficile devant le groupe... J'avais beaucoup moins affaire au Breton politique; les membres du groupe voyaient certainement une autre face, et il est probable que les deux points de vue ne s'accorderaient pas.¹¹

Parmi les tabous¹² et les interdits d'André Breton, il y avait aussi la musique. Soucieux d'être «rationnel dans son irrationalisme»¹³, Breton rejeta et détesta la musique, «parce que la musique¹⁴, c'est l'indéterminé»¹⁵, parce qu'elle touche l'ineffable. De fait, il manquait d'oreille, croit André Masson qui se souvient d'être allé au concert avec Max Ernst en cachette.

Cela l'aurait rendu si malheureux s'il avait su que nous y allions, au concert.¹⁶

¹⁰ Cf. Murat, *op. cit.*, p. 19 (conversation avec Julien Gracq sur Breton).

¹¹ *Ibid.* Le groupe prépara en 1925 la violente *Lettre ouverte à M. Paul Claudel, ambassadeur de France au Japon*. «Il ne reste debout qu'une idée morale, à savoir par exemple qu'on ne peut être à la fois ambassadeur de France et poète... Catholicisme, classicisme gréco-romain, nous vous abandonnons à vos bondieuseries infâmes. Qu'elles vous profitent de toutes manières; engraissez encore, crevez sous l'admiration et le respect de vos concitoyens. Ecrivez, priez et bavez; nous réclamons le déshonneur de vous avoir traité une fois pour toutes de cuistre et de canaille.»

¹² Dans le surréalisme la part de remise en ordre du passé est énorme. Dès le début, ce fut lisez/ne lisez pas. Breton, qui se voulut a-historique, reclassa la bibliothèque poétique. Il n'aimait pas, par exemple, Edgar Poe, inventeur du roman policier, il ne croyait pas à Verlaine. Lisez Rimbaud, ne lisez pas Verlaine. Il n'aimait pas Valéry, dont la poésie il nomma intellectualisée (à la différence de la poésie «sensibilisée»), mais salua Lautréamont, Charles Fourier, Rimbaud et de Sade.

¹³ A. et O. Virmaux, *op. cit.*, p. 120 (témoignage d'André Masson).

¹⁴ La musique classique, évidemment.

¹⁵ *Id.*, p. 120; c'est la réponse de Breton à Alfred Barr.

¹⁶ D'après Marie-Claire Dumas («Le Chant de l'image», *ibid.*), la présence ludique de la chanson apparaît dans les moments les plus anodins de son existence: dans l'*Amour fou* il évoque le moment de sa toilette, il joue sur des références musicales dans certains de ses titres de poèmes et de recueils (*Clé de sol*, *Mont de piété*).

En même temps Breton, qui aimait les arts de l'immédiat, où l'on reçoit tout en une seconde, telles la poésie, «convulsive», et la peinture, alors que le roman et la musique jouent sur la durée, précisa que le poète était toujours musicien en quelque sorte, car la poésie surgit à la conscience, portée par un rythme intérieur, une chaîne sonore qui est inséparable de son produit. L'écriture automatique obéit à des conditions de rythme, d'hauteur, d'intensité.

Aller aux musées et aux bals était la déchéance aussi. Breton ne dansait pas. Les désobéissants, il les traita d'arriérées. Non moins complexe fut son attitude face au théâtre, au cinéma et au roman traditionnel (sa position se nuança avec le temps puisque vers la fin de sa vie, il accueillit avec faveur les premiers livres de Julien Gracq).

Breton avait beaucoup de tendresse pour sa fille Aube Elleouët. Dans la lettre qui termine *L'Amour fou* (1937), il dit: «Je vous souhaite d'être follement aimée.»¹⁷ Il s'intéressait à sa fille, il s'occupait d'elle. Il n'avait rien d'un père de famille fouettard. Ce n'est pas le ton du *familles, je vous hais*.¹⁸ Intéressante est aussi la relation avec son père, Louis Breton. Pierre Demarne, qui fréquenta André Breton de 1947 à 1950, les rencontra en été 1947 à la galerie Maeght. Son père était une figure sympathique, la mine classique d'un cadre ou médecin retraité et rien d'un militaire – puisqu'il avait été employé aux écritures, dans sa jeunesse, à la gendarmerie de Tinchebray, les «mauvais» biographes d'André Breton croyaient qu'il avait fait carrière dans la gendarmerie. D'après Pierre Demarne, le fils était très amical avec son père, âgé de 75 ans environ. Leur rapport n'avait rien à voir avec la scène orageuse où Breton avait annoncé à ses parents qu'il renonçait à ses études médicales.¹⁹

On dit aujourd'hui qu'André Breton n'était pas un rebelle original et l'inventeur de la modernité. Il empruntait tantôt des thèmes tantôt des images ou le comportement soit aux symbolistes, soit aux décadents, soit encore à Jacques Vaché. On lui reproche l'incompatibilité de l'écriture automatique avec la prose travaillée en détail. Même pour une simple interview, Breton rédige avec soin ses réponses, exige de pouvoir les relire et les retoucher.

L'auteur de *Nadja*²⁰ écrit que «son plus grand désir eût été d'appartenir à la famille des grands indésirables» (*Dictionnaire abrégé du surréalisme*, 1938). Mais il

¹⁷ OC, t. II, p. 783.

¹⁸ «Breton père de famille, c'est beaucoup dire, mais tout de même – j'en étais resté au Breton du Manifeste – c'était un Breton, je ne dirais pas qui avait vieilli, mais qui avait des liens maintenant dans la vie» – Murat, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

¹⁹ Breton se tait longtemps sur son enfance; avec sa mère la mésentente avait été précoce et profonde. Peu à peu les biographes ont reconstitué son itinéraire familial: il y en a qui disent qu'André Breton était «fils de gendarme». Par ses adversaires il a été souvent traité d'adjudant, d'inspecteur, de flic... Au contraire, Louis Breton fut tenté par le secteur privé: il devient le sous-directeur d'une petite cristallerie à Pantin. Sa famille qui rêva pour André de Polytechnique, mais qui lui eut permis d'entreprendre sa médecine en 1913, montra un caractère bourgeois.

²⁰ Bien qu'il prétende n'obéir qu'à des impératifs anti-littéraires, il retouche *Nadja* pour sa réédition, ce qui est un réflexe d'écrivain traditionnel. Il s'en expliquera dans l'*Avant-dire* de 1962, où il met au rang des «vanités l'acte d'écrire, plus encore de publier toute espèce de livre». Dès 1924 il méprise «la littérature, dont plusieurs de mes amis et moi nous usons avec le mépris qu'on sait». L'écriture est un pis-aller qui ne peut intervenir que pour obéir à une nécessité: «Je veux qu'on se taise, lorsqu'on cesse de ressentir». Tout écrit doit porter un sentiment fort... Ce mépris réapparaît plusieurs fois: en 1950 il repousse l'idée que puisse lui être décerné un grand prix de littérature de la ville de Paris. *Le bien le plus précieux, celui dont rien ne compense la perte, c'est l'indépendance*.

n'a pas été exaucé, au contraire, sa légende (*négative*)²¹ a pris place parmi les plus grandes et les plus désirables du 20^e siècle. Aujourd'hui on lit Breton dans la *Pléiade*, ses mots dadaïstes sont écrits sur papier bible:

Lâchez tout. Lâchez Dada. Lâchez votre femme, lâchez votre maîtresse.
Lâchez vos espérances et vos craintes. Semez vos enfants au coin d'un bois. Lâchez la proie pour l'ombre. Lâchez au besoin une vie aisée, ce qu'on vous donne pour une situation d'avenir. Partez sur les routes.²²

Est-ce qu'on peut appartenir à un mouvement pendant toute une vie? Impossible, répond André Masson. «Sauf peut-être celui qui l'a lancé. C'est là que Breton reste logicien»²³. Un homme orthodoxe, un surréaliste absolu. D'après Jacques B. Brunius (1906–1967)²⁴ «Breton combattait le rationalisme étroit, tel qu'il était enseigné dans les écoles et les universités, et il essayait de le remplacer par ce qu'il appelait un rationalisme ouvert. C'est-à-dire un état de la raison humaine où ce qui était irrationnel hier pouvait devenir rationnel aujourd'hui, ou demain, ou après-demain. La raison n'est pas un objectif figé, mais un concept évolutif. Elle est mouvement et ne peut être conçue qu'en mouvement.» Au sens propre du terme *mouvoir* on peut, peut-être, rester fidèle au même cours pendant toute la vie.

Breton (victime d'un attentat manqué en 1963), qui détesta profondément la vieillesse et les vieillards²⁵, a «su mourir sans vieillir».²⁶ Quoiqu'il prît, dans l'automne de sa vie, de nombreuses positions, et malgré ses entretiens fréquents à la radio²⁷, il semblait être sur une ligne de repli et devenir un héros désabusé d'un autre temps.²⁸

²¹ Dans l'esprit public il était vu comme l'explosant-fixe, comète, patron autoritaire, fabricant de procès, casseur d'assiettes, machine à scandaliser les petits-bourgeois des années 30.

²² OC, t. I, p. 263; l'article «Lâchez tout», recueilli dans *Les Pas Perdus*, parut pour la première fois dans *Littérature*, 1er avril 1922, pp. 8–10. Breton se sépara de Tzara et du dadaïsme pour suivre son évolution individuelle.

²³ A. et O. Virmaux, *op. cit.*, p. 116 (témoignage d'André Masson).

²⁴ *Id.*, p. 99.

²⁵ D'après Julien Gracq, qui fait sa connaissance en 1939, ses textes principaux sont *Nadja*, *Les Pas Perdus*, le premier *Manifeste*, le *Poisson soluble*. La suite de son œuvre a établi un système d'échos aux premiers livres – l'auteur les a enrichis, approfondis, mais il y manque un certain jaillissement. Le surréalisme est lié à la jeunesse: le jet brutal de la révolte est difficile à renouveler dans l'âge mûr ou dans la vieillesse. On perçoit dans *Les Pas perdus* les tentatives de prendre la tête d'un mouvement qui redéfinirait l'esprit moderne et qui ne se limiterait pas à la littérature. Après l'échec du projet de *Congrès de Paris*, Breton se replie sur le domaine littéraire. *Point du jour*, *Le Clé des champs* témoignent d'une baisse de tension vitale. On voit apparaître chez Breton, surtout après la guerre, un côté rétrospectif qui n'existait pas au début. L'engagement politique a été une cause de vieillissement pour le surréalisme.

²⁶ A. et O. Virmaux, *op. cit.*, p. 106 (Marcel Duchamp, 1887–1968).

²⁷ En 1960 il signa le *Manifeste des 121* (déclaration sur le droit à l'insoumission dans la guerre d'Algérie); en 1962 il prit la parole aux obsèques de Natalia Sedova Trotski; en 1963 il s'éleva contre la collusion de Gaulle-Franco; en 1965 il présenta l'exposition internationale du surréalisme, *L'Ecart absolu*, qui prétendait être procès de la société de consommation.

²⁸ Au début Breton est un homme de contact immédiat avec la réalité. Dans *La Révolution surréaliste* et *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, par exemple, il est question de ce qui se passe, des faits divers: de Germaine Berton, de Sacco et Vanzetti, des sœurs Papin, de Violette Nozières, du 6 février... Breton prend chaque fois des positions. Or, pendant la période de guerre (de 39 à 46), il se tait. En 1939 il se trouve dans une impasse. Réfugié aux Etats-Unis il vit dans une espèce de bulle française, entouré de gens comme Duchamp, Matta, Duits, il refuse de parler anglais. Il n'est pas à l'affût des événements, ce qui ne lui ressemble pas. Par la suite, rentré en France, il n'a pas retrouvé ce contact perdu avec Paris. Il a fait un discours aux étudiants de Yale, en Amérique, qui ressemble à une sorte de rétrospective du surréalisme: «Pas un instant, croyez-moi bien, je n'oublie qu'il y a Hitler.»

Ce qui en demeura, ce fut le tremblement de la voix, un sentiment de calme moral, une générosité absolue pour préserver sa dignité: dans sa générosité «Breton a changé la vie et la vision de tous ceux qui l'ont connu».²⁹ Il était, par son autorité naturelle et son incontestable charme, le découvreur de Duchamp, Bruniüs, Estienne, Blin, Césaire.

Il m'a apporté la confirmation, si vous voulez, d'un très grand nombre de choses que je sentais plus ou moins obscurément, que je devinais, sur lesquelles j'hésitais, et brusquement tout m'étais confirmé, le feu vert m'était donné, une sorte d'immense raccourci pour me trouver moi-même.³⁰

Le 1^{er} octobre 1966, le jour des funérailles d'André Breton, le cimetière des Batignolles fut envahi par une foule de jeunes. Celui qui avait dit: »Il est inadmissible qu'un homme laisse une trace de son passage sur la terre»³¹ et «Je ne suis pas pour les adeptes»³², ne les avait jamais rencontrés et ils ne le connaissaient pas. Peut-être ces gens-là ne l'avaient même pas lu, mais ils avaient entendu parler de lui et du surréalisme qui a toujours inspiré un public fervent bien que limité.³³ Il a choisi pour épitaphe: *Je cherche l'or du temps*. L'or, c'est la liberté, l'amour et la poésie.

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²⁹ A. et O. Virmaux, *op. cit.*, p. 111 (témoignage de Joyce Mansour, 1928-1984).

³⁰ *Id.*, p. 102 (témoignage d'Aimé Césaire).

³¹ Murat, *op. cit.*, p. 9; Breton se préoccupait néanmoins d'établir l'histoire du surréalisme, acceptant que Marc Eigeldinger lui consacre un volume; quelques mois avant sa mort il s'est informé du colloque, organisé par Ferdinand Alquie, et il a ouvert ses archives à Marguerite Bonnet.

³² *Pleine Marge*, 1940, *OC*, t. II, p. 1179; cf. le vers ambigu, d'après José Pierre, «Des surréalistes, il n'en faut pas trop», Murat, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

³³ Le surréalisme est souvent considéré comme un snobisme intellectuel, une dépravation de l'esprit ou une plaisanterie d'artistes désireux d'étonner à tout prix. Le but des surréalistes est extra-littéraire, car il vise à libérer l'homme des contraintes d'une civilisation trop utilitaire. Le surréalisme repose sur la croyance à la réalité supérieure de certaines formes d'associations négligées jusqu'à lui, à la toute-puissance du rêve, au jeu désintéressé de la pensée.

CANONS LITTÉRAIRES, HORIZON D'ATTENTE: L'HISTOIRE D'UNE IDÉE

Ramona Malita

La circulation des idées est, de tous les genres de commerce,
celui dont les avantages sont les plus évidents.

Madame de Staël, *De l'esprit des traductions*

Résumé

Le *canon* se définit en tant que liste d'auteurs qui ont la force créatrice d'influencer toute une littérature à venir, formulant la loi esthétique d'une époque dont chacune comporte une liste canonique qui la particularise. Située à mi-chemin entre la tradition et l'innovation, entre l'avant-garde et l'arrière-garde, l'idée de *bataille canonique* gagne de la perspective historique et désigne la conceptualisation de la dynamique évolutive qui caractérise tout espace culturel. Le canon est le cadre de références d'autorité pour l'enseignement, vu son statut de modèle normatif à grande valeur de généralité. Le présent article porte sur les aléas du processus canonique, en tâchant de surprendre ses mécanismes intrinsèques.

1. Approches liminaires

Le phénomène canonique a fait l'objet de nombreuses études dans les milieux intellectuels anglo-américains qui ont cerné les aspects axiologiques (types de canons: religieux, littéraire, esthétique, culturel), étymologiques (le terme grec et les homonymes) et normatifs (les critères qui déclenchent la canonicité) relevant de la «liste d'auteurs et d'oeuvres canoniques».

Les réponses à la question «quels sont les bons livres» exigent une liste, c'est-à-dire un processus de sélection et de hiérarchie à la fois, bien qu'une telle liste ne soit jamais finie, ni complète, ni objective. Il y aura toujours quelque chose à signaler ou quelque chose de neuf à y ajouter, tout comme il y aura quelque chose d'ancien à rejeter.

Le canon, qui s'en occupe, n'est pourtant pas un collecteur neutre des titres d'auteurs, tout comme il ne s'agit pas d'un synonyme de blocage, de fixation dans un projet initial. C'est un continuum substantiel et relationnel en même temps. La tectonique des goûts littéraires à travers les siècles et ses implications axiologiques font *grosso modo* l'objet du canon. Les théoriciens anglo-américains, qui ont lancé les

recherches sur le canon, emploient habituellement et à grand succès ce terme, devenu familier, et qu'ils ont d'ailleurs imposé.

Le terme est moins fréquent dans l'esthétique française (le français enregistre ce terme au XIII^e siècle) qui préfère le synonyme de «norme», mais, paradoxalement, admet l'adjectif de «canonique», vu que le substantif «canon» désigne dans le français usuel la pièce d'artillerie pour lancer des boulets et des obus, même si les dictionnaires (*Litttré, Grand Robert, Larousse, Hachette, Dictionnaire du français pratique, Encyclopedia Universalis, Corpus*) signalent l'homonyme en tant que norme, règle, idéal, type; loi ecclésiastique, décret des conciles. Cette dernière notion finira probablement par s'imposer à la littérature de spécialité, préoccupée de plus en plus d'aborder le phénomène littéraire et culturel de changement du canon. On doit signaler, en ce sens, un ouvrage qui traite ce problème théorique, en employant le terme tel quel: *Le Canon: construction et déconstruction des classiques* d'Antoine Compagnon.

2. Etymologie du terme

Les dictionnaires signalent les homonymes «canon» et «cannon» et leurs étymons différents: un d'eux, provenant de l'italien «cannon» (augmentatif de «canna»), désigne la pièce d'artillerie servant à lancer des projectiles lourds; l'autre – dont la théorie fait l'objet de notre exposé – provient du grec κανὼν qui, au début, avait un sens concret: instrument servant à mesurer la longueur, mais dans le grec classique le terme couvrait plusieurs sens, toujours concrets: 1. la navette pour tisser 2. la règle servant aux menuisiers ou aux maçons à tracer des lignes droites 3. l'aiguille de la balance. Dans les épopées d'Homère κανόνες (au pluriel) désignait les dispositifs en métal qui fixaient à l'intérieur du pavois le bras du combattant.

Le latin classique traduit le terme par «regula,-ae» ou bien par «norma,-ae» qui renvoient à l'action de régler, de standardiser après un processus d'évaluation. Le syntagme de κανόνες χρονικοί (Plutarque) a été d'ailleurs traduit en latin par «les époques principales», c'est-à-dire les temps pris pour *principium* de l'histoire, principe d'appréciation qui a facilement servi de modèle.

Le latin de Saint Augustin enregistre en outre le sens religieux. Le terme désignait, à côté des sens déjà acquis, le «canon» de l'Eglise. De nos jours, le terme de «canon» a un champ sémantique étendu, retraçant sémantiquement le terme latin: 1. règle, dogme ecclésiastique se référant aux décisions des conciles 2. liste d'auteurs considérés comme modèles du genre 3. règle ou principe général, critère, norme, axiome 4. catalogue des Saints reconnus par l'Eglise 5. ensemble de livres admis comme divinement inspirés 6. partie de la messe qui va de la préface au Pater et le tableau sur lequel sont écrites certaines prières de la messe 7. dans les beaux-arts, la règle des proportions attribuées à la figure de l'homme et à celle des animaux 8. en musique, la sorte de fugue perpétuelle où les voix, partant l'une après l'autre, répètent le même chant 9. en imprimerie, les gros caractères.

Les idées de normativité et d'évaluation de n'importe quel genre de canon s'imposent. Retrouvée dans chacune des taxinomies ou des catégories passées en revue, l'évaluation réclame la valeur et celle-ci exige la hiérarchie. Le canon primaire établit

par lui-même une échelle axiologique à l'aide d'une simple action de mesurer. La pensée grecque classique, malgré la concrétion fruste du terme, y joint un sens tellement abstrait qu'on avait initialement nommé kanwn la statue célèbre de Polyclète, connue aujourd'hui sous le nom de δορυφόρος (le porteur d'estafette). Elle représentait un jeune athlète, le pied gauche fendu, le bras droit se reposant parallèlement au corps, l'autre tenant le bâtonnet d'estafette, la parure élégante, la musculature harmonieuse qui impressionnait par la beauté physique équilibrée et soigneusement étalée. Nommée ainsi, la statue se voulait et s'avérait être un modèle à imiter, une épreuve canonique digne de devenir normative.

3. Types de canons: religieux, littéraire, esthétique

L'origine de l'idée de nomenclature autorisée des livres est religieuse. Au sens primaire, le canon désigne la liste des livres dont l'Eglise se sert pour la prière publique. C'est un corpus hiérarchisé, la Sainte Ecriture, qui a un but normatif pour la pratique religieuse. Il n'est cependant pas suffisant que le texte soit antique, informatif et utile, ou bien simplement lu par les fidèles, les livres canoniques doivent avoir la bénédiction et l'inspiration divine pour que les vérités en soient comprises; ils expriment la Volonté et les Préceptes de Dieu. Le sens secondaire du canon religieux est celui de standard, de loi ecclésiastique, de décret des conciles en matière de foi et de discipline en vue d'obtenir le salut de Jésus-Christ.

La notion implique un processus d'évaluation et de hiérarchisation des valeurs, et il est impossible de concevoir le canon en dehors de ce processus axiologique. A partir des listes des ouvrages religieux de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament admis pour norme, les Pères de l'Eglise ont posé le même problème moral et normatif pour d'autres textes que ceux religieux. Saint Augustin et Sain. Jérôme ont problématisé la littérature païenne, sa réception et son influence sur le peuple chrétien. L'opposition s'est alors créée entre *homo barbarus* et *homo humanus*, le dernier muni de la foi chrétienne, le premier dépourvu du don divin, donc malheureux, mais dont on ne saurait ignorer l'intelligence, la sensibilité et la valeur innée.

Le processus axiologique renferme deux approches: le texte religieux et le texte laïque. Le canon chrétien sert de fondement pour celui laïque, qui suivra une trajectoire sinueuse bien que les implications morales, éthiques, politiques et sociales soient identiques pour les deux, à une différence près: si le canon religieux est établi et accepté depuis deux mille ans, l'autre est en perpétuelle transformation. Si l'œuvre d'art est située quelque part entre deux pôles, la réception et la composition, l'intrusion du social qui détruit son autonomie provoquera toujours des «méandres» par rapport à l'essai de dresser une liste des textes dits *absolus*. Le canon laïque comporte d'ailleurs lui-même au moins trois composantes: les beaux-arts, la musique et la littérature (*Petit Robert* 246).

Les changements du canon proviennent de la relativité du goût, ce qui entraîne à son tour des ruptures ou des harmonisations commodes avec *l'esprit d'une époque* tout en essayant d'établir ses propres invariants esthétiques selon lesquels on établit

les textes capitaux. L'entrée et la sortie du canon ne sont ni prédictibles ni explicables parce qu'elles suivent les convenances de l'époque, les traits esthétiques du courant dominant à ce moment-là. Il est difficile d'établir quelles sont les implications sociales d'un paradigme esthétique, mais il est évident que le passage d'un courant culturel à l'autre entraîne une «bataille canonique» plus ou moins acharnée qui veut imposer un autre type de valeur. C'est la voix de la critique dans la plupart des cas qui s'érige en haut-parleur de la nouveauté et trace les directions du nouvel esprit, de la nouvelle époque, esquissant un corpus des principes théoriques, donc une synthèse trans-littéraire. Il s'agit bien du canon esthétique, qui n'est jamais parfait, étant presque toujours artificiel, parfois arbitraire, et quand même fonctionnel. Il existe un corpus des textes littéraire pris pour canoniques, tout comme il y en a un des commentaires critiques. L'esthétique classique, celles des Lumières, romantique, réaliste, naturaliste, etc. en sont des formes concrètes (Martin 20-21). Même si ce *concept socioculturel*, selon le terme de Martin, comporte un haut degré d'abstraction, il est facilement repérable dans une concrétion littéraire, à condition que le fragment soit choisi d'un texte canonique puisque la consécration d'une valeur littéraire ou artistique n'a rien à faire avec l'éblouissement admiratif d'un *best-seller*. Le canon esthétique est la résultante la plus abstraite de tous les types de canons, car la notion couvre et, à la fois, développe un système général des principes théoriques selon lequel un courant ou un mouvement littéraire retrace son modèle.

4. Les traits inhérents du canon

L'idée d'autorité est le premier trait inhérent du canon. Le canon se dresse en tant que corpus des points forts qui sert de guide axiologique dans tel ou tel domaine. Il part de ce postulat afin de bâtir un modèle artistique qui puisse esquisser ce qu'il y a de neuf, avec toute la relativité que comporte le concept de la nouveauté.

La diversité du canon réside dans sa souplesse même. Il manque d'unicité, il proclame la nouveauté. L'étrangeté et l'originalité d'une œuvre littéraire vont toujours de pair et comptent parmi les paramètres qui certifient la valeur esthétique. La consécration canonique en tient compte, d'autant plus que l'une des tendances du canon est d'intégrer les exceptions. Les performances intellectuelles et expressives d'un écrivain seront jugées selon l'exubérance stylistique, la maîtrise du langage figuré, la compréhension etc., qui doivent détruire le commun, surprendre le lecteur sans jamais s'inscrire dans la zone commune de l'ordinaire.

Il semble paradoxal de définir le canon comme système supra-littéraire des traits communs repérables dans toutes les littératures, et à la fois «canoniser» les exceptions, les différences, ce qui sort du commun et de l'ordinaire. La structure même du canon est cependant un creuset où convergent jugement de valeur et jugement de goût, et tandis que les goûts changent, les valeurs demeurent.

Le paradoxe du canon – de la littérature en général – c'est d'intégrer l'exception, de communiser la différence. Il est au plus haut degré – et simultanément – convention (littéraire) et écart (Martin 19).

Bloom et Fowler ont les premiers signalé ce flottement du canon entre les constantes supra-littéraires et les variables textuelles. Dans l'exégèse roumaine, Martin et Cornea ont posé le problème d'une manière pareille, ajoutant que la vocation doctrinaire du canon a pour base un mécanisme de tri qui est plus ou moins étroit, selon l'époque en cours.

Le canon implique l'action de trier, qui assure son fonctionnement même. Il est impossible de tout lire, et cependant, le tri s'impose. La valeur est le premier des critères qui décident. Harold Bloom affirme que Shakespeare est au centre du canon, dont n'importe quel tri doit tenir compte :

Shakespeare c'est le canon. Il établit les standards et les limites de la littérature ; il est unique justement par la représentation simultanée de l'art élitiste et de celui populaire à la fois...Shakespeare reste le plus original auteur de tous les temps, et l'originalité littéraire devient toujours canonique (Bloom 24).

Il continue en proposant d'autres noms «classiques»:-Dante, Milton, Rabelais, Cervantès, Goethe, Montaigne, Chaucer...

Les repères de Bloom limitent en quelque sorte le phénomène ; selon lui, on pourrait bien prendre le canon pour un dépôt d'écrivains morts depuis longtemps et ranger parmi les livres exemplaires seulement les textes d'il y a trois ou quatre cents ans. Il s'agit d'un canon achevé une fois pour toutes. C'est un point de vue unilatéral qui n'embrasse pas le phénomène littéraire actuel.

Le canon comporte deux niveaux dans sa structure: le niveau classique et le niveau moderne, plus fluctuant, qui s'y superpose. Les deux, chacun d'un degré différent de stabilité, sont bien distincts et retracent le dessein même du canon: la relation entre la tradition et l'innovation dans la littérature. La tradition esthétique est entendue en tant que point de repère pour mieux juger les nouveautés - les écrivains dits classiques n'ont-ils pas eux-mêmes détruit les bornes littéraires contemporaines ? Par leur modalité particulière d'envisager l'acte artistique d'écrire, ils ont franchi les limites imposées en essayant de faire autre chose que la norme : les classiques sont eux-mêmes des novateurs.

Le processus d'entrée et celui de sortie du canon, c'est-à-dire la canonisation et la décanonisation, sont étroitement liés à la force esthétique de l'œuvre ou de l'auteur en question. Si cette épreuve est complètement esthétique, c'est le canon qui en gagne, parce qu'il se veut objectif et se dresse en miroir du mouvement littéraire de l'époque. Il s'agit alors de l'autonomie du canon.

Si un tel test de canonicité s'éloigne de l'esthétique, il s'approche du «social», ce qui le rend subjectif en dressant un miroir fidèle à une certaine idéologie politique qui n'a rien à faire avec la valeur. Le canon de la littérature totalitaire pour laquelle les slogans, les automatismes idéologiques, les clichés obligatoires agissent comme un lit de Procruste, imposant des limites infranchissables, en est un bon exemple. Les totalitarismes «procrustianisent» la littérature, ce qui renvoie à un canon hétéronome. La conséquence immédiate et parfois impossible à réparer est l'escamotage du canon esthétique. Un canon assujéti au social est donc hétéronome, tandis qu'un canon apolitique est autonome même si un degré zéro d'hétéronomie n'existe pas, tout comme

une autonomie absolue n'est que théoriquement concevable. L'ensemble des constantes selon lequel on établit un modèle de littérature constitue le canon. Son rôle est normatif, prétendant être une image restreinte de la totalité littéraire et s'efforçant de surprendre les invariants répétitifs. Il est néanmoins étonnant de constater combien il est étroit, en même temps, parce qu'il décrit des structures plutôt que des cas particuliers.

Puisque la langue a ses constantes, pourquoi la littérature n'aurait-elle pas les siennes? Les histoires littéraires ne sont-elles pas des essais de faire ressortir les principes répétitifs? Une histoire littéraire n'est jamais finie,; elle sera toujours potentielle et en rapport avec un goût esthétique existant à un moment donné.

Selon le modèle de la grammaire universelle on pourrait concevoir une grammaire universelle de la littérature équivalente à un modèle antérieure. On identifie un système sous-littéraire des propriétés communes pour toutes les littératures du monde. Ce modèle littéraire est isomorphe (Marino 26).

Le canon est redevable à ce modèle de grammaire.

5. Horizon d'attente, canon littéraire

Pourquoi lisons-nous telle oeuvre ? Pourquoi l'aimons-nous ? Comment la connaissons-nous? Comment savions-nous, avant de la lire, qu'elle existait ? Autant de questions auxquelles les études de réception nous obligent à nous confronter. Tandis que chacun peut donner une réponse qui tient à son histoire personnelle, les institutions à commencer par l'Ecole et l'Université contribuent à forger une opinion publique en matière de littérature. Chaque lecteur a son idiosyncrasie, bien qu'il soit inséré dans une continuité, assurée, par exemple, par l'Ecole et l'Université. Cette continuité est constituée par une tradition ou une série d'oeuvres connues et l'état d'esprit suscité par le genre et les règles du jeu d'une oeuvre nouvelle est familier. La compréhension du texte est orientée par les connaissances antérieures du lecteur. Si le texte reproduit simplement les caractéristiques d'une production antécédente, le lecteur connaîtra un plaisir de reconnaissance. S'il y a, au contraire, des transgressions des canons du genre, son horizon d'attente sera modifié. Les rapports entre le phénomène canonique et l'horizon d'attente renvoient à un système de références, redevable à son tour à l'expérience préalable du public. Les deux phénomènes touchent le même élément, devenu commun : la réception. L'un et l'autre envisagent la modalité sous laquelle une oeuvre littéraire ou un auteur est vu(e) par le public et par la critique. Les attentes et les préjugés du lecteur vont souvent de pair et il est parfois impossible d'établir une grille interprétative pré-existante à l'oeuvre ou à l'auteur. C'est le rôle du canon de guider et d'offrir un système de valeurs qui puisse forger un goût esthétique élevé.

Connue comme «écran de réception, grille théorique, système de référence transindividuel etc.», la notion d'«horizon d'attente» met en vedette l'enracinement historique de la réception de toute oeuvre littéraire. Elle envisage l'expérience préalable que le public a du genre en question. Plus le mécanisme intérieur de ce phénomène littéraire est simple, plus il est difficile à établir tout horizon d'attente à n'importe quel

moment de l'histoire culturelle d'un pays. Brunel propose les exemples de Shakespeare et du mythe de Don Juan :

La réception de Shakespeare en France est, pour une part, tributaire de cette grille (où écran) qui entraîne une incertitude sur le classement des pièces du dramaturge anglais et qui contribue sûrement à leur rejet, en tout cas à une attitude de défiance qui fut longtemps adoptée à leur égard par les lecteurs, les adapteurs, les critiques, les spectateurs; il n'empêche qu'une part importante de la production littéraire contemporaine, en Europe du moins, continue à se référer implicitement ou explicitement à des oeuvres antérieures, voire à des genres tombés – provisoirement – en désuétude : le *Don Juan oder die Liebe zur Geometrie* (Don Juan ou l'amour de la géométrie) de Max Frisch n'est lisible (du point de vue de l'auteur, au moins) que si on l'inscrit dans la lignée des grands modèles, à commencer par le *Burlador* attribué à Tirso de Molina et le *Dom Juan* de Molière (Brunel 200).

Plus loin il ajoute :

L'horizon d'attente du public est donc bien une grille herméneutique, le plus souvent implicite, orientant la prise de contact avec l'oeuvre étrangère nouvelle (Brunel 206).

La conjonction *canon littéraire et horizon d'attente* explique la nature, les implications esthétiques et les déclencheurs du phénomène canonique. La notion a été abondamment utilisée, glosée, contestée. Elle prend pour prémisses les idées que chaque lecteur a son idiosyncrasie et qu'il est inséré dans une continuité. H. R. Jauss a proposé d'utiliser, à ce propos, une notion empruntée à la philosophie : celle d'«horizon d'attente», qui est un «système de références objectivement formulable qui, pour chaque oeuvre au moment de l'histoire où elle apparaît, résulte de trois facteurs principaux : l'expérience préalable que le public a du genre dont elle relève, la forme et la thématique d'oeuvres antérieures dont elle présuppose la connaissance, et l'opposition entre langage poétique et langage pratique, monde imaginaire et réalité quotidienne».

Les mécanismes intrinsèques du processus canonique sont alors empruntés à ceux de l'horizon d'attente. Les deux notions partiellement revêtent la même spécificité. L'horizon d'attente et le canon littéraire sont deux systèmes de références *objectivement formulables*, chacun présupposant l'idée d'autorité, de loi, et renvoyant à une expérience préalable que le public a du genre / de la littérature / de l'auteur dont elles relèvent. Suivant cette analyse, la démarche théorique permet une deuxième remarque concernant la nature des deux systèmes; l'horizon d'attente et le canon littéraire sont des résultantes de plusieurs facteurs, impliquant un processus, si bien que le synonyme de *processus canonique* est parfaitement justifié.

La différence consiste dans la forme et dans la thématique des oeuvres qui entrent dans le canon ou de celles qui retracent l'horizon d'attente du public. L'insolite, l'exceptionnel, l'hors-du-commun gagnent le pouvoir esthétique de canoniser tandis que dans le spectre de l'horizon d'attente ils risqueront de choquer le goût déjà formé et les attentes littéraires et esthétiques du public. Le canon est premièrement à la

recherche d'une littérature qui s'impose par l'étrangeté ou par la nouveauté du système littéraire / esthétique envisagé ; l'horizon d'attente, au contraire, cherche et trouve une continuité, une série ou bien une suite de formes littéraires et de thématiques bien que chaque lecteur soit idiosyncratique. L'hors-du-commun et la ligne commune sont les deux traits qui définissent la différence de ces deux notions. Le canon s'arrête devant l'exceptionnel et choisit selon la valeur ; l'horizon d'attente a pour mission l'identification des séries, des continuités qui circonscrivent un goût esthétique déjà formé. Le canon forme, impose un goût esthétique élevé, tandis que l'horizon d'attente en confirme un qui existe déjà et qui peut être bon ou non. Le canon est une école des goûts, l'horizon d'attente renferme une attitude esthétique collective. Le premier a le contrôle de la valeur, le deuxième l'a déjà perdu.

Ni l'un ni l'autre ne moralisent ni n'ont pour but d'imposer une morale quelconque : « Mon affaire est de peindre des voleurs de chevaux, non de rappeler qu'il est mal de voler les chevaux. C'est l'affaire des magistrats. » (Tchekhov) *Mutatis mutandis*, le rôle du canon n'est point de moraliser, mais d'exposer les choses telles quelles, même si cela arrive à ne pas plaire. Les livres ne sont pas moraux ou immoraux, ils sont bien ou mal écrits. C'est l'affaire de la critique de mettre en évidence la valeur d'une oeuvre ; quant aux implications et aux impacts moraux d'une écriture, le canon ne les présuppose pas tandis que l'horizon d'attente le fait. Le problème de la morale ne se pose pas dans le processus du tri canonique, cela est l'affaire de la sociologie littéraire.

Parmi les visées du canon nous ne comptons guère la morale ni l'impact sur le social, mais l'originalité, l'insolite, l'exceptionnel, la nouveauté du style, l'audace thématique, le génie de la composition, la bizarrerie etc. Sur le rapport « canon-originalité », la remarque de Nerval est toujours valable : « Le premier qui compara une femme à une rose était un poète, le second était un imbécile. » Les émules d'une nouvelle formule littéraire n'ont qu'à perfectionner l'audace déjà acquise par le maître.

6. Conclusion

A. Le canon est habituellement envisagé comme une liste d'écrivains et d'oeuvres qui ont la force d'influencer toute une littérature à venir. Etablir des canons sert à mettre en ordre l'expérience artistique, à en extraire les valeurs dites absolues et à mettre en vedette les chefs-d'oeuvre. Cette démarche canonique assure à l'enseignement et au public les repères axiologiques essentiels.

B. Le modèle littéraire canonique remonte aux origines religieuses, car l'idée de nomenclature autorisée des livres est chrétienne. Que le type de canon envisagé soit esthétique ou littéraire, son fonctionnement est redevable à celui du canon religieux.

C. La structure du modèle canonique comporte deux couches : l'une, « stable », est formée des écrivains consacrés, l'autre, plus flottante et loin d'être stable, est marquée par des mutations axiologiques peremptoires.

D Le canon, qui se veut le miroir de l'époque en cours, est le baromètre des goûts littéraires à travers les époques.

E. Au sein d'un monde de moins en moins soucieux de la valeur, le phénomène canonique témoigne d'une interrogation sur les modalités d'avoir et / ou de créer une culture véritable et sans simulacres.

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TRAVERSING AND CONTESTING THE TEXTUALITY OF GENDER IN MAINSTREAM CHILDREN'S FICTION

Lilijana Burcar

Abstract

The article first outlines the way in which mainstream children's fiction has traditionally sought to address and undermine the artificiality of oppositional and hierarchical gender paradigms. Pro-feminist texts that abound in mainstream children's literature have never really extricated themselves from the bonds of gender-related binarizations and hierarchizations because their approach in delineating girl protagonists has been premised primarily upon a mere reversal of masculine and feminine defined attributes. By insisting only on the examination and reversal of attributes, mainstream children's fiction has fallen short of investigating narrative mechanisms which are essential to the understanding of how subjectivities, regardless of their feminine or masculine inflections, are constituted in the first place. To address this issue, it is argued that children's mainstream literature should embrace such literary devices as metafiction and genre mixing. The article goes on to demonstrate the kind of impact these devices have in challenging and undermining the socially constructed notions of oppositional and hierarchical gender paradigms on those children who have been subject to traditional literary socialization.

One of the main interests in children's literature¹ today has to do with the question of how to challenge and redress contemporary oppositional and hierarchical gender paradigms without unwittingly reproducing the very same dictates of gender binarism and hierarchisation from which escape is sought. As it is, enforced gender binarisation and hierarchisation not only require that masculinity be currently assembled under the characteristics of being strong, tough, independent, active, aggressive, violent, unemotional, competitive, powerful, commanding and rational, or that femininity be recuperated exclusively under the supposedly remaining attributes of being beautiful, soft and yielding, passive, self-effacing and caring, vulnerable, powerless and intuitive (Stephens in Pennell, 138). This pattern of gender binarisation and hierarchisation also insists on the so sedimented and consolidated notions of femininity and masculinity to be entrenched, natural and intrinsic states of mind and body

¹ As a working definition of children's literature the author follows Marija Nikolajeva's proposition whereby the term children's literature refers to all the fiction written for children aged between 0 and 15 years (Nikolajeva 1996).

when in fact they function as a strictly organizing principle. That is, they stand for "inherently relational concepts, which have meaning in relation to each other, as a social demarcation and a cultural opposition" (Connel 1995, 44).

Despite the expectations or postulations to the contrary, the majority of mainstream and even pro-feminist children's texts have never really extricated themselves from the bonds of hierarchical gender binarism. In their effort to wrench the female subject from the clutches of imposed passivity, denigration and invisibility, they have taken recourse to re-appropriating the attributes traditionally assigned to masculine subjects and bestowing them upon the female defined protagonists. By means of such a simple and unquestioned reversal of attributes the female character now comes to feature as the only one to have access to the position of authoritative power, domination and privilege. Such a simple reconceptualisation of female subjectivity in children's literature has more often than not also implied that masculine subjects be now posited as the site of 'pejoration' and 'demonisation' or at best as being "emotionally inarticulate or emotionally completely unavailable" (Pennell 122). In this vein, by inverting traditional gender schemata some pro-feminist and the majority of mainstream children's texts have continued to uphold the framework of artificially polarized and hierarchical gender relations, rather than, for instance, drawing attention to the mechanisms implicit in the normative patterning of masculinity and femininity itself. Such an interrogative stance could for instance also help to raise the possibility of unveiling and exploring an array of masculine subjectivities which resist recruitment under the normative script of hegemonic masculinity. These have been by default mired in abjection and constantly made subject to vilification, precisely because they refuse to embrace the so called "relentless impetus to distinction where competitiveness is understood to be the essential masculine experience and 'winning' the only means of establishing self-worth" (Pennell 122).

Similarly, those progressively dubbed children's texts that seek to redress the entrenched gender scripts outside pro-feminist marked contexts tend to slide back into traditional narrative patterning which requires that narrative closures recompose masculinity under the sign of the preferred ontological state. In these children's texts masculinity with its traditional assortment of attributes comes to be paradoxically valorised as an escape route and a shield for a girl protagonist against the indignities of disempowerment and dehumanisation embedded in feminine subject positions. Finally, those children's texts that seek to redefine the concepts of masculinity by means of reshuffling gender attributes or attendant material practices seem to flounder along the same lines as seemingly pro-feminist texts. Boy protagonists, according to Pennell (forthcoming), may be endowed with such characteristics as being caring and vulnerable, thereby displaying the so-called reformulated 'sensitive masculinity'. However, such shifting in the distribution of attributes seems to be permissible only as long as boy protagonists continue to function as the locus of decision-making and intellectual enterprises. Equally, a very popular reappropriation of such material practices as crocheting, embroidery or knitting in these progressively dubbed children's texts does not serve the purpose of teaching boy protagonists to become attuned to the needs of others and to rely on negotiation and consensus as their operative principles. Rather, these practices are more often than not incorporated in the traditional framework of

one or other type of fierce peer competition with the male protagonist keeping an eye on beating and vanquishing his opponents. In this way, seemingly ground-breaking evening out of activities like crocheting, knitting and embroidery gets to be completely undermined. The activities are simply once again collapsed under the old matrix of hegemonic masculinity and its all too familiar impetus to distinction and assumption of power. Illustrative of this point is Pennell's discussion of *Fabric Crafts* in which the boy protagonist takes up embroidery not really so much for the sake of proving himself capable of excelling at whatever skill is at hand but to strengthen his superiority over other students with whom he enters into a school competition he wants to win at all costs. Seized up by the boy character, the activity itself may be shorn of pejorative connotations and is actually revalorised to signify such qualities as manual deftness, creativity and perseverance. However, it still remains subsumed under the traditional matrix of power structures, which goes to show that the reshuffling of gender attributes or their attendant activities alone hardly brings about the necessary changes in redressing the hierarchical and oppositional tenets of gender binarism.

All in all, mainstream children's literature in spite of its sporadic efforts to undermine and obliterate gender boundaries reinstates and perpetuates the patriarchally informed oppositional and hierarchical binarism of gender relations. Dwelling on the surface of reshuffled gender attributes does not generate sufficient change "as these do not result in shifts in power relations among characters nor do they alter story coherences and closures" (Pennell 125). On the contrary, the unbalanced power distribution embedded in this binary system is in fact preserved intact, mainly because genre conventions which mould expectations and regulate restrictive structuration of femininity and masculinity themselves remain unquestioned and unchallenged. Modern adventure stories stand for a case in point. Their female characters may be swaddled into attractive layers of reformulated characteristics including bravery, self-initiative and strong determination. However, these girl protagonists are eventually either completely phased out, or diluted and remodelled so that they can be once again contained within the traditional scaffolding of adventure genres. These of course require that they hold only supportive roles or pose as an ultimate reward for masculine heroism. Consequently, the closures of modern adventure stories continue to rally around the depictions of feminine subjects as stiflingly 'overbearing' and 'practically ineffectual', advocating their "dependency on masculine leadership, expertise and ingenuity", thereby reviving the endlessly recycled myth of masculinity as "the legitimate site of action and power" (Pennell 125).

Furthermore, an approach based solely on the reshuffling of gender attributes also precludes the possibility of interrogating the way images of masculinity and femininity are established in the first place. It fails to shed light on the way images of masculinity and femininity are invested with seemingly immutable, impregnable meanings and infused with emotions, which in turn not only invite passionate attachments but also draw the reader's commitments. Such an approach therefore skirts by a wide breadth the intricacies of language, discursive practices and most importantly the processes of focalisation and point of view, through which "subject positions are constructed and ideological assumptions inscribed" (Stephens 1992: 81). It is narrative devices and strategies such as metafiction and genre-mixing, which mainstream chil-

dren's literature has kept confined to the margins, that prove to be especially instrumental in interrogating the textuality of gender in children's literature. These narrative techniques serve to question the validity of the binary opposition by foregrounding the slippery slope of the linguistic repertoire behind which it barricades, and by exposing and problematizing the mechanisms of knowledge production, thereby also calling into question the world's broader knowability and the stability of its encrypted categorisations. The rest of this paper therefore seeks to examine and delineate the potential these literary techniques have in disentangling and challenging the textual production of gendered subjectivity in children's literature, primarily realistic fiction, as they lay open and point to the way a narrative frame is also complicit in spawning and consolidating persistent essentialist notions of gender. This part of the paper takes as its interrogative point of departure the social construction and sedimentation of femininity, which in children's literature finds its most visible textual realizations in the form of the fairy tale genre, romance, girls' school story and domestic fiction. Most of these genres feature as a derivative of *bildungsroman* aimed at girls. At the same time we seek to address the actual relevance these literary techniques have when it comes to exploring the textuality of gender in children's realistic fiction in the form of an action research conducted among a sample of 13 and 14-year-old primary school pupils.

Postmodernist narrative strategies in children's literature are not mined simply for their potential of splitting open traditional structural conventions. They are especially appreciated for offering young readers a wide range of interrogative reading positions. Metafiction and genre-mixing enable young readers to occupy multiple, most often contradictory and yet distanced subject positions so that their attention is drawn to the function of language and socio-cultural influences/factors in the construction, textual representation and perpetuation of socially regulated and monitored subjectivities. Such a positioning also facilitates the understanding of gendered subjectivity as a conglomerate, an intersection of a variety of appropriated cultural discourses and textual practices which interpellate one into a symbolic order by simultaneously empowering and constraining that individual. In delineating textual strategies which allow for such gender-related interrogative reading positions, this part draws mainly on the concepts developed by Robyn McCallum (1999a, 1999b) and John Stephens (1999), which underlie the understanding of subjectivity in general. The strategies we seek to expand and tailor here to meet the needs of investigating and contesting the traditional textuality of gendered subjectivities in children's literature include primarily strategies such as genre-mixing, metafiction and split third person character focalization.

When it comes to the interrogation and undermining of traditional textuality of gender, genre-mixing proves to be especially useful on a number of accounts. Most importantly, genre-mixing serves to foreground and question the organisation and transmission of knowledge typical of individual genres². It does so by concurrently run-

² Encoded within a genre memory is a complex network of lingering socio-historical factors which informed its conception and which still continue to shape and determine the sphere of interests and self-defined problems to be pursued in the genre's naturalization and regulation of gender relations. Fairy tales continue to endorse the image of sedate, timid, languid, yielding and self-effacing femininity by

ning usually two genres on two respective literary planes, with one always discussing the literary conventions, story constituents and implications of ideologically inscribed meanings of the other. A novel based on this approach typically takes the shape of two alternating narratives, where for instance a girls' romance school story can be juxtaposed against journal entries of a heroine no longer under the spell of what turns out to be a disillusioning romantic love. This dialogic engagement between genres and the contrapuntal narrations thus produced allows for an informed reading position as the blending and clashing of genres with one another constantly challenges the significance of their closures. It puts under the magnifying lens the limited horizon of utopian expectations fostered by genre conventions such as fairy tales and romances. Comparative reading positions for example enable readers to grasp the "hollowness of romantic endings because they have simultaneously been reading about the aridity of the heroine's subsequent life through journal entries" (Stephens and McCallum, 1999). Yet, as McCallum succinctly points out later in her *Ideology of identity in Adolescent Fiction* (1999) such multi-voicedness must be carefully groomed as it can be easily "contained and repressed through the presence of a dominant authorial or narratorial point of view" or the "lack of register of differentiation" (1999: 210). The end result of such superficially constructed frames of narrative investigations may easily lead to the reintroduction of the old and falsely propagated notion of genre being a transparent medium, rather than pointing to the understanding of the genre as a specific linguistic code that forges and inscribes meanings.

In investigating the textuality of gender in mainstream children's literature, metafictional approach can be put to efficient use. Metafictional contradiction, for example, may centre on a protagonist encountering different versions of herself which inhabit alternative realities. As a fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its own mechanisms of meaning-making, of creating and sustaining the scripts of gender-dividedness, metafiction in this case serves to lay bare

castigating powerful women either as witches, as evil women who lure, control and conspire or as Disney modern animated versions would have it, as disruptive femme fatales whose uncontained, overflowing, excessive bodies unmistakably come to signify 'the enveloping, consumptive sexuality of the deadly woman' (Mallan 2000: 29). Deliberately cast in these roles, powerful women are condemned to destruction and elimination. Female curiosity and self-defined activity are automatically depicted as courting disaster, so that the award and pay-off for female characters in these tales lies solely in the subscription to male defined values of femininity - such as obedience, docility, patience, and suffering - thus making them deserving of marriage to the prince (Seago 2000: 147). This closure in turn, of course, parades as the enticing source of genuine personal happiness and ultimate female fulfilment.

Romance genre works under the pretext of providing women readers with an escape from unequally balanced heterosexual relationships. Such a utopian vista of imaginary control over one's own destiny is fostered and made possible because a heroine turns her victimisation into a form of heroism. This transforms her into an active, even triumphant but always self-denying character who is allowed a sense of competence and personal achievement providing she colludes with the patriarchal patterns of femininity. The narrative suspense thus always rests on physical and psychological journeys, their sudden twists and turns the active but self-sacrificing heroine is going to take to complete her self-induced course on tamed femininity.

Bildungsromans designated for girl readers exploit the very same paradigm where growing up in fact means growing down; tomboyishness must be renounced as a transitory period in favour of learning to be dependant and submissive (Pratt 1983: 16).

the rigidity of spaces and positions from which a female subject has been allowed to speak or be seen. By criticizing methods of fiction's own construction, metafiction shatters what in children's literature is still a persistent myth of fiction being a mere representational system. Instead it foregrounds and brings to the young readers' attention the awareness that fiction itself is a manipulative tool of choices and creations, not an imitation of the world but an imitation of its discourses, which makes fiction complicit in the propagation of socially restrictive scripts of femininity.

And finally, split third person character focalisation can be brought in to investigate the textuality of gender. This narrative strategy has to do with the splitting of narration into two parallel narrative strands. These strands are marked as standing apart by shifts in the temporal and spatial relationships. Both strands are focalised by the same female character but from two different vantage points in time and therefore from two separate subject positions which are impregnated with different personal and cultural contexts of their respective temporal positionings (McCallum, 1999: 134, 144). McCallum stipulates that "while by the end of the novel young readers know that A and B are the same character, it is still difficult not to think of them as 2 different characters... Because the older A and younger B both focalise, they both occupy discrete and equally valid subject positions. They might represent aspects of the same character but they are not identical. They occupy independent subject positions which for readers are coexistent and not entirely assimilable to each other" (1999: 134, 136). McCallum further observes that "the implication is that the subjectivity of the character(s) is being presented as contingent upon, and constructed through, the subject positions which they occupy within various contexts, rather than being essential or given" (1999: 135). The paramount importance of such a textual strategy lies in the nature of the reading position it carves out for the reader as s/he is effectively denied the possibility of identifying fully with either A or B. Instead the kind of reading that is invited is that of retrospective and analytical deconstruction of gendered subjectivity not as an experientially coherent, singular and immutable entity but in fact as an amalgam of interlocked discourses and appropriated subject positions.

When it comes to practical application of these strategies in a classroom situation, a number of questions start to surface. What is in fact the true pragmatic effect that these strategies and reading positions have on problematising mainstream children's literature and its underlying notion of a single coherent and essentialist gendered subjectivity? What critical insights do pupils who have been the recipients of traditionally literary socialization really derive from these textual strategies and their exploration of textual constructions and regulations of gendered subjectivities? To explore these issues, we conducted a study among a representative group of 10 primary school pupils aged 13 and 14. These students were all Slovene and were attending advanced-level English classes. The study itself was based on an adaptation of the first textual strategy presented above, which proceeded along the lines of combining together parallel readings of a girls' adventure story by the Slovene author Desa Muck (*Out there in the open*, 1996) and a domestic fiction story by Lois Lowry (*Anastasia on her own*, 1992). The former exploits the paradigm of the boys' adventure story by simply reshuffling some of the gender attributes without simultaneously addressing the problem of inscribed gender inequity, thus merely reinforcing the existent hierar-

chical and oppositional premises of gender binarism. The latter novel endeavours to undo traditional patterns of self-effacing and yielding femininity, but its attempt to do so, it fails miserably. What the reader ends up with is merely an approximation of feminist glibness, as the teenage protagonist and, for a good measure, her mother too are gradually once again locked into the monotony of household chores and caring for other male members of the family primarily at the expense of having their career or school ambitions either derailed or sidelined.

This parallel reading (which counted as an improvised genre-mixing) led the students to expressing their dissatisfaction with the casting of the female roles by observing that mothers, especially those in adventure stories, merely exist and can win recognition and visibility only as long as they appear in a hero's purely supportive role, profusely shedding tears while offering him unwavering emotional support and comfort. On the basis of this parallel, mixed-genre reading, students could point out that mothers pursuing a professional career are hampered in their efforts to have their projects carried out as their opinions at work are more often than not disregarded. Similarly, by drawing on *Out in the open*, they observe that even though girl characters in adventure stories venture out of the constricting parameters of domesticity, they are symbolically returned to the very same confines of domesticity. This is because the world through which they move refuses to and is unable to establish a rapport with them unless they fall back on performing the familiar set of menial and caring tasks associated with home keeping and emotional labour that needs to be pumped into the maintenance of the community's overall well-being. Thus, the two girl protagonists in *Out in the Open* are barred from instigating any meaningful adventures as their steps in such direction are met with and undercut by adults' stern looks of disapproval, tight-lipped admonishing silences, failures of cooperation or straightforward persecution. Instead of at least making progress from one set of fully developed enterprises to another as is customary in boys' adventure stories, the two protagonists' main preoccupation, significantly, consists in staying on the run from encountering or even brushing against proper adventures as these spell danger emanating from the adults' unfavourable reactions. This in turn triggers a chain of specifically shaped events which lead the two protagonists to abandon their probes into the unknown and, as the students themselves point out, rely ever more heavily on the external help and expertise of their new boy acquaintances whom they come to serve as helpmates. It is only after this reversal of roles³ has taken place that the two protagonists are allowed to seek and

³ The enthronement of the boys as the indisputable and even rightful masterminds of the rest of the expedition along the Slovene coast is covertly accomplished and given its final ideological twist of justification as the reader is subtly invited to judgementally sift through the contents of the shopping trolleys belonging to Vlasta and Rudi respectively. The two have been entrusted with the task of procuring the weekly rations for a harsh journey ahead of the group. However, the money is running low, which calls for prudent decisions to be made on the part of the respective shoppers. While Vlasta's trolley is found to be brimming over with sweets, chocolate bars, all sorts of salamis (her passion) and fresh baked buns, that is the whole range of quickly perishable or irrelevant goods which are additionally topped by a selection of comics, a neat notebook and a pencil, nail varnish, a bar of scented soap, a comb and a hand-mirror, Rudi's carefully selected items include tinned food, packets of rusk, dried fruit, powdered milk, vitamin supplies, a guide book, fishing-tackle and first-aid kit. This distribution of goods also introduces and seals the dichotomous distribution of characteristics with rationality and prudence being grafted upon the boy character, whereas the girl character is to be assessed on the grounds of being

secure their footing in the outside world, where their reconciliation to such dutifully performed tasks as cooking, cleaning and doing the laundry for the two boys is installed and amplified as a much approved demonstration of selfless love. As for adventure stories featuring a mixed cast of both girl and boy protagonists, the pupils express overt concern over the fact that “girls are deliberately given less demanding tasks”, that “boys are indiscriminately believed to be more courageous, they are always running missions while girls are condemned to endless waiting”, or that it is “the boys who mount and run expeditions while girls are forced to merely eavesdrop or listen to what they’ve got to say” (personal notes, May 1999).

Interestingly enough, the shrewdness and poignancy of students’ observations notwithstanding, their experimental rewrites of the very same stories offered into earlier analytical reading demonstrate a wide discrepancy between what they are able to discern and criticise as a result of the adopted reading strategies on the one hand, and what they continue to write on the other, as the excerpts provided below amply document⁴.

...[A girl and a boy] were just about to tackle the steep incline of the road when they heard somebody weeping and sobbing. The girl stopped and listened but Rudi was already dragging her away from the scene, because he was aware of the pending danger of the two of them being found out [and sent back home] if they continued to dawdle any longer. But Vlasta, in a bout of determination, nearly dislocated his shoulder as she wrenched herself free and proceeded in the direction where the sobs were coming from...(personal archive, emphasis added) [1]

... Vlasta felt sorry for the poor crying girl, and seeing that she was dizzy and confused, she wanted to help. But the problem was that she was no sportswoman. She knew only too well that Rudi would put up a fierce fight/protest against carrying her back to their shelter. However, Vlasta was a diplomat, a real coxer. Her subtle flattery left Rudi with no other option but to yield to her demands and grant her what she wished. (emphasis added) [2]

...it took Anastasia three days to fully recuperate and take her surroundings in. But it also took her three days to recount her story to her new friends. Anastasia told them all about the way she got lost on the big Slovene coast. She talked about her family, her little brother and her feelings of helplessness, too. But Taja and Vlasta preferred to hear about her American experiences and what America was like. In this respect, they acted very selfishly. (emphasis added) [3]

These writings are visibly punctuated by students’ conscious endeavours to address the problem of gender inequity and distribution of gender attributes by bestowing on female characters such characteristics as *strong will and determination* [evident from excerpt 1]. Yet the weight of these attempts is continuously undermined and overturned, as the young authors slip back into traditional moulds of patterning femi-

guided by impulsiveness, overindulgence and recklessness, or, in short, a lack of shrewdness and therefore reliability. This in turn serves to automatically disqualify her from the no longer shared field of decision making, turning her instead into an ideal pupil in need of guidance and instruction on the basic matters of survival.

⁴ The translations of pupils’ contributions, which were originally presented in Slovene, have been made by the author of this article. Any linguistic incongruities or other mistakes are therefore the author’s responsibility alone.

ninity primarily as the site of *helplessness* (excerpt 2). In this respect, a female character remains obstructed and constrained in her exercise of shared power; her access to it is always indirect, limited and unreliable as it can be gained only by means of scheming and being sly [2]. Helplessness becomes a common denominator of even those fictional female characters whom students first unanimously declared to be "smart, competent and self-sufficient" (personal notes, May 1999). Yet, later in the students' writings, whenever these characters find themselves transported out of their original household domains, they are automatically transformed into 'crying, sobbing, self-conscious and wretched' girls. All these female characters continue to be evaluated in terms of the extent of emotional support, understanding and care they offer to the others, and are severely criticised or berated for straying away from this socially entrenched script of femininity by being name-tagged and marginalized as selfish [3].

The students' written contributions display a tenacious grip traditional literary socialization holds over young readers, and is most evident in their story coherences and tight-knit closures, which, in spite of the students' endeavours to the contrary, continue to be heavily saturated and eventually fraught with oppositional and hierarchical structuring of gender relations. Nevertheless, inculcated values of femininity and masculinity are not altogether impossible to dispense with as demonstrated by the application of postmodernist literary approaches to the interrogation of the textuality of gender in children's literature. The ideological significance of the traditionally entrenched patterns of masculinity and femininity can be successfully addressed and pried open by the students themselves, as long as they can rely on alternative reading positions. But these must yet find their way into the midst of mainstream children's literature in order to really challenge or provide an alternative to the persistent tenets of traditional literary socialisation.

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SUMMARIES IN SLOVENE – POVZETKI V SLOVENŠČINI

UDK 008(931:497.4)
UDK 821.163.6.09-992(931)
UDK 821.111(931).03=163.6

Andrej Podbrežnik

NOVA ZELANDIJA IN SLOVENIJA: KULTURNI STIKI, 1923–2000

Slovenija in Nova Zelandija sta zelo oddaljeni deželi in njuna zgodovina in položaj v svetu se močno razlikujeta. Kljub tamu pa so se med njima le stkali nekateri politični, gospodarski in kulturni stiki.

Prve poskuse političnega in gospodarskega sodelovanja z Novo Zelandijo zasledimo že pred letom 1991, ko je bila Slovenija še del Jugoslavije. Po osamosvojitvi je sicer prišlo do posameznih poskusov navezave političnih in gospodarskih stikov, toda velika geografska oddaljenost, neprepoznavnost in finančne težave, temu niso bile preveč naklonjene.

Na kulturnem področju so stiki prav tako skromni in vezani na osamljene primere obiskov umetniških skupin, posamezne opise ali časopisne članke.

Veliko bolj so slovenskim bralcem Novo Zelandijo približali potopisci. Prva Slovenka, za katero vemo, da je potovala na Novo Zelandijo, je bila Alma Karlin. Po prvi svetovni vojni je med svojim popotovanjem obiskala tudi Novo Zelandijo. Več desetletij kasneje je svoje opise teh krajev in ljudi ponudil slovenskim bralcem Miran Ogrin, nato pa še Tomo Križnar in Bogomil Ferfila. Omenjeni avtorji so vsak po svoje potovali po deželi in jo odkrivali s svojega zornega kota. Vendar so njihove ugotovitve v bistvu zelo podobne. Zelo pomembno je tudi njihovo predhodno vedenje o deželi in njenih prebivalcih, prav tako pa njihova splošna razgledanost po svetu, ki jim je omogočala primerjanje, povezovanje, analiziranje spoznanj in nova sklepanja.

Tudi s prebiranjem novozelandskih literarnih del, ki so prevedena v slovenščino, lahko slovenski bralci spoznavajo življenje in kulturo v tej oddaljeni deželi. Najpo-

membnejši v tem pogledu je ustvarjalni opus Katherine Mansfield, ki je vse svoje življenje podredila umetniškemu ustvarjanju. Slovencem jo je odkril predvsem Jože Udovič, ki je leta 1963 v knjigi *Družba v vrtu* predstavil izbor kratkih zgodb te plodovite pisateljice. Poleg tega imamo v slovenskem prevodu še nekatere romane in kratke zgodbe ali odlomke iz romanov drugih novozelandskih literarnih ustvarjalcev, ki so navedeni v virih.

UDK 821.111(73).09 Buck P. S.

Alenka Blake

SLOVENSKI KRITIČNI ODMEVI NA DELA PEARL S. BUCK

Pearl S. Buck je v začetku svoje pisateljske poti v tridesetih in štiridesetih letih 20. stoletja dosegla osupljiv uspeh, ki je leta 1938 segel celo do Nobelove nagrade za literaturo. Njena dela so bila priljubljena med bralci po celem svetu, med drugimi tudi na Slovenskem. Slovenci v tistem času nismo zaostajali za svetovnimi literarnimi trendi, saj smo prvi prevod pisateljčinega najbolj znanega dela z naslovom *Dobra zemlja* dobili že leta 1934, kar je tri leta po izdaji originala. Pisateljčina tematika, Kitajska v stiku z Zahodom, je privabila mnogo bralcev, tako da je število prevodov pisateljčinih del na Slovenskem naraščalo. S prevodi so se v slovenskih časnikih in revijah pojavljale kritike, ki so bile največkrat pisateljici zelo naklonjene. Članek tako presoja in vrednoti kritični material, ki so ga slovenski kritiki izdali na osnovi prevedenih del Pearl S. Buck.

UDK 821.111(73).09 Fitzgerald F. S.

Vanja Avsenak

ETIMOLOGIJA IMEN IN NJENA SIMBOLIKA V VELIKEM GATSBYJU F. S. FITZGERALDA

Smoter razprave je bil odkriti raznovrstne interpretacije lastnih imen in njihovih bolj ali manj očitnih simboličnih preslikav Fitzgeraldove klasike *Veliki Gatsby*. Nedvomno je skrivnost Fitzgeraldovega uspeha tudi dejstvo, da je njegova pripoved pisana v klenem preprostem jeziku, izbira besedišča pa se le zdi enopomenska, a v sebi skriva mnogotere pomene. Ali je avtor v resnici hotel s svojim delom vzbuditi tako številne in raznolike razlage, ki bi odrazile narodni in socialni značaj ameriške družbe v razburkanih dvajsetih, kot je to prikazano v osebnih zgodbah glavnih oseb romana, ostaja odprto. Vsekakor pa drži, da je simbolika lastnih imen, četudi majhen, vendarle eden najbolj zanesljivih in bistvenih elementov, ki tvorijo mozaik duševne praznine in

apatičnosti po prvi svetovni vojni, h kateri je odločilno prispeval propad velikega sna, čigar posledice je čutiti v ameriški psihi še dandanes.

UDK 821.111(73=96).09 Morison T.

Simona Midžić

ODZIVI NA DELO TONI MORRISON NA SLOVENSKEM

Prva afriško-ameriška Nobelova nagrajenka za literaturo Toni Morrison je vsekakor ena od modernih ustvarjalk, katere romani so v svetu med najbolj poznanimi. V Združenih državah Amerike je ena najbolj branih romanopisk, saj so bili vsi njeni romani »best-selerji«. Na žalost pa istega ne moremo trditi za slovenske bralce, med katerimi Nobelova nagrajenka še vedno ni našla mesta, ki ji pripada. Do sedaj sta bila v slovenščino prevedena samo romana *Song of Solomon* in *Beloved*, pa še ta dva sta v večji meri slovenskemu bralcu neznana. Poleg tega je bilo napisanih o Toni Morrison in njenem delu le približno deset člankov ali spisov, pa še ti so večinoma prevodi angleških člankov; izjema je študija Jerneje Petrič.

Članek je predstavitev slovenskega prevoda romana *Song of Solomon*, ki ga je prevedel Jože Stabej, in člankov, ki so jih o Toni Morrison napisali slovenski kritiki. Jože Stabej je do sedaj edini slovenski prevajalec, ki se je lotil prevajanja romanov Toni Morrison. Avtorica tega članka se posluži nekaterih odlomkov iz slovenskega prevoda romana *Song of Solomon* in ga primerja z izvirnikom. S tem želi pokazati na tiste razlike med obema jezikoma, do katerih prihaja zaradi različnih slovničnih struktur jezikov in različnih kultur. Članki slovenskih kritikov so večinoma le povzetki ali prevodi angleških izvirnikov in so bili objavljeni v različnih literarnih revijah. Le v redkih slovenskih šolah so dela Toni Morrison del učnega načrta, zato jih le redki dijaki poznajo. Da bi bilo temu drugače, bi morali spremeniti učni načrt, v okviru katerega bi eno izmed poglavij obravnavalo Nobelove nagrajence ali pa bi v okviru pouka angleškega jezika brali odlomke iz njenih del.

UDK 792.02(497.4):821.111.09-2 Shepard S.

Anina Oblak

IGRE SAMA SHEPARD V INTERPRETACIJI SLOVENSКИH GLEDALIŠKIH REŽISERJEV

V članku avtorica raziskuje postavitve iger Sama Sheparda v Sloveniji med 1985-2000 in se osredotoča na pristop slovenskih režiserjev k Shepardovim igram in težavam pri prilagajanju njegovih tipično ameriških iger. Do danes je bilo v Sloveniji postavljenih pet Shepardovih iger, dve zgodnji in tri dela novega realizma. V intervjujih z režiserji (Vinko Möderndorfer, Primož Bebler, Boris Kobal, Dušan Jovanović in Boris Cavazza)

ter tremi igralkami in koreografinjo (Alenka Vidrih, Barbara Babič, Vesna Jevnikar, Tanja Zgonc) se je izkazalo, da prenos tipično ameriških vprašanj zahteva drugačen pristop in drugačne metode dela. Vsaka izmed iger je na svoj način nagovarjala slovensko občinstvo in vsak režiser je uprizoritev lahko povezal z določeno situacijo, strukturo ljudi ali načinom življenja v Sloveniji. Tako režiserji kot igralci so priznavali Shepardovim igram ameriško kvaliteto, ki se v nekaterih točkah ne da preliti v slovenski prostor. Režiserja Dušan Jovanović in Boris Cavazza sta pri igralcih zahtevala poseben pristop k psihologiji lika. Jovanović je gradil na nadrealizmu ameriške igre in skušal ustvariti poseben govor, Cavazza pa na ameriški metodi igre povzeti po sistemu Slaniskavskega, ki poudarja čutni spomin. Občuten pa je tudi delež filmskosti pri postavljanju Shepardovih iger, zaznamovanih s filmskim dialogom, saj so pri štirih igrah za izdelavo Shepardovih likov režiserji našli navdih v filmskem mediju ali pa igre videli kot niz filmskih prizorov. Igralca v delu *Pravi Zahod* sta gojila notranji monolog filmskih igralcev, režiser Primož Bebler je imel v mislih filmske junake, ko je gradil like. Boris Cavazza pa je uporabil delež filmske igre in filmsko režijo.

UDK 821.111.09 Clayton F. W.

Thorsten Fögen

FRANK CLARE: ROMAN *THE CLOVEN PINE* (1942)
DOKUMENT ČASA IN FIKCIONALIZIRANA AVTOBIOGRAFIJA

Pri romanu *The Cloven Pine*, ki je bil objavljen leta 1942, ne gre le za upoštevanja vredno literarno delo, temveč istočasno tudi za pomemben zgodovinsko-politični dokument o Nemčiji v času nacionalnega socializma (nacizma). V središču dogjanja stojita mlad britanski učitelj in nemški mladenič, med katerima se počasi razvije zapleteno prijateljstvo. Očitne so tematske in motivne paralele z nekaterimi drugimi britanskimi pisatelji (npr. Christopher Isherwood), pa tudi nemškimi avtorji. Kljub temu tu obravnavani roman v nekaterih pogledih zavzema poseben položaj. — Pričujoči sestavek je nastal v povezavi z nemškim prevodom tega romana, ki bo izšel jeseni 2003, in bo tako v strokovnih krogih kakor tudi pri zainteresiranih bralcih kot ponovno odkritje verjetno zbudil veliko zanimanja.

UDK 821.163.6.09.03-1=111 Zajc D.

Nada Grošelj

PRIMERI SLOGOVNE POENOSTAVITVE V DESETIH ANGLEŠKIH
PREVODIH DANETA ZAJCA

V pričujočem članku primerjam pet pesmi slovenskega pesnika Daneta Zajca in po dva angleška prevoda teh besedil. Osrednjo pozornost namenjam strukturam, ki

so v slovenščini slogovno zaznamovane, v prevodih pa nevtralne, torej poenostavljene. Prevajalske rešitve kategoriziram v več skupin glede na to, koliko se ujemajo z izvirnikom in druga z drugo v skladenjski strukturi in v razporeditvi informacij (tj. členitvi po aktualnosti). Primere iz vsake skupine natančno obravnavam in ugotavljam njihovo pogostnost v primerjavi z drugimi skupinami. Analizo sklenem z opažanjem, da prihaja do poenostavitve v prevodu pri treh vrstah zaznamovanih slovenskih struktur; to so zaznamovan besedni red, dvoumnost v zgradbi in slogovno pogojene strukture z retoričnimi sredstvi vred.

UDK 811.112.2:929 Herder J. G.

Siegfried Heusinger

JEZIK, NAŠ KULTURNI ZAKLAD
REMENISCENCE O JOHANNU GOTTFRIEDU HERDERJU (1744-1803)

18. decembra 2003 mineva dvesto let od smrti J. G. Herderja, ki je pomembno zaznamoval filozofijo zgodovine in teologije na Nemškem, ukvarjal pa se je tudi s teorijo jezika in umetnosti. Njegove raziskave o jeziku in književnosti slonijo na historično-genetičnih izhodiščih. Veliko svojega razmišljanja posveča razmerju med jezikom in človeškim razumom. Na osnovi svojega unilateralnega razumevanja jezika gradi most do razumevanja jezika in kulture. Danes vemo, da je jezik medij v večkratnem pomenu besede: je nosilec in posrednik naših misli, ohranja zgodovino in kulturno zgodovinski razvoj in je kot človekova stvaritev sestavni del kulturne dediščine ljudstev. Iz navedenih razlogov smo odgovorni za njegovo negovanje in razvoj. Ta misli so vznemirjale tudi Herderja, ki ni skoparil s kritiko praznega besedičenja in kvarjenja jezika v svojem času. Pojem *kultura jezika* (Sprachkultur) je moderna skovanka; njegovo teoretično podlago in metodo pa je konec dvajsetih let 20. stoletja razvil praški lingvistični krog. Na 1. mednarodnem slavističnem kongresu v Pragi 1929 so bili »splošni temelji kulture jezika« v središču razpravljanja.

UDK 821.111(73).09 Bowles P.: 821.134.2.09 Subirós J.

Santiago Martín

“NIČ SE NE IZGUBI” V ROMANIH ZAVETJE NEBA IN ZMENEK V
TIMBUKTUJU

Pričujoči članek poskuša primerjati dva romana, oddaljena med seboj v času in prostoru, namreč *Zavetje neba* (1949) Paula Bowlesa in *Zmenek v Timbuktuju* (1996) Josepha Subirósa. Španski roman se ob večih priložnostih navezuje na ameriško književno delo. Razne teme, ki so navzoče v obeh delih in bi jih radi poudarili, so: fascinacija z afriškim kontinentom, puščava kot kulisa, potovanje (zlasti notranje) kot

oblikovanje civiliziranega človeka v sovražnem okolju, telesna ljubezen med civilizirano žensko in divjim moškim, beg civiliziranega človeka iz njegovega habitata v iskanju drugačnih vrednot in poraz, ki ga povzroči izravnateženost (telesna, duševna in časovna) civiliziranega človeka. Tako s primerjavo obeh del in skozi stavek "Nič se ne izgubi v puščavi", ki si ga *Zmenek v Timbuktuju* sposodi iz *The Protecting Sky*, španski roman ponuja alternative problemom, ki jih postavlja ameriški roman. Če je v Bowlesu resignacija, je v Subirósu upanje.

UDK 821.133.1.09 Breton A.

Mimi Podkrižnik

OBRAZI A. BRETONA

Članek poskuša prikazati mnoge, neredko nasprotujoče si obraze A. Bretona, očeta francoskega nadrealističnega gibanja. Bil je pronicljiv pisec manifestov in poet razumnik, ki se je politično angažiral intelektualec v izgnanstvu v ZDA, privlačen in odbojno avtoritaren hkrati. Presenečala je njegova prijaznost, ki so ji lahko v hipu sledile zmerljivke, njegovo menjavanje razpoloženja, preobrazba začetna navdušenost v dokončno ali vsaj začasno razočaranje in zavrnitev. Takšna drža ga je zaznamovala na vseh področjih: v družbenem delovanju, kjer se je alternativno zanimal dadaizem in za komunizem, v medsebojnih odnosih, kajti prekinil je z vsemi nadrealističnimi sopotniki, razen z Jacquesom Vachéjem in z Benjaminom Péretom, v ljubezni, kjer je opeval »noro in edinstveno« ljubezen ter obsojal donjuanstvo, homoseksualnost in prostituiranje, obenem pa je bil trikrat poročen in se je spuščal v prenekatera razmerja. Sodobnike je omejeval s tabuji in prepovedmi, sam pa neredko kazal nenačelnost: čeravno se mu je, denimo, zdelo »nedopustno puščati sledi«, je v literaturo stopil s pisanji o nekaterih sodobnikih, o zgodovini nadrealizma. Intelektualca, ki ni hotel »privržencev«, je tudi na poslednji poti pospremila množica pogrebcev, predvsem mladih, ki so dotlej vsaj slišali za nadrealizem, pogosto označen za intelektualni snobizem, ki je zadeval glasno, a po številu članov omejeno skupino. Ob študiju Bretonovega življenjepisa se zazdi, da niti oče gibanja, ki je zahteval *svobodo, ljubezen, poezijo*, ni bil povsem svoboden.

UDK 82.0:111.852.028

Romana Malita

LITERARNI KANONI: OBZORJE PRIČAKOVANJ – ZGODOVINA NEKE IDEJE

Kanon so dela avtorjev (»auctores«), ki s svojo ustvarjalno močjo vplivajo na literaturo v nastajanju in ji določajo estetsko normo. V zgodovinskem smislu je pojem

»spopada za kanon« umeščen na pol poti med izročilom in inovacijo, ker omogoča konceptualizacijo razvojne dinamike, ki je značilna za določen kulturni prostor. Pričujoči članek poskuša slediti procesu vzpostavljanja kanona in notranjim mehanizmom njegovega delovanja.

UDK 821.09-93:396

Lilijana Burcar

IZPODBIJANJE TRADICIONALNIH PARADIGEM BESEDILNEGA GNETENJA DRUŽBENEGA SPOLA V OTROŠKI LITERATURI

Za feministično naravnana ali vsaj proto-tipična feministična besedila znotraj osrednjih tokov otroške literature je značilno, da so skušala problem vsiljenih in umetno skonstruiranih binarično-hierarhičnih postulatov družbenega spola reševati na poenostavljeni način, in sicer tako da so se in se v veliki večini še vedno poslužujejo golega premeščanja in pripenjanja domnevno maskulinističnih lastnosti deklinškim likom. Na ta način stereotipne in družbeno konstruirane spolne binarizacije in hierarhizacije še zdaleč ne razblinjajo, marveč jih kvečjemu dodatno gostijo in utrjujejo. Predvsem pa tako zakrivajo razumevanje, da atributi maskulinosti in femininosti ne obstajajo sami po sebi, ampak nastopajo kot vnazajski vpisi, ki odsevajo družbeno začrtane oblike poustvarjenih razmejitev in domnevnih nasprotij. Z izključnim poudarkom na prečesavanju in premeščanju pripisanih lastnosti femininosti in maskulinosti, tovrstna besedila zanemarjajo proces besedilnega vzpostavljanja in gnetenja samih subjektivitet. Pri odpravljanju te slepe pege, bi se otroška literatura lahko naslonila na upovedovalne strategije kot so žanrska prepletenka in metafikcija. Članek preverja učinek, ki ga imajo te ubesedovalne strategije pri razkrajanju binarično-hierarhičnih postulatov družbenega spola med že tradicionalno literarno socializiranim mladim bralstvom.

