

»Kdo bere?«: perspektive raziskovanja branja

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

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

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

zumevanje sodobnih razmer, namreč bralčeve interakcije z elektronskimi besedili.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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‘Who Reads?’: Perspectives on Reading Research

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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