

THE RECEPTION OF CANADIAN LITERATURE IN SLOVENIAN TRANSLATIONS TILL 1980

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At the beginning of this research, there were first of all some main questions that had to be taken under consideration. The primary questions were: how many Canadian authors writing in English were translated into Slovenian, how far back do these translations go, who were the translators and what was the influence on the Slovenian reader.

The main focus was given to the literary works that specifically spoke about Canada, her characteristics and people. On the other hand, literary works viewing the Canadian lifestyle, were not given thorough attention. This way the answer to how Canadian literature was accepted in Slovenia could be summarised.

The geographical point of view has been a very important aspect. The vast Canadian land and the different locations mentioned in the translated works are of importance, especially when reflecting the great distances.

The basic work undertaken in the research of Canadian literary history was Margaret Atwood's, **Survival**. In this work the authors are arranged thematically and not chronologically, which is understandable when one takes into consideration the relatively short history of Canadian literature. Margaret Atwood stresses the difference between British or American literatures on one side, and Canadian literature on the other. She shows how Canadian literature became independent "I had seen animals, quite a few of them; a dying porcupine was more real to me than a knight in armour or Clark Kent's Metropolis. Old mossy dungeons and Kryptonite were hard to come by where I lived, though I was quite willing to believe they existed somewhere else; but the materials for Seton's stick- and- stone artefacts and live-of-the-land recipes in Wildwood Wisdom were readily available, and we could make them quite easily, which we did."

Some thoughts awakened while reading and analysing the translations can be found in the preface to Robin Mathews' **Canadian Literature – Surrender or Revolution**: " It has been this editor's exciting task to select and arrange the essays that develop Mathews' thesis that the strong consciousness of collective existence that is within Canadian identity and Canadian imagination is readily accessible in our literature – if only we can learn to read our classics with de-colonized eyes."

W.H.New on the other hand took a different stand in **A History of Canadian Literature**. First of all, he divided Canadian literary history into periods marked

with historical dates. And within these periods he united the authors thematically, just as Margaret Atwood had done it in her work.

The first task that New found important to establish was to define the term Canadian literature. It is a controversial term if we take into consideration questions such as, "Is citizenship the answer to become a Canadian writer, or could they also be only visitors, emigrants or people that moved to Canada and found there their new home?". Some authors lived even in exile or were disloyal to their homeland, nevertheless their work is connected with Canadian literature. According to all these facts a general definition was established: "A shared familiarity with popular culture, a localised adaptation to space and distance, a reliance on common civil rights and expectations of behaviour, and a recognition of local forms of speech and intonation ... all underlie the more immediately observable regional and linguistic disparities ..."

We must not forget that Canadian literature cannot be thought of as only one identity: it has cultural plurality. This is also how Canadians define their political character, the dimensions of their literature, and develop their attitude to different morals, institutions and individualities.

It is interesting that the authors translated into Slovene have an important place in Canadian literature, yet their best works were not rendered into Slovene. Still, it is important that at least their thoughts and ideas were transferred to Slovenia.

With my work I have tried to analyze the reception and meaning of Canadian literature and of her authors in Slovenia. But first of all, I had to find out the importance of the American author Jack London, who knew well Canada's Yukon territory. Through his work the first information about the land of snow, ice, struggle and honesty came to Slovenia at the beginning of the 20th century. Jack London introduced to the Slovenian reader the strong individual and true comrade. He showed that in this country there is only time to think how to survive. Therefore the law of nature lets only the strong to survive. Despite the fact that Jack London was not a Canadian, his knowledge and love of nature enabled him to recognise the beauty of the Canadian land. That is why his work was important for the first students of Canadian literature in Slovenia.

In our subsequent examination how Canadian authors see Canada's nature, and the wildlife, we had to pay attention to the Canadian authors E.T.Seton, A.R.Evans, Martha Ostenso, and others.

In the works of James Oliver Curwood and Ernest Thompson Seton we meet life in the wilderness in its primary form, where the hunter is not a mass killer, but a naturalist. Unfortunately, there are only a few dozen of Seton's essays about animals translated into Slovenian. Many appeared several times under different titles. His most frequent translator was Pavel Holeček (1882 – 1964), who was a secondary school teacher.

A new element was introduced in the works of James Oliver Curwood. In the vast North-Western territory it was difficult to keep control over the whole region. Only the bravest and toughest members of the Royal Mounted Police could carry out their duties and maintain law and order.

On the other hand territory the Hudson Bay Company is shown as an alien element in this territory. The owner of a large segment of the countryside, with employees loyal to their company, but merciless towards the Indians and hunters.

In the translated novels of Martha Ostenso, the reader was able to meet the Canadian farmer who is kindred in spirit to the Slovenian peasant. As in the works of the Slovenian realistic authors, in her novels we find similar thoughts expressed by Canadian farmers. The voice of the owner is the law and his bond with his farmland is bordering on fanaticism. The works of Martha Ostenso are therefore closer to the Slovenian reader, who could find it difficult to understand the big snowy land hunting grounds, and wild rivers of Curwood's novels. Her life on the farm looks so real. The reader can almost feel the sweat of labour. The characters are described realistically: we meet the master of the house, the obedient wife, and the labouring children, who all suffer under the pressure of farm work. But her novels are not dark, they include characters who positively influence the emotional development of farm children. The position of intellectuals is secondary, because manual work is still of the utmost importance to the farmer.

Two new views appear with the novels of A.R. Evans. In the novel **Veter nad belo cesto (Northward Ho!)** Evans shows the personal metamorphosis of a lazy fellow into a working and honest citizen. The transformation was not based on political grounds, but as the only possibility to survive in the cold and forsaken tundra. The novel **Pohod severnih jelenov (Reindeer track)** is the first translated work to talk about the simple life of the Eskimos. In its care for the Eskimos, the Canadian government organized the transfer of a large herd of 3000 reindeer 5000 miles away to feed the Eskimo tribes and taught them how to economically take care of the herd.

With Evans' translated novels the Slovenian reading public was able to get a more complete picture of Canada and her people. In his descriptions of nature he is accurate, and colourful. His characters combine different human qualities, which makes them life-like.

An general picture of Canada was given to the Slovenian readers with the geographical survey by Bruce Hutchinson **Kanada, orjaška sila jutrišnjega dne (Canada, ...)**. In it, the author describes the country from the east coast to the west, with all its different landscapes, people, nationalities, architecture, religion, and thoughts. For him, speaking two languages – English and French, – is not a disadvantage, but a link between two nations/religions, who can work side by side creating a new joint country. The work shows the progress of civilisation, where the individual can hardly cope with the achievements. Nevertheless, the Canadian man is a farmer, explorer and traditionalist in his heart, and tolerant towards other nations.

Mazo de la Roche was the author of a 16 novel series about **Jalna**, but only 3 novels have been translated into Slovenian. New settlers came from Britain to the promised land, but they could never abandon their old English traditions and remained loyal British subjects. Here we meet the colonial thinking and the problem of new countries to step on their own and become independent.

The frequency of translations from Canadian literature in the period 1919 – 1980 was highest from 1925 – 1939. Many works were published as books and

around 40 appeared in Slovenian newspapers as serials. The serials usually produced a feeling of a remote romantic area. Their aim was not to educate, but to entertain. Not only were the best Canadian works not translated into Slovenian: the selection of translations was not systematic, and the translators were frequently linguistically insufficiently trained.

Bibliography:

1 Margaret Atwood, *Survival, a Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*. Toronto: Anansi, 1972, page 29.

2 Robin Mathews, *Canadian Literature – Surrender or Revolution*. Toronto: Steel Rail Educational Publishing, 1978, preface.

3. W.H.New, *A History of Canadian Literature*. London: Macmillan Education LTD, 1989. page 2.

The Titles of Books from Canadian Literature translated into Slovenian till 1980

No.	Author	Title	Translator	Publisher/year
1.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Lobo, currumpavski kralj.</i>	anon.,	ND, 1919 podlistek, št. 86 –91.
2.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Winnipeški volk.</i>	Marija KMET,	JU, 1921. podlistek, št. 75 – 91.
3.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Kazan, volčji pes.</i>	Pavel BREŽNIK,	SL, 1924. podlistek št. 94 – 146
4.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Kazan, volčji pes.</i>	Pavel BREŽNIK,	JK, 1924.
5.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Onstran pragozda.</i>	Fran GOVEKAR,	J, 1925.
6.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Onstran pragozda.</i>	Davorin RAVLJEN,	J, 1925. podlistek, št. 126 – 163.
7.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Tepček.</i>	Franc BOLKA,	M, 1925.
8.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Bingo.</i>	Pavel HOLEČEK,	C, 1925.
9.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Ris in deček.</i>	Pavel HOLEČEK,	C, 1926.
10.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Stari volkodlak.</i>	Pavel HOLEČEK,	C, 1926.
11.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Preganjana žena.</i>	Davorin RAVLJEN,	J, 1927. podlistek št. 151 – 238.
12.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Črni lovec.</i>	France MAGAJNA,	E, 1927/28. podlistek št. 190 – 26.
13.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Medved Tir.</i>	Davorin RAVLJEN,	J, 1930. podlistek št. 190 – 196.
14.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Medved Tir.</i>	anon.,	P, 1931.
15.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Podarjeni obraz.</i>	Boris RIHTERŠIČ,	ND, 1931.
16.	Martha OSTENSO,	<i>Klic divjih gosi.</i>	Griša KORITNIK,	JK, 1931.
17.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Titalisica.</i>	Pavel HOLEČEK,	C, 1931.
18.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Na meji sveta.</i>	Davorin RAVLJEN,	J, 1932. podlistek št. 1 – 71.
19.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Hči divjine.</i>	Davorin RAVLJEN,	J, 1933. podlistek št. 111 – 193.
20.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Zgodba zajca z bombažastim repkom.</i>	A. PETRIŠIČ,	MJ, 1936. podlistek, št. 43 – 51.
21.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Lov na ženo.</i>	anon.,	AD, 1937.
22.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Lisica iz Springfielda.</i>	anon.,	MJ, 1937. zgodbica v št. 1 – 6.
23.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Zlata zanka.</i>	J. OMLADIČ,	DO, 1938.
24.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Rolf Gozdovnik.</i>	Miran DERŽAJ,	S, 1938.
25.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Sivko.</i>	Vladimir LEVSTIK,	CS, 1938.
26.	E.T.SETON,	<i>Vuli.</i>	A. PETRIŠIČ,	R, 1939.
27.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Niva in Miki.</i>	Davorin RAVLJEN,	J, 1942. podlistek, št. 134 – 185.
28.	J.O.CURWOOD,	<i>Blisk.</i>	A. PETERLIN,	SK, 1943.

29. J.O.CURWOOD, *Ogenj divja.* Vinko GABERC, SK, 1943.
30. J.O.CURWOOD, *Dolina molka.* anon., S, 1943.
31. Martha OSTENSO, *Objestneži.* Niko KURET, SK, 1944.
32. E.T.SETON, *Vinipeški volk.* Marija KMET, MK, 1947.
33. E.T.SETON, *Črni kljusač.* Pavel HOLEČEK, PIO, 1949/50.
34. E.T.SETON, *Črni kljusač in dr. zgod.* Pavel HOLEČEK, MK, 1950.
35. J.O.CURWOOD, *Cesta dedov.* anon., PPP, 1953. podlistek, št. 1 – 19.
36. J.O.CURWOOD, *Črt se je vrnil k ljudem (odl.).* anon., 7 dni, 1953. podlistek, št. 7 – 39.
37. J.O.CURWOOD, *Medvedek Neewa.* Tit VIDMAR, slikanica - Miki Muster., SP, 1954.
38. E.T.SETON, *V senci gozdov.* Saša DOBRILA, LD, 1954.
39. E.T.SETON, *Srebrni svizec.* Pavel HOLEČEK, MK, 1954.
40. A.R.EVANS, *Veter nad belo cesto.* Rapa ŠUKLJE, TT, 1955. podlistek, št. 13 – 36.
41. E.T.SETON, *Zgodba o dobrem jazbecu.,* anon., TB, 1955/56.
42. E.T.SETON, *Zvesti pes Cink.* Marijan TAVČAR, PIL, 1956.
43. A.R.EVANS, *Srečni par.* Marjan BREGANT, TT, 1956/57.
44. J.O.CURWOOD, *Kazan, volčji pes.* Tit VIDMAR, SP, 1957.
45. E.T.SETON, *Družina iz Wyndigola.,* Anton S. PIRC, MV, 1957.
46. E.T.SETON, *Povest o dobrosrčnem jazbecu.,* Jože KRANJC, MS, 1957.
47. Allen Roy EVANS, *Pohod severnih jelenov.,* Josip RIJAVEC, L, 1957.
48. E.T.SETON, *O zajcu, ki žvižga.* Jože KRANJC, CI, 1957/58.
49. E.T.SETON, *Vidra na drči.* Jože KRANJC, CI, 1957/58.
50. E.T.SETON, *Voluharjev muzej.* Jože KRANJC, CI, 1957/58.
51. J.O.CURWOOD, *Baree.* anon., SP, 1958.
52. E.T.SETON, *Rolf Gozdovnik.* Rudolf KRESAL, MK, 1958.
53. E.T.SETON, *Stari volkodlak.* anon., B, 1960.
54. Bruce HUTCHINSON, *Kanada.* Zdenko KNEZ, DZS, 1961.
55. J.O.CURWOOD, *Kazan, volčji pes.* Marijan TAVČAR, MK, 1962.
56. J.O.CURWOOD, *Baree, Kazanov sin.,* Sonja CUDERMAN, DZS, 1963.
57. E.T.SETON, *Rolf Gozdovnik.* Rudolf KRESAL, MK, 1964.
58. Malcolm LOWRY, *Pod ognjenikom.* Mira MIHELIC, CZ, 1965.
59. Thomas B. COSTAIN, *Poslednja ljubezen.,* Drago GRAH, PZ, 1967.
60. Mazo de la ROCHE, *Začetek Jalne.* Zoja SKUŠEK-MOČNIK, CZ, 1970.
61. Mazo de la ROCHE, *Mary Wakefield.* Maja KRAIGHER, CZ, 1970.
62. Mazo de la ROCHE, *Jalna.* Katrina PUC, CZ, 1970.
63. Martha OSTENSO, *Klic divjih gosi.* Griša KORITNIK, O, 1971.
64. Mordecai RICHLER, *Main.* Ivan DOLENC, TT, 1972.
65. E.T.SETON, *Črni kljusač in dr. zgod.,* Alenka GORIČAR, Pavel HOLEČEK, MK, 1973.
66. E.T.SETON, *Rolf Gozdovnik.,* Rudolf KRESAL, MK, 1973.
67. E.T.SETON, *Vinipeški volk.* Marija KMET, MK, 1973.
68. E.T.SETON, *Winnipeški volk in dr. zgod.* Avgust PETRIŠIČ, Marija KMET, MK, 1973.
69. J.O.CURWOOD, *Baree, Kazanov sin.,* anon., V, 1976. podlistek, št. 125 – 196.
70. Dennis Feltham JONES, *Kolos.,* BORIS GRABNER, MK, 1976.
71. J.O.CURWOOD, *Medvedek Neewa.* Tit VIDMAR, slikanica - Miki Muster., D, 1977.
72. J.O.CURWOOD, *Kazan.* Tit VIDMAR, strip ilustriral Miki Muster., D, 1978.
73. J.O.CURWOOD, *Pogum ob jezeru.* Andrej KOVAČ, D, 1980. podlistek, št. 254 - 304.