Univerza v Ljubljani
FILOZOFSKA FAKULTETA

ACTA NEOPHILOLOGICA

46. 1-2 (2013)
Ljubljana

ACTA NEOPHILOLOGICA

46. 1-2 (2013)
Ljubljana

ACTA NEOPHILOLOGICA SLO ISSN 0567-784X

Published by/Založila: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete Unverze v Ljubljani (Ljubljana University Press, Faculty of Arts)
Issued by/ Izdal: Znanstveno-raziskovalni inštitut Filozofske fakultete (Scientific & Research Institute of Faculty of Arts)
For the publisher/Za založbo: Branka Kalenić Ramšak, dekanja Filozofske fakultete (the dean of the Faculty of Arts)

Ljubljana 2013

Design and layout/Oblikovanje in prelom:
Printed by/Tisk: Birografika Bori d.o.o.
Number of copies printed/Število izvodov: 350
Price/Cena: 15 EUR

This publication was supported by/Publikacijo so podprli:
Javna agencija za knjigo/Slovenian book agency

Acta Neophlogica is published once yearly (as a double number). The review is primarily oriented in promoting scholarly articles on English and American literature, on other literatures written in English as well as on German and Romance literatures. All articles are refereed before being accepted or rejcted. Manuscripts will not be returned unless they are commissioned. Computer-printed copies must be double-spaced and new paragraphs should be printed with an indention. Articles must have an accompanying abstract and key-words. Literature used should be prepared in the alphabetical order of authors. The views expressed in articles should in no way be construed as reflecting the views of the publisher. Articles submitted for consideration should be sent in two computer-printed copies (double spaced) with a short abstract (in English) and together with a diskette. Articles should be of no more than 5,000 words. For format and style authors should follow the *MLA Handbook*. Autors who wish to have their articles published in the next issue of *AN* should send their manuscripts to the editor no later than l May each year: Mirko Jurak, Department of English, Filozofska fakulteta, Aškerčeva 2, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia.

UDK 821.111(73=669)–31.09Cole T.

TEJU COLE'S NIGERIA AND THE OPEN CITIES OF NEW YORK AND BRUSSELS

Igor Maver

Dedicated to Chinua Achebe (1930-died 2013), the first major African/Nigerian writer in English

Abstract

The novel *Open City* (2011) by the Nigerian-born and raised author Teju Cole is set in New York City, where he has lived since 1992. The narrator and protagonist of the book, the young Nigerian doctor Julius in is a veritable *flâneur* in the Big Apple, who is observing the rapidly changing multi-ethnic character of the city and meditating on (his) history and culture, identity and solitude, and the world beyond the United States, with which it is interconnected through the global history of violence and pain. He is juxtaposing the past and the present, the seemingly borderless open city of New York, Nigeria, and the various European locales, particularly Brussels.The novel, although set in the United States, is constantly interspersed with his recollections of his past experiences conditioned by his complex hybrid Nigerian-European-American identity.

Keywords: American literature, 9/11, diaspora, identity, Nigerian literature

> That night I took the subway home, and instead of falling asleep immediately, I lay in bed, too tired to release myself from wakefulness, and I rehearshed in the dark the numerous incidents and sights I had encountered while roaming, sorting each encounter like a child playing with wooden blocks, trying to figure out which belonged where, which responded to which. Each neighborhood of the city appeared to be made of a different substance, each seemed to have a different air pressure, a different psychic weight: the bright lights and shuttered shops, the housing projects and luxury hotels, the fire escapes and city parks. My futile task of sorting went on until the forms began to morph into each other and assume abstract shapes unrelated to the real city; and only then did my hectic mind finally show some pity and still itself, only then did dreamless sleep arrive. (*Open City*, 6-7)

Teju Cole's recent book *Open City* (Cole 2011) is an urban city novel about the open city of New York, although it is also as much about the 'open' city of Brussels, where Julius, the narrator of the book, finds the ethnic/multicultural openness of the latter more problematic: he spends a long vacation in Brussels, primarily in search of his German oma/grandmother on his mother's side, while he is an American-Nigerian resident of New York City. Historically, the official declaration and description of a city to be 'open' has been made by a warring side which was on the verge of defeat and surrender. This is what happened in Brussels in 1940 which the book does mention; in other cases, those making such a declaration were willing and able to fight on, but preferred that a particular city be spared. On the other hand, the author declares New York City 'open' in the context of accepting the inflow of many migrants from all over the world, a city that protects them from the vicissitudes of modern life, wars and suffering, a heaven-haven, a post-colonial metropolis that he perceives as such. On the other hand, surrender also seems to be in the focus here, for there are new migrants to NYC who give and take in order to adapt to the new environment: this is actually true of all the multi-layered and multi-ethnic world metropolises. An Audenesque suffering is, to his mind, the *conditio sine qua non* of the human condition. In fact, Cole speaks about violence, trauma, war in a new way, indirectly, describing not the external events but rather the consequences of suffering upon one's psyche, individual and collective memory. But NYC is not immune to violence either, the protagonist broods over Ground Zero, since the novel was written in the post-9/11 period. Julius's New York walkabouts represent the framework narrative of the text, featuring the travels and reminiscences in-between, the Proustian *flâneries* of the narrator, the young doctor of psychiatry Julius, who is part American, part Nigerian and part German. The text moves freely between the present and the past on three continents; in addition to New York City and Brussels partly also Lagos in Nigeria, with the fictional protagonist, the hybrid and often alienated but nonetheless reliable narrator, in a desperate search of his identity, even if he is not consciously aware of that search.

This is not a typical book of fiction, a novel per se, with a weak narrative plot development, undoubtedly something of a drawback in the book, for it is, we can speculate, largely based on the narrator's/author's own experiences. He makes no particular effort to distinguish between the two as he moves freely between fiction and reality, his recollections of the past and travels. The style of writing of the book is smooth-flowing, grappling indeed, showing the author's great knowledge of art history, other literary texts, music and paintings. This symphonically-structured novel moves forward by leaps and retro-bounds effortlessly, with the sound of music, Wagner, Mozart and especially Gustav Mahler, stylistically chiselled, composed and tranquil, interspersed with frequent references to visual art. The text actually works as a musical piece, with Mahler opening and closing it fittingly by his musical 'death' piece, i.e. his Ninth Symphony (saying farewell). It moves by employing a counterpoint rhythm and fugue-like, structural techniques. The main framework of the book is the concept of the open global city, while the second one is Julius's hybrid identity and search for his ancestors, parents, memories swirling about the inner-city natural and and the various urban habitats of New York City.

It is true, however, that Cole deliberately provides an intellectual show-off and artistic refinement to the extent that one may even wonder whether the narrator Julius

might be an intellectual poseur. One has to clearly distinguish between the author and the protagonist of the novel: Teju Cole, born to Nigerian parents in the USA and raised in Nigeria, from where he returned to New York during his late adolescence and where he now lives. If identity is a mix of inheritance, memory and pure fiction, then NYC with its many historical layers of urban history is the right palimpsestic site for its examination. The protagonist and first person narrator in *Open City*, on the other hand, has a double hybrid identity, being American, Nigerian and German. Given the fact that Teju Cole is also a photographer and a professional historian of early Netherlandish art, the book abounds in visual images and photographic realism, often presenting New York City from the slice-of-life angle.

The involuntary memory of a Proustian *flâneur* and modern urban spectator, in a clearly Romantic stance, as it results from the introductory epigraph above, characterizes Julius. As Charles Baudelaire defined the *flâneur*:

> The crowd is his element, as the air is that of birds and water of fishes. His passion and his profession are to become one flesh with the crowd. For the perfect *flâneur*, for the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite. To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world—impartial natures which the tongue can but clumsily define. (Baudelaire)

Open City is Teju Cole's debut novel, and it won the PEN/Hemingway Award, the New York City Book Award, and the Rosenthal Award of the American Academy of Arts and letters. The narrator Julius roams through the seemingly borderless open city metropolis of New York with it ever-changing migrant population, still haunted by the post-traumatic memory of 9/11. Cole had prior to *Open City* published a novella wih photographs about contemporary Lagos from the point of view of a diasporic Nigerian person returning home for a brief visit, *Every Day is for the Thief*, in 2007, which is partly connected to *Open City*. In this case, however, the Nigerian narrator returns from New York to Lagos to visit his friends and relatives, only to be disappointed at the violence and corruption he finds there, although he also has hope for a change. He is now working on a non-fictional book about Lagos, based on *fait divers* from everyday life he can gather from the internet and the papers: ¨The idea is not to show that Lagos, or Abuja, or Owerri, are worse than New York, or worse than Paris. Rather, it's a modest goal: to show that what happens in the rest of the world happens in Nigeria, too, with a little craziness all our own mixed in¨ (www.tejucole.com/small-fates/).

The novel opens with the description of Julius, who indulges in randomly walking about Manhattan. He watches the birds migrate as part of the natural migration process, as opposed to the »unnatural« migration of people into New York City. As an avid classical music listener, Julius often listens to musical fugues which he compares to the city's »incessant loudness, a shock after the day's focus and relative tranquility« (6). Julius first walks around the Upper West Side, then visits his old and ailing professor of English, Japanese-American Saito, for whom he has a deep respect and gratitude for introducing him to English literature during his two years at college

before entering the Medical School. The professor talks to him about his hybrid identity of being a Japanese-American, especially during a concentration camp confinement for the Japanese during World War Two, which anticipates Julius's own identity search in the novel: »For me, in the forties, memorization was a helpful skill, and I called on it because I couldn't be sure I would see my books again, and anyway, there wasn't much to do at the camp. We were all confused about what was happening, we were American, had always thought ourselves so, and not Japanese« (13). The narrator's fascination for classical music is the fil rouge of the structural organisation of the book. Gustav Mahler opens and closes it, namely with his late instrumental-vocal symphony *Das Lied von der Erde*, and it is precisely his music that often transposes the narrator into a »reverie« (17). One day he ventures into Harlem to find »the brisk trade of sidewalk salesmen: the Senegalese cloth merchants, the young men selling bootleg DVDs, the Nation of Islam stalls. There were self-published books, dashikis, posters on black liberation, bundles of incense, vials of perfume and essential oils, djembe drumbs, and little tourist tchotchkes from Africa. One table displayed enlarged photographs of early-twentieth-century lynchings of African-Americans« (18).

When Julius sees a cripple in the busy street dragging his broken leg behind him, he resorts to his Nigerian heritage and gets the impression that all the things he is seeing around himself are under the aegis of Obatala, the demiurge charged by Olodumare to create humans from clay. The Yoruba namely, he explains, believe that when drunk he made dwarfs, cripples, and those burdened by a debilitating illness. Moreover, he notes that from the Dutch colonization onwards native Americans in the area of New York have been completely wiped out (e.g. Cornelis Van Tienhoven, who was described in a recent history book *The Monster of New Amsterdam*). Julius compares Van Tienhoven to Pol Pot, Hitler and Stalin: he certainly sees violence and supression all over the world as having existed for centuries. The author of this particular book, a certain V., becomes Julius's patient and tells him: »There are almost no native Americans in New York City, and very few in all of the Northeast. It isn't right that people are not terrified by this because this is a terrifying thing that happened to a vast population. And it's not in the past, it is still with us today, at least, it is still with me« (27).

At the end of Chapter 2, Julius decides to watch a new film set in Africa. Few people attend. He is appalled to see that the director used music from Mali to represent Kenya and is annoyed and angry to conclude that »Africa was always waiting, a substrate for the white man's will, a backdrop for his activities. And so, sitting to experience this film, *The Last King of Scotland*, I was prepared to be angry again. I was primed to see a white man, a nobody in his own country, who thought, as usual, that the salvation of Africa was up to him. The king the title referred to was Idi Amin Dada, dictator of Uganda in the 1970s« (29). Walking about New York City seeing all its ethnic diversity, Julius suddenly (»on the uptown train«) starts to feel the need to see his German oma (grandmother), who might be in one of the nursing homes in Brussels, but he has no idea how to locate her: it is then that he decides to go for a long holiday of several weeks to Brussels. We learn how he and his mother had become estranged from each other when he was seventeen, just before his departure for the USA. Likewise, he thinks, his mother had grown estranged from her own mother, Julius's oma, and never returned to Germany. Julius in his hybrid Nigerian-German-American identity swirl

thus reminisces about oma's visit to Nigeria and her tour of Yorubaland, where she came from her home residence in Belgium which she was living at then. Julius nurtures very fine thoughts for his grandmother and, as he is not sure whether she is still alive, he decides to go to Belgium, perhaps to find her or at least to walk in her footsteps. He believes she could be in a nursing home there, though he does not know where. The next day, wandering through the streets of NYC he has a flash-back recounting his meeting with a blind bard in Lagos when he was a child, somewhat reminiscent of himself and his grandmother:

> Once, in a crowded market at Ojuelgba, sometime in the early eighties, I saw him. … He sang in a plaintive and high-pitched voice, in deep, proverbial Yoruba that was impossible for me to follow. Afterward, I imagined that I had seen something like an aura around him, a spiritual apartness that moved all his hearers to reach into their purses and put something in the bowl his assistant boy carried. (38)

The narrator of the book travels through the city by bus, subway, cab, or rather mostly walks all over the city and his visual memory is acute, always comparing the diverse architectural styles, for example Wall Street in Lower Manhattan, to the English gothic style. He steps into the Trinity Church just past Wall Street and Broadway to pray for an ailing friend. The Trinity Church, he elaborates on at length, has a significant place in American literature and culture. Julius quotes from the early New Amsterdam Dutch settler Antony de Hooges's writing, where he describes a certain white fish in the Hudson river and beached sperm whale. The whale had a symbolic importance for the Dutch. To see a whale and even more an albino whale in the area of the New Amsterdam settlement: since the beached whales in the Netherlands were immensely historically important (for example, the whale of Berckey near The Hague beached in 1598). It was some two hundred years later that Herman Melville was inspired by this legendary account. He was a parishioner of the Trinity Church and wrote his famous novel *The Whale: Moby Dick* on an albino Leviathan. The narrator slips his hand into the Hudson river and thinks about the passage of life, about eternity, how we ignore nature and are totally daily consumed by banal everyday questions. He is uncomfortable more than once when an African man tries to 'brother' him, as he is not in search of establishing a black brotherhood friendship at all cost. He passes by Ground Zero site and concludes that atrocity is historically nothing new, not to humans nor animals, except that in the modern world »it is uniquely well organized, carried out with pens, train carriages, ledgers, barbed wire, work camps, gas. And this late contribution, the absence of bodies. No bodies were visible, except the falling ones, on the day America's ticker stopped. Marketable stories of all kinds had thickened around the injured coast of our city, but the depiction of the dead bodies was forbidden. It would have been upsetting to have it otherwise. I moved on with the commuters through the pen« (58). The narrator also describes Groud Zero:

> The perimeter marked out the massive construction site. I walked up to a second overpass, the one that once connected the World Financial Center to the buildings that stood on the site. Until that moment, I had been a lone

> walker, but people that began to troop out of the World Financial Center, men and women in dark suits including a group of young Japanese professionals who, tailed by the rapid stream of their conversation, hurried by me…. When I came up to the overpass, I was able to share their view: a long ramp that extended into the site, and the three or four tractors scattered around inside it that, dwarfed by the size of the pit, looked like toys. Just below street level, I saw the sudden metallic green of a subway train hurtling by, exposed to the elements where it crossed the work site, a livid vein drawn across the neck of 9/11. Beyond the site was the building I had seen earlier in the evening, the one wrapped in black netting, mysterious and severe as an obelisk. (57-8)

Julius also notes that before the erection of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in the 1960s various activities at various venues had taken place on the old Washington market, active piers, the fishwives, the Christian Syrian enclave established here in the late 1800s. He pays a visit, with his girl-friend Nadège, to an immigrant detention facility for undocumented migrants (Africans, Latinos, Eastern Europeans, Asians) and sees a plethora of new migrants who ended up there. He relates in some detail the life story of Saidu from Liberia, who made his way up to Tangier in Morocco and then Ceuta, the Spanish enclave, from where he manages to enter Spain, then Lisbon and finally illegally arrives to the USA.

Chapter Six is a flash-back into Julius's childhood and early adolescence, his attending the Nigerian Military School in Zaria, which was his father's wish. He remembers how he had no objection to going to Northern Nigeria, which he found »a desertified territory, with small trees and parched shrubs, might as well have been another continent, so different was it from the chaos of Lagos« (77), for him far away from his native Yorubaland up into the Hausa Caliphate. He writes about a deepening rift with his German mother originally from Magdeburg. His insecure hybrid identity is explicitly stated:

> The name Julius linked me to another place and was, with my passport and my skin colour, one of the intensifiers of my sense of being different, of being set apart, in Nigeria. I had a Yoruba middle name, Olatubosun, which I never used. That name surprised me a little each time I saw in on my passport or birth certificate, like something that belonged to someone else but had been long held in my keeping. Being Julius in everyday life thus confirmed me in my not being fully Nigerian. (78)

He draws parallels between the Second World War and the German ancestry of his mother and the Nigerian military coup of 1976, marking also the untimely death of his Nigerian father. He saves money and borrows money to study in the USA, on his own terms.

Chapters Seven to Eleven are all set in Brussels, his long vacation there, designed particularly to come across his grandmother, even if only indirectly. Julius rents a private apartment from a girl called Mayken in the centre of Brussels and on the flight to Brussels meets Annette Mailotte, a retired doctor, who has been living in the US for a number of years, but who regularly comes to Brussels, where she keeps an apartment.

He learns a lot from her about Belgium, from her point of view, of course, and why she had not stayed in Belgium professionally and academically: »She told me that she had done her training in Louvain. But you must be a Catholic to be a professor there, she said with a chuckle. Not so easy for an atheist like me: I've always been one, I'll always be one. Anyway, it's better than Université Libre de Bruxelles, where no one can achieve anything professionally without being a Mason« (89). Dr. Maillotte has a good friend in Brussels and invites Julius to have dinner with them during his long vacation in Brussels, Grégoire Empain—one of the grandsons of Baron Empain, an important name in Belgian history who had built Heliopolis in Egypt, where his palace still stands. Empain was a sucessful industrialist, who masterminded the Paris metro and was also amateur egyptologist, who had helped the Belgian government acquire some important Egyptian items for the Brussels museum. His host Mayken picks him up and on the way to the city presents a heap of stereotypes (»the French are lazy« 96) upon Julius, who does not have any idea: Flemish, Walloon? Julius had been twice before to Brussels, but only for a short time, on his way to America. He wants to amend the erroneous American views of this old capital:

> It is easy to have the wrong idea about Brussels. One thinks of it as a techocrats' city, and because it was so central to the formation of the European Union, the assumption is that it is a new city, built, or at least expanded, expressly for that purpose. Brussels is old – a peculiar European oldness, which is manifested in stone – and that antiquity is present in most of its streets and neighborhoods. The houses, bridges, and cathedrals of Brussels had been spared the horrors visited on the low farmland and forests of Belgium, which had borne the brunt of the countless wars fought on the territory. Slaughter and destruction, ferocious to a degree rarely experienced in history, had taken place on the Somme, in Ypres, and before that, out at Waterloo. (97)

Julius is struck to find large numbers of people from Africa in Brussels, from Maghreb and the Congo, the latter of which surely had all to do with its colonial past in the Belgian Congo Free State controlled by the Belgian King Leopold II until the early 20th century and, from 1908, the Congo as the Belgian colony. Julius notes racial tensions and immigration discontent with many Belgians: »The country was in the grip of uncertainties – the sense of anomie was apparent even to a visitor« (100). He walks into the Parc du Cinquantenaire, feels dwarfed by the sheer size, and sees from afar tourists taking photos, silently. When he comes closer, he realizes they are speaking Chinese. He suddenly realizes he has to try to find his grandmother, but there is no Magdalena Müller in the phone book. Near his rented home he gradually enters into long conversations with Farouq, a Moroccan from Tétouan, who works in an internet café. He gets the feeling of rage and violent rhetoric on Farouq's side and anti-immigration feeling, on the other.

In a café in Grand Sablon he meets a young Czech woman and ends up having a one night stand with her. There is still no sign of his grandmother: he looks at old women huddled at tram stations, and hopes to see her there. He remembers the day they visited Olumo in Nigeria, and she had wordlessly massaged his shoulder. However,

no sign of her whatsoever. Julius's encounters with Farouq and his Arab friends make him increasingly uneasy, with anger seething underneath the surface. In Chapter Ten he returns again to his adolescence spent in Lagos, but then suddenly realizes he is in Brussels. His much sought-after solitude in Brussels is interspersed with his encounters of various Africans: contrary to his initial belief that everybody in Belgium is from the Congo, he meets people from Mali, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Liberia and the question significantly goes through his mind: »Who, among those present, I asked myself, had killed, or witnessed killing?« (139). Julius perceives life as a continuity and, only after it becomes the past, he feels, we are able to see its discontinuities. In trying to recover the submerged hybrid layers of his self, he confesses: »Nigeria was like that for me: mostly forgotten, except for those few things that I remembered with an outsize intensity. These were the things that had been solidified in my mind by reiteration, that recurred in dreams and daily thoughts: certain faces, certain conversations, which, taken as a group, represented a secure version of the past that I had been constructing since 1992« (156).

In Chapter Thirteen the reader learns that upon the return to New York City from Brussels, his mind is vacant, he is »subject to a nervous condition« (161), when he is buying medicine in a Wall Street pharmacy. He finds some solace again in his compulsory »reverie« walks in the city. In this second part of the book he becomes a *flâneur* in Lower Manhattan. Every area he visits has an abundantly described historical context, the Chinese, the port of New York, etc. He walks all the way down the Bowery to the Lower East End, then away from the tourist crowds, to east Broadway, where he finds that everybody is Chinese, or can be taken for one. He finds the monument to Lin Zexu, an antinarcotics activist, a hero of the Opium wars, who was much hated by the British in impending their China drug traffic and who had been appointed commissioner in Guangzhou in 1839.

Near Morningside Park on the North West Side Julius is one night badly mugged, beaten and kicked by two very young adolescent African-American 'brothers', stealing his wallet and phone. This makes him think differently about race: race does not discriminate in crime, he concludes looking at his painfully disfigured jaw. Still, he explores the black racial history of New York City, finding an African burial ground, which is mostly covered by new buildings, not too far from City Hall Park. He writes about slavery in Manhattan and how it has been covered by the layers of the past in the palimpsest the city is today. After the rape of his girlfriend Moji in the past, he experiences something of a shock seeing her again. He manages to suppress this deed yet again into his subconsciousness, just as his connection/identification with Africa, which is, despite his evasive attitude, constantly there in his life and innermost thoughts through a negative presence. He remains hopelessly deracinated. Julius talks a lot about death and burial at the end of the novel, the death of his father, his grandfather, that of his beloved composer, Mahler in 1911, referring also to the famous El Greco painting from Toledo, Spain, *Burial of the Count of Orgaz*. The final 21st Chapter ends with a description of his first full day in the psychiatric practice on the Bowery with a senior partner of his. Mahler's music fittingly ends the narrator's musings on death: he goes to hear Mahler's vocal-symphonic piece *Das Lied von der Erde* at the Carnegie Hall, and then his Ninth Symphony, commenting on both: »The overwhelming impression they

give is of light: the light of a passionate hunger for life, the light of a sorrowful mind contemplating death's implacable approach« (250). He ends his city journey symbolically with a boat trip to the Statue of Liberty on Liberty Island and feels sorry for the handful of wrens that have been disoriented and have, paradoxically, found suffering and death in it – like humans – searching for liberty.

Teju Cole's first novel *Open City* has received positive reviews from critics: they have compared him to the writing of Joseph O'Neill and Zadie Smith (*The New Yorker*), his honesty has also been noted (*The New York Times*). The buried layers of the past underneath the skyline of NYC today is what he aims at discovering, so that the book is a meditation on the suffering in history, identity quest and, above all solitude, that the narrator does not wish to break. At the same time he hopes to unveil the palimpsest of his own self, which he is not fully capable of coming to terms with. The Big Apple *flâneur*, Julius, is constantly watching the city and its bird life: he finds the city globally interconnected with the rest of the world through pain and suffering. NYC expresses and caters well to his hybrid identity, a veritable palimpsest of African-American memory. He grapples with his partly Yoruba identity and never feels fully Nigerian, and does not trust his passport which says he is Nigerian, for he is as much American and German. The »new migrants« to the USA and New York City are his main points of ineterest, from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean region in particular. Talking to the angry migrants in Brussels makes him reflect upon the American as well as European identity crisis, especially after 9/11. New York is shown as a metacity (according to the well-known Dutch architect Winy Maas), which is not defined by topographical facts or prescribed ideologies, nor representation or context but rather by the people inhabiting it. The book nonetheless inspires calmness, inner peace, a Wordsworthian connection of the onlooker with nature, so his position is somewhat Romantic, isolated against the crowds, trying to find a connection with nature and with his own self: Julius is ultimately unable to do either of these two. On the other hand, Julius, who is increasingly turning from a reliable into an unreliable narrator, especially when we learn about his committing rape, is all along very distant and cannot seem to be able to connect with people around him. This is particularly true of women, with whom he has troubled relationships in one way or another (his mother, Moji, Nadège). The text ofen reads as a musical score that adds to its appeal. Paradoxically, the hassle of the great megalopolis enables the narrator to find at least an imaginary identity and mental stability, inner peace and solitude, which effectively rubs off onto the reader as well.

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

WORKS CITED

Baudelaire, Charles. »The Painter of Modern Life«. New York: Da Capo Press, 1964. Orig. published in *Le Figaro*, in 1863.

Cole, Teju. *Open City*. London: Faber & Faber, 2011.

_____. *Every Day is for the Thief*. Abuja, Nigeria: Cassava Republic press, 2007.

UDK 316.75:929Vode A.:929Šentjurc I.
UDK 821.112.2(=163.6)–31.09Šentjurc I.

THE ORIGINS AND IMPACT OF STATE FORCE: THE CASES OF ANGELA VODE AND IGOR ŠENTJURC

Mira Miladinović Zalaznik

Abstract

Working without a theoretical background the article discusses two Slovenian intellectuals: Angela Vode and Igor Šentjurc. These two writers and publicists, though separated by sex and the centuries in which they were born, are bound by life experience, for the state and Party, along with its subordinates, the Secret Police *(Geheim-Polizei)*, as well as legal authorities that oppressed them, were fundamentally and continually a part of these two individuals' lives.

Key words: Angela Vode, Igor von Percha, Igor Šentjurc, Secret Police, *Woman in Today's World,* Dolores Ibárruri, General Valentín González – El Campesino, Edvard Kocbek, the novel *Feuer und Schwert*

> When I returned from prison, the hardest thing for me was to avoid cars. This was a sort of phobia. If it signalled left, I was convinced it would go right, and vice-versa. If it didn't signal, I was convinced that it would turn left or right. I didn't expect it to watch out for me. I didn't dare cross the street, and I would wait. Even today this sometimes still occurs. This I brought with me from prison. Into my flesh and blood had come a fear of deception (Vode 2004, 226).

As Robert Musil might say, today I have a "foreshortened perspective" – I am *perspektivisch verkürzt*. Working without a theoretical background I will present two Slovenian intellectuals: Angela Vode and Igor Šentjurc. These two writers and publicists, though separated by sex and the centuries in which they were born, are bound by life experience, for the state and Party, along with its subordinates, the Secret Police (*Geheim-Polizei*), as well as legal authorities that oppressed them, were fundamentally and continually a part of these two individuals' lives.

I. ANGELA VODE (1892–1985)

Angela Vode was born on January 5, 1892 into a family of railway workers in Ljubljana, the present capital of Slovenia. She was the youngest daughter. Despite her sex, her parents and older brothers and sisters encouraged her to get an education. She concluded her schooling with a diploma that qualified her to be a primary school teacher. Between 1912 and 1920 – that is, beginning already during the Habsburg Monarchy – she taught in various villages around Ljubljana, while also performing other duties that the village surroundings of the time required of educated individuals. She held anti-Austrian and leftist pro-Yugoslavian political views, and because of this the authorities kept continual tabs on her. She enthusiastically greeted the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the birth of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In 1919 she became employed as a clerk in a factory that manufactured cast iron products. She was active in the division of the Social Democratic Party of Slovenia, which today counts as the forerunner of the first communist organization in Slovenia. In 1921 she passed a specialist exam for teaching handicapped children and found work at a so-called "auxiliary school" (as they were known at the time). There she had a rewarding 25-year career and earned a reputation as a leading expert in her field. Her membership in the Communist Party dates from 1922;[1] she was also involved in a movement that fought for the rights of women, becoming president of the Woman's Movement (for Slovenia), which was a part of the broader Feminist Alliance. She collected literature from this area, and wrote articles on the development of society and the position of women in society. In 1929 she took part in the world conference of feminists, and in 1930 she became president of the Slovene chapter of the Society of Teachers, while remaining active also in other expert societies. She wrote articles that were published in dailies and periodicals, and held lectures, often outside of Ljubljana, on politics, culture, and social welfare – almost always from the viewpoint of discrimination against women or of their emancipation. In addition to her regular employment she was engaged in many larger projects. In 1934 she wrote and published the book *Žena v sedanjem svetu* (Woman in Today's World), which is a meticulously researched historical, sociological and political study of the role of women in society and in the family, of women's economic dependence on men, and of the influence of war and politics on woman's life. Reviews were positive, and her books soon sold out. She began to research Nazism intensively, also with the help of the German books she would order.[2] Among those which she read closely immediately upon publication was Hitler's *Mein Kampf* (1924), and she was thus among the first to recognize the dangers of National-Socialism. In 1935 she published the book *Žena i fašizam* (Woman and Fascism) in Serbo-Croatian, and in 1936, to mark the 25th anniversary of her school, she edited *Pomen pomožnega šolstva in njegov razvoj v Jugoslaviji* (The Importance of Auxiliary Education and its Development in Yugoslavia).

[1] The majority of the documents – 57 of the numerous official documents that one receives in a lifetime – were taken from her when she was arrested, never to be returned. Some were destroyed, whereas others are preserved in the Archives of Slovenia; those that were not destroyed most probably in 1990 when the Secret Police, sensing the approach of the 1991 democratic changes in Slovenia, purged the lion's share of their archives. (Cf. Puhar, 380).

[2] In addition to her native Slovenian, Vode had mastered German, English, French, Italian, Serbo-Croatian and, to a lesser extent, Russian. She read both literature and specialist literature in those languages.

She fought for the franchise of women,[3] endeavoured to bring in progressive legislation in the areas of labour, family, social justice and – something especially advanced for her time – for the introduction of social changes that would lead to the right to abortion. Her book *Spol in usoda* (Sex and Destiny) appeared in 1938, meeting with much approval but also with hostile reviews, especially in the clerical press, which attacked not only her expertise but also her humanity.

Although Angela Vode was overtly left-wing and a communist, in her published writings she did not adopt an ideological position, and she did not disseminate communist propaganda; her writing was always intelligent, cultivated, clear, readable and, not least, well-grounded. She wrote nothing in haste, and her firm convictions were informed by research and studies, including empirical ones. In 1939 war was approaching, and Angela Vode called upon Slovenians to bind together. She started a petition which was signed by 67 women's organizations, along with 185 organizations of mixed membership. At this time she was cast out of the Communist Party for having spoken publicly in a manner disagreeable to her Party colleagues, and for having condemned the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact because she believed that Stalin would betray Slovenians in the name of international communism – just as he had already betrayed his convictions. From that time until her death Vode was under constant surveillance not only by the authorities of the time – the Kingdom of Yugoslavia – but by Italians, Germans and the post-war Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (that is, primarily the Communist Party). After Yugoslavia was occupied on April 6, 1941, Vode organized aid for refugees. The Board of the Yugoslavian' Women's Alliance selected her to represent them at The Liberation Front,[4] the organization for the struggle against the occupiers, which the Communists first established for the fight against imperialism – more precisely, against the English and the Americans. Not until the start of the war in Yugoslavia in April 1941 did they change their name to *Osvobodilna Fronta* (Liberation Front). After six months working for the Liberation Front, Vode became convinced that the Communists in Slovenia were carrying out red terror and she therefore distanced herself from this organization, choosing to continue her aid on a personal level. She worked with everyone, regardless of their political convictions: with the Red Cross, other organizations, and churches. She raised help for prisoners in the Italian and German camps, especially for the non-organized (i.e. not members of the Communist Party) and people with no family. When in 1942 the Italians began to imprison and murder hostages *en masse* she organized a petition against Mussolini and within a short time collected the signatures of 2000 women. The Communists were against solitary action and confiscated the petition, defaming Vode in the process. In 1943 the Italian police imprisoned her for a few weeks. Following the Italian capitulation in September 1943 the Germans took control of Ljubljana and sent Vode, who had been betrayed by her former Party colleagues, to the Ravensbrück concentration camp in 1944. After someone intervened on her behalf she was released at the end of the same year. When she returned to Ljubljana, she lost her job. She be-

[3] Women in Yugoslavia received the right to vote in 1945; in 1946 this right was written into the constitution.

[4] The Liberation Front was founded in late April 1941 to fight against occupation. It was composed of various groups, with various ideologies, but the Communist Party was the predominant faction; already during World War II this led to civil war in Slovenia.

gan to write her memoirs about the German concentration camp, though the post-war authorities did not want to publish these; she depended on support of her sister, Ivanka Spindler, for her economic survival.

At the end of the war the red terror intensified, and the state began to carry out mass extermination of civilians, prisoners of war and refugees (cf. Vodušek Starič 1992). Vode had to make a statement to OZNA (the Department for the Protection of the Nation)[5] about her internment at Ravensbrück and about her political past. In September 1945 she became employed at a school for children with special needs, though as one stigmatized by the Party she was unable to hold a permanent position – this in spite of the lack of educated individuals. On May 5 1947 (which was two days before Tito's birthday), UDBA,[6] after two years of terror exercised on its own nation, arrested some 30 renowned intellectuals who were regarded as sympathetic to Western-style democracy. Among these, along with Angela Vode, were Partisans. She was interrogated under inhuman conditions for two months, always at night; during the day she was not allowed to sit or lie down, let alone sleep. The Politburo of the Communist Party of Slovenia determined that all of these alleged Anglo-American spies, enemies of the people, traitors, individuals friendly to the Gestapo, and saboteurs had to be made example of before they "succeeded in destroying 'socialist gains' in 'a free homeland'"(Vode 2004, 131). Fifteen people were put on trial and on July 29 the "Nagode trial" began (named after the first individual accused). On August 12, 1947 they each received extreme sentences; they were condemned to forced labour and they were stripped of their civil rights and liberties. Three were sentenced to death: Nagode was killed,[7] while two of the accused "committed suicide" in prison; two were pardoned, including Dr. Ljubo Sirc (1920),[8] who, after eight years of prison – two in solitary confinement – is today a retired university professor in Glasgow. Angela Vode was sentenced to twenty years forced labour, which, after the death penalty, is the highest punishment, and taken to the women's prison of Begunje. There she had to toil away quarrying stones. She was 55 years old. Her sister and nephew were evicted from their apartment in the centre of Ljubljana and given 2 damp rooms – a renovated lavatory and storeroom – in a nationalized house on the outskirts of the city.[9] In 1948, at the time of the Cominform, or Tito's dissension from Stalin, Vode was tried again. Although a sworn anti-Stalinist, she was denounced by a co-prisoner in a forced written statement which claimed she was loyal to Stalin. She spent June 24, 1948 until the first half of 1949 in solitary confinement. Her sister managed to have her moved to the women's prison Rajhenburg (renamed Brestanica in 1952), where she saw the sun for the first time in almost two years. It was here that she celebrated her 60th birthday. Together with other political prisoners, including the Vien-

[5] OZNA was established during the war, in 1944.

[6] UDBA, the state security office, or the Yugoslavian Secret Police, had a role similar to that of the NKVD in the Soviet Union or the Stasi in the German Democratic Republic. It was formed in 1946, when OZNA was divided into a civilian and a military section. The civilian section was called UDBA, the military section KOS (Counter-Intelligence Service). KOS was re-named *Organ bezbednosti* (Security Organ), and in 1996 UDBA became *Služba državne bezbednosti* (The State Security Service).

[7] His mother felt guilty because they had extracted her son's diary from her, and, after this became the primary source of evidence against him, she committed suicide.

[8] Ljubo Sirc's Father Franjo, who was sentenced at the same time as his son, died in prison's hospital.

[9] Left without any means of survival, the 60-year-old owner of the house drowned himself.

nese Hildegard Hahn (who was considered Jewish on account of her father), Vode was sentenced at the Diehl-Oswald trial to death by firing squad. This was then reduced to twenty years strict confinement, because she was alleged guilty for the death of 70,000 Jews. Her room had no window panes, and birds and rats nested there. Two inmates slept on the same straw mattress and covered with their own blankets, provided their relatives were able to furnish them with such. For sanitary needs they had buckets that they had to carry out and empty into the so-called lavatory (ibid., 184). They received their rations in a cauldron in the courtyard and ate on the ground, like dogs (ibid., 204), from their own dishes and with their own spoons. Vode recalled Ravensbrück almost nostalgically, since there every evening they had received a large piece of bread, a portion of margarine and a large slice of sausage (ibid., 226–227). In Rajhenburg they did piecemeal work, in three shifts so that the state would not have to support them (ibid., 181–182). Vode's sister tabled a number of requests, asked for an audience among high-up Party leaders that had been "friends" of Vode, but was unsuccessful. She started collecting signatures in support of her sister's relatives and added this list of signatures to her entreaty. On January 1, 1953 Angela Vode was released from prison. On returning home, she longed most to sleep properly for the first time in six years. She was required to sign a statement confirming that she would never speak of her time in prison, and put on a midnight train to Ljubljana. When she arrived in the early morning, she could not go home immediately because the tram had not yet started and she was too weak to go on foot. In the waiting room of the train station she met several other released prisoners who were waiting for public transportation to start.

"An acquaintance from the office of the interior once told me, 'You and Sirc and Furlan[10] were actually condemned to death. Your life may have been spared on account of some external circumstances, but your destiny cannot be changed'" (ibid., 303). Once freed, Angela Vode became what one of her interrogators, Stane Runko (1917–1988), had promised she would become under his surveillance: a non-person. Extremely ill, suffering from asthma and a digestive illness that was a result of her harsh imprisonment, she found herself uninsured, pensionless, not allowed to work, and without anyone willing to publish anything that she wrote. Because of her relation to Angela, her sister received a miserly pension. Angela's nephew, who was not allowed to study medicine at the time of her imprisonment, emigrated via Austria to Australia, where he became a doctor. Completed isolated, visited by few friends but by many denouncers, Angela borrowed a typewriter – the one that had been confiscated from the sisters Vode had never been returned. She wrote a study of Nietzsche as well as a study of neglected youth, though to date neither has been published. In 1958, at the age of 66, she was granted civil rights, and became employed as a secretary, though from her many years of work experience they subtracted the twelve years she spent in prison. It was also at that time that her translation of Stefan Zweig's memoirs *Die Welt von Gestern* was anonymously published. She wrote a textbook for educating individuals with special needs, but, fearing that it would be pilfered from her and published under

[10] The Slovenian lawyer and philosopher of law Boris Furlan (1894–1957) was also active as a translator and as a liberal politician. During World War II he worked for Radio London as "London's Slovene voice". A former minister in the Tito-Šubašić coalition government, he was sentenced in 1947 at the Nagode trial. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boris_Furlan (Accessed: January 19 2010).

another name, she subsequently burned it. Thirty years of her work disappeared. In hopes of finally receiving a pension she tried to become a member of the section of the veteran's association *Zveza Borcev* for those interned during World War II, but she was prevented from doing so because the head of this section was none other than Stane Runko, her interrogator. At this time Mišo Praprotnik published an article in *Borec* (The Fighter) attacking her and denouncing her yet again (ibid., 296–297). In 1960 she finally became entitled to a pension in the amount of 12,000 dinars, of which only 4,900 was actually paid to her. On the encouragement of Erna Muser, her former colleague from the woman's movement, she wrote a study of the worker's movement for the Institute for the History of the Worker's Movement. She received very modest payment, and the two reviews, including one written by the historian Milica Kacin Wohinz (who still today remains highly esteemed), stated that her text was in fact un-publishable. In 1968 she secured a passport and travelled throughout Europe, also visiting Hildegard Hahn in Vienna. In 1970/71 she completed her memoirs and accounts of the persecution under Communism, complemented by a lucid reflection on the post-war period and an analysis of communist theory and practice. Her final entry was written after Tito's death in 1980. After the death of her sister in 1975 her co-prisoner Mojca Prinčič moved in with her. Angela Vode strengthened contact with her nephew Janez Spindler, and she lived for part of 1976 with him and his family in Ulm. In 1982, after forty years of silence, she spoke publicly for the first time: on the third programme of Radio Ljubljana there was a show about her, prepared by Rapa Šuklje; in 1984 *Nova Revija*, a journal for *Dichten und Denken* (writing and thinking), published an interview with her.

A few years before her death, Vode began to put her affairs in order. Some of her personal effects she destroyed, and the rest she left to the Slovenian School Museum in Ljubljana. She kept her memoirs up-to-date and concealed, and told her nephew to publish them, if possible, after her death. She sold off her books and most of her furniture. In spring of 1985 the 93-year-old "Angela Vode decided that she had lived long enough. She took leave of those closest to her, saw to her final concerns, and stopped eating. One month later she was dead" (Puhar 2004, 373).[11]

II. IGOR VON PERCHA (1927–1996)

"*Ein Mann hat das Recht zu wissen, wie sein Vater gestorben ist* […]" (Šentjurc 1993, 156) – "A man has the right to know how his father died". These words might well have been uttered by Andrej Wajda before he set to work on his film about the Katyn massacre. It was at this location in Russia that the Soviet Major-General of the NKVD Vasili Blokhin (1895–1955) set to work with his helpers every night after 10 pm. Using a German Walter pistol and German ammunition, and dressed in a leather butcher's apron, a hood and gloves that reached to his shoulders in order to keep his uniform clean, in complete darkness and alone, Blokhin killed 300 people per night. In twenty-eight nights a single human liquidated 8,300 Polish officers – a unique event in civilization at that time and level. Among the dead was Andrej Wajda's father.

[11] Vode's gravestone indicates 1983 as the year of her death.

But the sentence "a man has the right to know how his father died" was not uttered by Wajda. It was uttered by a writer better known among his German readership as Igor von Percha. This was not his real name, and the "von" does not indicate nobility. The author's pseudonym is a mimicking of the medieval German poets who were named after the places from which they hailed. And so it was that the author opted for Igor from Percha, as it was in Percha, Bavaria that he began a new life in 1953 (the same year in which Angela Vode was released from prison). Here the political prisoner and Slovenian writer and publicist Igor Šentjurc found himself.

Igor Šentjurc was born in Slovenj Gradec on January 31, 1927. In 1941 his father was sent to do forced labour in Germany, and his mother to Austria with the children. Šentjurc was drafted into the German army and sent to the front. He deserted and joined the Partisans. In 1947 (when Angela Vode was imprisoned) he had to carry out military service for one year. When he returned in 1948, the rift between Tito and Stalin had occurred. The situation in Yugoslavia had become radically more severe, and concentration camps had been established on Goli Otok in Croatia and in Strnišče / Sterntal in Slovenia (today Kidričevo by Ptuj). Šentjurc found out about grave examples of torture and the death of inmates and determined that there was an enormous gap between the theory and the practice of communism. He described his experiences of the time in *Gebet für den Mörder* (*Prayer for an Assassin* in the novel's English translation) (1958) (Vodeb 1963, 180–188), although the primary theme of that work is the 1956 Hungarian uprising against the Soviets.

In 1949, when he was 22 years old – Vode had just been moved to Rajhenburg – Šentjurc was working as a journalist and deputy editor-in-chief of the sport weekly *Polet* (Élan). Meanwhile, he was creating literary texts and publishing literary sketches in contemporary journals. In 1952 his extremely unconventional sketch "*Eden proti trem*" ("One Against Three") was published in the journal *Novi svet* (New World). Its main protagonist, a young liquidator, has to track and kill members of the Home Guard. He recognizes that he has to liquidate the enemy, as commanded, and in spite of everything he respects that the enemy is also fighting for his ideals, even while knowing that they will not succeed. For the protagonist, such idealism under such conditions would be impossible.

In 1952, when Vode was 60 years old, Šentjurc, became the 25-year-old editor-in-chief of the magazine *PPP* (*Poletove podobe in povesti* – "Polet's Images and Tales"), *Polet*'s supplement. He did not publish sports but literary contributions, including contemporary Slovenian narratives, English and American novels in serial form, literary sketches, pieces on modern life, practical advice, articles on fashion, jokes, and caricatures. Here it was that the comic Miki Muster first saw the light of day, after there was a problem at customs when importing the Disney original.

Today some of Šentjurc's remaining contemporaries from *PPP* claim that the magazine was pulp-like, the first stirrings of the tabloid press in Slovenia. In my view, they do this out of ignorance. At the time a very popular *bon mot* on censorship cited a lack of paper and a corresponding need to limit the number of published pages. Yet Šentjurc was able in spite of censorship and other controlling elements to publish economic and political articles in *PPP*, reportages from undeveloped places in Slovenia that clearly showed that in seven years of the People's Democracy circumstances had

not improved. These matters were not otherwise covered in the Slovenian press of the time. He also reported on circumstances abroad. And so on August 8, 1952 on the first page he published a long article entitled "*Kdo je kriv*" ("Who is Guilty"), which meticulously reported on the crimes of the Soviet authorities in Katyn, which had been discovered in 1943.

Šentjurc published the anonymous article "Life and Death in the Soviet Union. What Happened to the Fighters for Republican Spain in the Soviet Union. A Life Worse than Death". Here he wrote in detail about pilots of the Republican army who had fought against Franco, as well as children and Spanish Communist leaders who had emigrated to the Soviet Union. For as long as the Spanish Republican government could support them, all was well. When support ceased, many children of both sexes were left to prostitution and a life of crime; if they did not subjugate themselves to Stalin, the pilots were liquidated, along with the Spanish Communists. The author especially exposed the hypocritical and infamous role of the leading European Communists Ilija Ehrenburg, Palmiro Togliatti, and Dolores Ibárruri ("*La* Passionaria"). The information for this article, which is stylistically clearly one of Šentjurc's, was taken from a book that Šentjurc must have known; the book had been published in Paris in 1950 under the title *Vida y muerte en la URSS* (1939–1949) (Life and Death in the USSR (1939–1949). It was written by the Spanish fighter General Valentín González (1909–1983), El Campesino. In his work González reports on how 6,000 Spanish refugees were transported by ship to the Soviet Union, and on how during the Spanish Civil war itself 1,700 children and 102 teachers had also left for the Soviet Union. González saw that the NKDV had liquidated 4,600 Spanish immigrants, 22,000 Germans and 18,000 Czechoslovakians. It is not known how Šentjurc obtained this book. It is possible that he found the information in a German source that certain privileged individuals in Slovenia were allowed to read.[12]

Among the most unlikely articles in *PP*[13] was "A Special Report on the Events in Berlin", which was related by telephone by "Our Special Correspondent Martin Pfeideler" (Pfeideler 1953, 1).[14] The German journalist reported on the insurrection in the German Democratic Republic, which had started in East Berlin and spread at lightning speed throughout East Germany. The Slovenian editorial department did not add a word of commentary to the article, but merely informed their readership about the bloody events. The Slovene dailies did not describe this so exactly and vividly, and neither did they publish any photographs.

The consequence of such an editorial policy, which did not report on Party Congresses and other important matters of socialist daily life, was that readership rose remarkably. In one year circulation rocketed from 6 or 7,000 to over 120,000. The Party became attentive and decided to act. A magazine that moved in the direction of opposition had to be brought into line – this is spite of the "liberalization" that followed the establishing of concentration camps on Goli Otok or in Sterntal, political trials

[12] In a January 19, 2009 article in the newspaper *Delo* Mimi Podkrižnik wrote about the shocking fate of the more than 30,000 children who vanished between 1944 and 1954 under Franco; there is no mention in this article of the Spanish who disappeared in the Soviet Union.

[13] The name of the publication changed constantly.

[14] They received the photographs through the mail.

organized and transmitted via loudspeaker *urbi et orbi* (such as the Nagode trial and the Dachau trial). The same had already occurred in 1951 when the politician and poet Edvard Kocbek (1904–1981), a former Partisan and fellow fighter of Tito, was retired at the age of 47 and banned from publishing for ten years (Cf: Miladinović Zalaznik 2006, 607–621).

In Šentjurc's case the Communist Party decided to interrupt *PP*, and this decision was supported by both its youth organization and the Association of Slovenian journalists. In addition to this, a major of the Secret Police hinted to Šentjurc that the matter would not end there. The situation became increasingly unbearable for the young editor, especially because at the same time they wanted to recruit him for a volunteer activity: spying.[15] Šentjurc decided to accept the offer for a work trip abroad and, with a valid passport and 100 dollars in his pocket (Vodeb 1963, 184), he headed to West Germany. In Munich he asked for political asylum. On October 9, 1953 he is said to have sent his publisher a letter stating, "for various reasons – primarily political ones – I have decided not to return to Ljubljana in the foreseeable future. Today I asked the authorities here for political asylum" (T. B. 1953, 259). This statement was published in only one paper, in the second edition of *Ljudska pravica – Borba* (The People's Rights – The Fight) on October 10, 1953.[16] A certain T. B. accused Šentjurc, among other things, of incompetence and ignorance as well as of longing for the German soldiers with whom he had spent time during the war; these accusations appeared in the (otherwise non-existent) column "Letters from our Readers" in which a part of the former editor's letter was "reprinted" (ibid).

The next day, on October 16, *PP* appeared for the last time. The editor's name was no longer published, and no reason was given for the cessation of the magazine. Two days latter, two dailies simply published an advertisement announcing that on October 22, 1953 instead of *PP*, *TT – Tedenska Tribuna* (Weekly Tribune) would commence. It was most evocative of *PP*, the difference being that the editor Šentjurc had been removed. Never again was he spoken of in public.

In Germany in 1954 Šentjurc received the status of political refugee as well as a passport for people without citizenship. He also found work in the editorial office of the illustrated *Lies mit*. It was at this time that he wrote his first novel, *Der Teufel braucht Liebe* (The Devil Needs Love) which had appeared previously in serial form in the *Münchner Abendzeitung*. From then on he lived with his family (five children as well as a sickly Slovenian daughter from his first marriage who lived with him for eight years after his former wife took her there) by Lake Starnberg, for the most part as a writer. Here and there he wrote articles for various magazines and work for television, and from 1958 on – at the encouragement of Hardy Krüger – occasionally worked in film (including the 1960 classic *Bumerang*). Between 1973 and 1986 he wrote nothing, occupying himself instead with fish farming. When the political situation in the Eastern Bloc began to change radically, he once again sat at his typewriter. He died in 1996, a few days before his 69th birthday. His works have sold ten million copies and have been translated into English, French, Dutch, Portuguese, Hebrew, Finnish, Slovenian and Turkish. He did not live to see the publication of his first book in Slovenian, which was published in 2001.

[15] We know this today also from sources published at the time.

[16] Such was the official name of the Slovenian newspaper that had a communal editorial office with the Party newspaper *Borba* from Belgrade.

Šentjurc wrote more than 30 novels in German. He published them under four names: Igor von Percha, Igor Georgew (a near translation into German of Šentjurc), Igor von Seberg (an allusion to the mountain pass Jezersko) and Igor Šentjurc. Some of his novels were published in the feuilletons of the newspapers and magazines *Münchner Abendzeitung*, *Quick*, *Stern* and *Bunte Illustrierte*.[17] He wrote fictional political and historical novels, mysteries, romances, and some lighter novels; they each have real, historically-verifiable backgrounds. After 1986 he devoted himself to his most ambitious plan: a cycle of ten novels on changing times. This cycle was to deal with the individual stories of members of a single over 100 years of European history, including both world wars. He was able to complete two novels in this cycle, but died while working on the third one. The story in the novel *Feuer und Schwert* (The Fire and the Sword) (1988) literally turns around the single sentence "a man has the right to know how his father died" (Šentjurc 1993, 156) and deals thematically with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo as well as World War I on Montenegrin soil. In the second, *Im Sturm* (In the Storm) (1991) Šentjurc deals with the interwar years as well as the post-war years, especially with the Prussian-Polish struggles; in the third, the unfinished *Vaters Land* (Father's Land) (1997), which was printed after his death (and which also exists in Slovenian translation), he deals with the civil wars in Romania and Spain. The mother of the main protagonist Ilon Dragonescu, who is half-Slovenian, raises her son in the spirit of "*srčna kultura*" – heartfelt culture (it is also written in Slovenian in the German original).

Šentjurc's literary oeuvre is in two languages, Slovenian and German, and it encompasses his life experience, especially of World War II and the decades-long Cold War. The constants of his works are humanism, a hope in woman as the bearer of progressive ideas as well as social emancipation, terror and totalitarianism from both left and right that is aimed at (one's own) people, both at groups and individuals, as well as the work of intelligence and counter-intelligence services.

III.

How do things stand today with Angela Vode and Igor Šentjurc? They swam against the stream both as individuals and writers, and they were prepared to suffer greatly for their ideas. Most painful is the fact that later generations of compatriots continue to renounce them, press them into the subconscious, remain silent about them, or even use them for manipulative purposes. Between 1998 and 2000 Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik published Vode's collected works in three volumes. She included studies about Vode and her fate, but these studies have a foreshortened perspective. Vode's *Skriti spomin* (Concealed Memory) appeared in 2004 thanks to the efforts of Alenka Puhar, who added a thorough study of the times and the author. Ljubljana Television produced a film version of *Concealed Memory*, which the 2009 Festival of Slovenian Film did not want to accommodate because they argued it was a documentary film. The interroga-

[17] He had contact with the *Gruppe 47*, the esteemed group of authors writing in German, especially with Ingeborg Bachmann (1926–1973), Hans Magnus Enzensberger (1929) and Hans Werner Richter (1908–1993), the intellectual father of this group.

tors and politicians in this film are nameless, because the pressure of so-called "healthy forces" remains too strong, leaving authors in fear of consequences. The film's premiere and single public showing took place at the former concentration camp Rajhenburg/Brestanica, though it was later shown on television. The charges against Angela Vode and those condemned along with her were annulled in 1991.

Those of Šentjurc's contemporaries that are still living do not want to speak, generally arguing that they did not know him well, that he only published in the yellow press (which was not even allowed at that time), or that they are in ill health and have forgotten everything. Now he is almost never spoken of, and not even my generation is familiar with him. The Archives of Slovenia are still not prepared to show all of the documents, and they claim that these were destroyed. Only one of his books, the unfinished *Vaters Land*, has been translated into Slovenian.

The upshot of all of this: I am of the opinion that there is a need for *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in Slovenia, beginning with the less glorious, in fact, shameful parts of our history. Both individual perpetrators and all illegal acts must be judged. We Slovenians are not unique, nor are we rich and mighty enough to conceal our own history in the name of the communist ideology we still so nonchalantly and often uncritically praise. It is time that we accept these two individuals, as well as many others not named here, as part of our culture and history, and allot them the place they deserve.

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Translated by Jason Blake

WORKS CITED

Miladinović Zalaznik, Mira. Heinrich Böll und Edvard Kocbek im Briefwechsel. Die Geschichte einer Freundschaft. (Heinrich Böll and Edvard Kocbek in Correspondence: The Story of a Friendship). *Estudios Filologicos Alemanes*, 2006, vol. 12, 607–621.

Pfeideler, Martin: "Posebna reportaža o berlinskih dogodkih." (A Special Report on the Events in Berlin). *PP*, 26. June 1953, Volume II, no. 26, 1.

Puhar, Alenka. "Spremna beseda. Prebudi se, Debora" (Commentary. Awaken, Debora). Vode, Angela. *Skriti spomin* (Concealed Memory). Ed. Alenka Puhar. Ljubljana: Nova Revija, 2004. 373–392.

Šentjurc, Igor. *Feuer und Schwert* (The Fire and the Sword). München: DTV, 1993

T. B.. S tem sramotnim dejanjem so pokazali svoj pravi obraz. (With this Shameful Act they Showed their True Face). *Ljudska pravica – Borba*, 15. October 1953, p. 259, 2nd edition, 6.

Vode, Angela. *Skriti spomin* (Concealed Memory). Ed. Alenka Puhar. Ljubljana: Nova Revija, 2004

Vodeb, Rafko: Srečanje na Lilijski poti. (Razgovor z Igorjem Šentjurcem) (An Encounter on the Path of Lilies. A Discussion with Igor Šentjurc). *Meddobje*, 1963, no. 3–4, 180–188.
Vodušek Starič, Jera. *Prevzem oblasti 1944–1946* (Taking Over Power: 1944–1946). Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1992.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boris_Furlan (Accessed: January 19 2010)

UDK 929Radics P.:94(436–89:497.4)

KULTURELLE SELBSTVERORTUNG UND IDENTITÄTSFRAGE: DER KRAINER POLYHISTOR PETER VON RADICS (1836–1912) ZWISCHEN ZWEI SPRACHEN UND KULTUREN

Tanja Žigon

Abstract

This article focuses on the life and creative path of the Carniolian polymath, many-faceted researcher, historian, German specialist, and theater specialist Peter von Radics (1836–1912), who was born in Postojna (Adelsberg) but did not have Carniolan roots. Based on this case study, the author examines the issues of what characterized an intellectual working in Carniola in the nineteenth century, what his place in society was, and what his understanding of his own identity was. The article also examines the hypothesis that one can speak of at least three identities in the nineteenth-century Slovenian lands – regional, ethnic, and dynastic (Habsburg), sheds light on the conditions that marked Radics' life and work, and seeks to explain why he chose to live in the microcosm of Carniola rather than seeking his fortune as a journalist, researcher, and author in the center of the monarchy, in Vienna.

Key words: Peter von Radics, Anastasius Grün, identity, cultural and literary history, Carniola, nineteenth century

Im Vorwort zum Drama aus dem 17. Jahrhundert *Der verirrte Soldat*,[1] das Peter von Radics (1836–1912), ein vielseitig gebildeter und belesener Gelehrter und Theaterforscher aus Krain, während seiner Forschungen zum deutschen Theater in der Laiba-

[1] Die handschriftliche Fassung des Dramas, betitelt *Der Verirrte Soldat oder Des Glück's Probierstein* stammt aus der Feder der heimatlichen Verfasser Martin Höndler – nach Radics' Angaben soll er ein Gottscheer gewesen sein – und Melchior Harrer. Im Drama ist der Einfluss der Exotik auf die damalige Unterhaltungsliteratur zu erkennen, obwohl Peter von Radics in dem vorausgeschickten Vorwort diese Tatsache völlig außer Acht ließ. Die Handlung ist dem persischen Hofleben entnommen: Der von seinem eigenen Vater verworfene Prinz, kehrt nach sieben Jahren zurück, gerade in dem Augenblick, als sein Vater gegen den türkischen Sultan im Felde liegt, und rettet dem Vater das Leben. Zu guter Letzt verliebt sich der Prinz in die gefangene Sultanstochter, die er heimführt und heiratet. Das Drama wurde dem „Theatermäzen", Vincenz Karl Fürst Auersperg (1812–1867) gewidmet. Besonders wertvoll in diesem Werk sind die angehängten Begleitstudien, die Peter von Radics selbst beisteuerte. Die erste Abhandlung bespricht die theatralischen Aufführungen in Ljubljana im XVII. und XVIII. Jahrhundert, die zweite ist ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der slowenischen Theatervorstellungen (*Slovenische Dramen und die slovenischen Aufführungen im Laibacher Theater*), von ihren Anfängen im Jahre 1789 bis 1865.

cher Studienbibliothek aufstöberte und 1865 in Buchform herausgab (vgl. Žigon 2009: 257–262), konstatiert der Autor wie folgt:

> Krain stellt, vom Standpunkte des Kulturhistorikers betrachtet, die Brücke vor, über welche romanische und deutsche Kunst von Nord nach Süd und in entgegen gesetzter Richtung die Jahrhunderte über gewandert sind, so kam es, dass die Wächter dieser Brücke, meine lieben slovenischen Landsleute, die eine wie die andere kennen lernten und in sich aufnahmen!
>
> Vor allen andern Künsten war es aber ganz besonders die dramatische Kunst, die darüber hinzog, von den „hochdeutschen Komödianten" an, bis Shakespeare – Göthe – Schiller und von der wällischen Oper" bis Mozart!
>
> Als das nationale Selbstbewusstsein zu Ende des vorigen Jahrhunderts auch bei uns in vieler erwachte, da geschah, wie natürlich, zugleich die erste Anregung: eine nationale dramatische Kunst zu schaffen! (Radics 1865: III).

Bereits der einleitende Satz spiegelt die kulturelle Realität im Land Krain im 19. Jahrhundert wider und bringt deutlich zum Ausdruck, dass Peter von Radics das Land Krain als eine Nahtstelle dreier Kulturen verstand. Er stellt fest, dass sich in Krain sowohl romanische als auch slawische und germanische Einflüsse verflechten, wobei vor allem die zwei letzterwähnten Kulturkreise Handel und Wandel in diesen Gebieten wesentlich geprägt haben. Ferner gewähren die zitierten Zeilen auch einen Einblick in die Selbstwahrnehmung und -verortung des Autors: Obwohl er seiner Abstammung nach kein Krainer war, nimmt er den Slowenen gegenüber nicht nur eine freundliche, wohlwollende Haltung ein, sondern er empfindet sich selbst als Krainer und voll integriert in der Krainer Gesellschaft, nennt die Slowenen seine „lieben Landsleute" und drückt seine Zugehörigkeit mit dem empathischen „bei uns" aus.

Im vorliegenden Beitrag wird zunächst die kulturhistorische Situation im Land Krain skizziert. Anschließend werden anhand der Lebensgeschichte des berühmten Krainer Polyhistors Peter von Radics die Fragen beantwortet, was einen Krainer Intellektuellen im 19. Jahrhundert prägte und prädisponierte und wie sich seine kulturelle Selbstverortung und seine Identität definieren lassen, vor allem im Hinblick auf die Zerrissenheit zwischen dem Zentrum und der Peripherie: Einerseits stand nämlich den aus der Provinz stammenden Intellektuellen die Möglichkeit offen, sich in der Reichs- und Hauptstadt Wien zu behaupten, andererseits waren ihre Erfolgschancen im Mikrokosmos der Provinz viel größer und realistischer. In diesem Sinne wird im Weiteren versucht festzustellen, wie soziale, ästhetische, ökonomische, mentale und kulturelle Interaktionen das Leben und Schaffen eines Einzelnen geprägt und bestimmt haben, ferner wird aber auch der Frage nachgegangen, wie sich ein Intellektueller aus den südlichen Gebieten des habsburgischen Vielvölkerstaates in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. und im angehenden 20. Jahrhundert zwischen Wien und Laibach verwirklicht und sich zwischen zwei Sprachen und Kulturen seinen Platz im kulturellen Leben der damaligen Zeit gesichert hat.

DER KULTURHISTORISCHE HINTERGRUND

Nachdem die Habsburger im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert fast alle althabsburgischen Besitzungen in der Schweiz verloren hatten, erwarben sie 1335 nach dem Ableben des letzten Grafen von Tirol-Görz die Länder Kärnten und Krain (Hösler 2006: 33–38). Seit der zweiten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts war Krain ein Herzogtum und von 1849 bis zum Ende des Ersten Weltkrieges ein österreichisches Kronland, das somit, ausgenommen die Zeit der Napoleonischen Illyrischen Provinzen (1809–1813), für fast 600 Jahre zu Österreich gehörte (vgl. ebd. 68–71).

Im Land Krain, wo die Mehrheit der Bevölkerung slowenischer Herkunft war, lebten Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts 36 Prozent aller Slowenen, die anderen 64 Prozent bewohnten die angrenzenden Gebiete, die ebenfalls innerhalb der habsburgischen Hoheitsgrenzen lagen: die Untersteiermark, Kärnten, die Küstenregion, Görz, Gradisca und Istrien. Die Schwerpunkte der deutschsprachigen Besiedelungen waren vor allem die damaligen Landeshauptstädte, größere Städte in der Untersteiermark wie Marburg an der Drau (Maribor), Cilli (Celje), Pettau (Ptuj) (vgl. Brix 1988: 52) und die deutsche Sprachinsel Gottschee (Kočevsko) südöstlich von Ljubljana. Knapp zwei Drittel der Deutschen in Krain waren in der inselartigen Abgeschiedenheit des Gottscheerlandes (ebd. 55) angesiedelt, darüber hinaus lebten aber viele auch in der Hauptstadt Krains. Laut Statistik wohnten hier Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts etwa 5.000 Deutsche, was ungefähr 40 Prozent der Gesamtbevölkerung in der Stadt ausmachte. Jedoch sank der Anteil der Deutschen in Krain von Zählung zu Zählung bis auf 27.915 Personen (5,4 Prozent) im Jahre 1910 (ebd. 54).

Die nationale Zugehörigkeit, Kultur und Sprache spielten im 19. Jahrhundert zunächst keine besondere Rolle im öffentlichen Diskurs. Die Phase einvernehmlicher deutsch-slowenischer Koexistenz und Symbiose dauerte bis in die 1880er Jahre hinein an. Erst zu dieser Zeit verschärfte sich die Reaktion der Deutschen in Krain. Es entstanden etliche deutschnationale Vereine, z. B. der Deutsche Schulverein (1880), der Deutsche Turnverein (1885) und die von deutschen Hochschullehrern gegründete Ferialverbindung „Carniola“ (1884). Jedoch lehnte das deutsche Lager in Krain bereits seit den 1860er Jahren und vor allem in der Zeit verstärkter nationaler und politischer Gegensätze eine pointiert deutschnationale Haltung ab. Stattdessen prononcierte man die liberale und verfassungstreue weltanschauliche Richtung (vgl. Vodopivec 1987: 31), kritisierte die slowenische nationale Partei als zu oppositionell, zu klerikal oder einfach als zu slawisch und protegierte die Vorrangstellung des Deutschen als Sprache mit langer kultureller Tradition.

Der slowenisch-deutsche Konflikt wurde Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts nicht nur auf dem politischen, sondern auch auf dem literarischen Felde ausgetragen. In diesem Zusammenhang kann die deutschsprachige Literatur in Krain als „Literatur der Grenze“ verstanden werden, im Unterschied zum früheren literarischen Konzept „Krain“, das die deutsche Kulturhegemonie mit einem paternalistischen Zugang zur slowenischen Literatur verband (Michler 1998: 204–213). Mit der politischen Konstellation hängt auch die nationale Vereinnahmung der Literatur zusammen. So wurde beispielsweise der oberösterreichische Lehrer an der Lehrer- und Lehrerinnenbildungsanstalt, Edward Samhaber (1846–1927), der 1878 nach Krain kam, nicht nur als großer Bewunderer

des unbestritten bedeutendsten slowenischen Lyrikers aller Zeiten, France Prešeren (1800–1849), bekannt, sondern er verfasste in der Zeit seines zehnjährigen Aufenthalts in Ljubljana auch „Turnerlieder“ und Oden in denen er „seine Zugehörigkeit zum Deutschtum hervorhob und seine Überzeugung von der Überlegenheit der deutschen Kultur gegenüber der slowenischen zum Ausdruck brachte“ (Miladinović Zalaznik 2000: 77).

Zu Beginn der 1880er Jahre zählte das damalige Ljubljana weniger als 30.000 Einwohner, wobei die Personen mit deutscher Umgangssprache 21,5 Prozent der Einwohnerschaft darstellten (Brix 1988: 55). Trotzdem hatte die Stadt nach außen hin eine deutsche Gestalt: Aufgrund der historischen Gegebenheiten wurde ungeachtet der Muttersprache und der Abstammung in der Oberschicht wie auch im bürgerlichen Milieu Deutsch gesprochen, die Straßenschilder waren überwiegend auf Deutsch, es wurden deutschsprachige Zeitungen und Zeitschriften herausgegeben und gelesen und auch den nationalbewussten Slowenen lag die deutsche Sprache noch immer näher als das noch nicht etablierte Slowenisch. Somit war die Umgangssprache in der Stadt Deutsch, worauf bereits im 17. Jahrhundert der Krainer Polyhistor Johann Weichart Freiherr von Valvasor (1641–1693), Mitglied der englischen Royal Society und Autor des monumentalen Werkes *Die Ehre des Herzogthums Krain* (1683), hinwies. Er stellte für Laibach fest, dass man hier untereinander sowohl Krainerisch als auch Deutsch spreche, ferner dass Adlige und Händler miteinander auch auf Italienisch kommunizierten, dass aber der schriftliche Verkehr in der Regel auf Deutsch geführt werde (Orožen 1993/94: 5). Das galt auch noch im 19. Jahrhundert, denn untereinander sprach man gewöhnlich deutsch, obwohl man auch slowenisch konnte.

In Anbetracht dieser Tatsachen spielte sich das literarische Leben in Krain entweder zwischen den oder in beiden Sprachen ab. So dichtete beispielsweise der bereits erwähnte France Prešeren, „eine einsame dichterische Größe und ein anregender Denker der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts“ (Miladinović Zalaznik 1998: 91), nicht nur Slowenisch, sondern auch Deutsch, wobei seine deutschen Gedichte sogar von höherer literarischer Qualität sind als die von ihm ins Deutsche übertragenen eigenen slowenischen Lieder (ebd. 92). Dahingegen war sich die nach 1830 geborene Generation der slowenischen intellektuellen Elite, es seien hier nur die Schriftsteller Fran Levstik (1831–1887), Josip Jurčič (1844–1881) und Fran Erjavec (1834–1887) erwähnt, der bedeutenden Rolle der eigenen Muttersprache durchaus bewusst und bediente sich dieser so häufig wie möglich, jedoch kommunizierten ihre Vertreter sowohl mündlich als auch schriftlich untereinander überwiegend noch auf Deutsch. Das hängt wohl auch damit zusammen, dass slowenische Intellektuelle im 19. Jahrhundert gewöhnlich in Wien studierten; eine eigene slowenische Universität wurde erst im Jahre 1919, also nach dem Zerfall der Donaumonarchie, in Ljubljana gegründet.

Wien war für die aus den heutigen slowenischen Gebieten stammende Bevölkerung jahrhundertelang ein besonderer Anziehungspunkt. Hier versuchten viele Gelehrte, Wissensdurstige oder Handelsleute ihr Glück. Erstens erstarkte Wien bereits in der Zeit vom 11. bis zum 13. Jahrhundert zu einem blühenden und bedeutenden Handelszentrum (Zöllner 1990: 175–179), zweitens wurde im 14. Jahrhundert hier die zweitälteste Universität (nach der 1348 errichteten Karls-Universität in Prag) im deutschen Sprachraum gegründet. Danach kamen immer mehr Studenten aus den sloweni-

schen Gebieten nach Wien.[2] Im Vergleich zu der Prager Universität oder der italienischen Universität in Padova, die damals in Bezug auf die Entfernung genauso wie die Wiener Universität hätten in Frage kommen können, war das Studentenleben in Wien wesentlich billiger, weswegen auch Studenten aus ärmeren Schichten Zutritt zu der universitären Ausbildung hatten (Medved 1995: 23). Ferner trug aber auch gut überlegte Schulpolitik und später die durch Kaiserin Maria Theresia (1717–1780) verabschiedete Gesetzgebung dazu bei, dass die slowenische Intelligenz sich lieber für ein Studium an der Wiener als an anderen europäischen Universitäten entschied.

Bereits im 18. Jahrhundert trifft man in Wien auf viele bedeutende Persönlichkeiten aus den slowenischen Gebieten, wie z. B. auf den Naturwissenschaftler, Germanisten und in den Jahren 1753 und 1766 Professor der deutschen Sprache an der Wiener Universität, Žiga (Sigismund) Popovič (1705–1774) (vgl. Weiss 2007: 101–105), oder auf den berühmten Mathematiker und Astronomen, Jurij (Georg) Vega (1754–1802) (vgl. Pisanski 2006), den Verfasser des legendären *Logaritmisch-trigonometrischen Handbuches* (1780), das bis 1908 beachtliche 82 Auflagen erlebte. Ferner gehört zu den verdienstvollsten slowenischen Landsleuten, die in Wien Karriere machten und bedeutend das kulturelle Leben der Slowenen beeinflussten, auch der Sprachwissenschaftler Jernej (Bartholomäus) Kopitar (1780–1844) (vgl. Merchiers 2007; vgl. auch Grošelj 2008: 40–41), der zusammen mit Josef Dobrovský (1753–1829) (vgl. Grošelj 2008: 54) und Pavel Josef Šafárik (1795–1861) als einer der Begründer der wissenschaftlichen Slawistik gilt. Sein Zeitgenosse Fran Miklošič (dt. Franz Miklosich; 1813–1891) begründete 1849 die Wiener Slawistik und wurde fünf Jahre danach (1854/55) Rektor der Wiener Universität. Darüber hinaus studierten und lebten in Wien auch slowenische Klassiker: der Lyriker France Prešeren, der Schriftsteller und Literaturtheoretiker Josip Stritar (1836–1923) wie auch der größte Dichter der slowenischen Moderne, Ivan Cankar (1876–1918) (mehr zu diesem Thema Grdina 2013).

Aber nicht nur Wissenschaftler und Literaten verstanden die Residenzstadt des Vielvölkerstaates als Tor zur Welt, als ihr verheißenes Land. Die ökonomische Lage des 19. Jahrhunderts zwang auch viele Krainer dazu, sich vor allem in der Winterzeit nach Wien zu begeben, um dort überwiegend als Maronibrater (auf der Straße rösteten sie aber auch Kartoffeln und Äpfel) ihr Geld zu verdienen und sich so den Lebensunterhalt zu sichern. Die Wiener Jahre und Wien als eine ausgesprochen kosmopolitische Stadt, ein „Schmelztiegel" verschiedener Kulturen und Religionen, haben jeden der Erwähnten nachhaltig geprägt und dadurch auf die Dauer auch das Leben in Krain weitgehend beeinflusst.

PETER VON RADICS: BIOGRAPHISCHE TATSACHEN

Peter von Radics wurde am 26. September 1836 in Adelsberg (Postojna) in Krain geboren und verstarb zwei Tage vor seinem 76. Geburtstag, am 24. September 1912 in Ljubljana. Seinem Geburtsort nach war Radics ein Krainer, seiner Abstammung

[2] Aus der ältesten Universitätsmatrikel geht hervor, dass in der Zeit zwischen 1377 bis 1400 an der Wiener Universität von ungefähr 600 Immatrikulierten 47 Studenten aus Laibach, 26 aus Cilli (Celje), 21 aus Pettau (Ptuj), 19 aus Krainburg (Kranj), 15 aus Marburg an der Drau (Maribor), 10 aus Gottschee (Kočevje) und 8 aus Stein (Kamnik) stammten (vgl. Medved 1995: 22; vgl. auch Cindrič 2009; Cindrič 2010).

nach jedoch ein Deutscher. Er entstammte einer Mischehe. Seine Mutter, eine gewisse Leopoldine Binder (1796–1883) stammte aus Niederösterreich, sein Vater Peter von Radits (1779–1854) war aus Ungarn gebürtig, „Sohn eines österreichischen Edelmannes“, wie es in seinem Tagebuch, aufbewahrt im Slowenischen Nationalmuseum, steht (NMS, Nachlass Peter von Radics, TE 1 / II / C, Nr. 12). Er nahm bereits in den Kriegen gegen Napoleon auf der österreichischen Seite teil und ließ sich Ende der zwanziger Jahre des 19. Jahrhunderts in Adelsberg nieder, wo er als k. k. Straßenkommissar tätig war und für gute Verkehrsverbindungen und für die Aufsicht beim Straßenbau zuständig war (Žigon 2009: 28–30).

Darüber hinaus entstammte Peter von Radics einer Familie, die 1733 geadelt worden war und dem niederen Adel angehörte (ebd. 29). Trotzdem war sein Leben alles andere als adlig. Er musste hart um seine eigene Existenz und die seiner Familie kämpfen, sein tägliches Leben bestimmten finanzielle Schwierigkeiten und er musste sich deswegen mit Bienenfleiß der publizistischen Arbeit und dem Schreiben widmen.

Peter von Radics gehört zu den Autoren, die im 19. Jahrhundert in Krain wirkten, ihre Werke auf Deutsch verfassten und mit den bekanntesten Persönlichkeiten des politischen und literarischen Lebens der damaligen Zeit verkehrten. Er war ein in vielen Fächern bewanderter Gelehrter. Er war Publizist, Redakteur, Historiker, Germanist, Pädagoge, Ethnologe, Theaterforscher, mit einem Wort ein Polyhistor. Bereits zeit seines Lebens war er wegen seiner zahlreichen Studien zur Krainer Kultur-, Literatur-, Theater-, Sozial- wie auch Jagdgeschichte, Archiv-, Landes- und Erdkunde als *der* Krainer Historiograph bekannt. Er veröffentlichte mehr als 70 selbstständige Monographien und über 500 Zeitungsartikel und Beiträge zu den erwähnten Themen (vgl. ebd. 301–350). Auch wenn er keine bahnbrechenden Werke schuf, zählt er zweifelsohne zu den produktivsten Autoren seiner Zeit. Trotzdem schenkten ihm die lexikalischen Werke des 19. und angehenden 20. Jahrhunderts keine besondere Aufmerksamkeit. So hielt es beispielsweise sein Bekannter, der illustre Laibacher Bibliograph Constant von Wurzbach (1818–1893), nicht für notwendig, Radics in seinem monumentalen Lebenswerk, dem *Bibliographische[n] Lexikon des Kaisertums Österreich* (1856–1891) anzuführen, geschweige denn, ihm einen ganzen Lexikonartikel zu widmen. Genauso wird Radics auch in allen weiteren Lexika des 19. Jahrhunderts nur lapidar erwähnt (Hinrichsen 1891: 1074) und es werden nur knapp die wichtigsten bio- und bibliographischen Daten zu seiner Person zusammengestellt und veröffentlicht (Nagl et al. 1937: 1258).

Peter von Radics lebte und wirkte als Publizist sowohl in der Hauptstadt Krains als auch in Wien, er war der slowenischen Sprache mächtig, obwohl er seine Werke hauptsächlich auf Deutsch verfasste, er fühlte sich als Krainer, widmete sein gesamtes Opus seinem Geburtsland Krain, berief sich jedoch hier und da auch auf seine deutsche Abstammung und teilte mit dem Krainer Deutschtum Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts liberale Ideen, was ihm seine slowenischen Zeitgenossen verübelten. Sein Leben zwischen zwei Sprachen und Kulturen, wurde durch mehrere wichtige, jedoch ambivalente Faktoren gekennzeichnet, die ihn geprägt haben und im Weiteren beleuchtet werden.

DER REDAKTEUR IM DIENST DER VERSTÄNDIGUNG ZWISCHEN DEN KULTUREN

Seine ersten Erfahrungen im Zeitungsgeschäft sammelte Peter von Radics in den sechziger Jahren des 19. Jahrhunderts in Ljubljana. Bereits vor 1865 wurde im slowenischen nationalen Lager die Gründung eines politischen Blattes diskutiert, wobei allem voran die Sprache des Blattes zur Diskussion stand. Letztendlich wurde seitens der Aktionäre, die die finanziellen Mittel zur Verfügung stellten, entschieden, ab Januar 1865 eine Zeitschrift in deutscher Sprache unter dem Titel *Triglav. Zeitschrift für vaterländische Interessen* herauszugeben. Die Redaktion übernahm im Einvernehmen mit den konservativen Altslowenen, vor allem nach der Absprache mit der führenden Persönlichkeit des damaligen slowenischen politischen Lebens, Johann Bleiweis (1808–1881), Peter von Radics (Žigon 2004: 41–116). In einer programmatischen Schrift, die auch in der ersten Nummer der Zeitschrift abgedruckt wurde, fasste er die Ziele des neuen publizistischen Organs kurz und bündig zusammen:

> Den Deutschen […], wie sie unter unserem Volke wohnen, dem die römischen Schriftsteller schon die Uebung der Gastfreundschaft zu hohem Lobe anrechneten, soll „Triglav" für Besprechung berechtigter Interessen willig seine Spalten öffnen, denn wir wollen aufrichtig Verständigung und Versöhnung mit ihnen, deren Sprache wir uns, hauptsächlich im Hinblicke auf das ebengenannte schöne Ziel, in diesem unserm Organe bedienen (Radics 1865: 1).

Das Blatt, das sich laut seines Programms um ein besseres Verständnis zwischen dem Deutschtum und dem Slowenentum in Krain bemühte, geriet bald in Kritik und stieß vor allem bei der jüngeren Generation der Slowenen auf Widerstand. Peter von Radics, selbst überzeugt von der Notwendigkeit einer „vaterländischen" Zeitschrift in deutscher Sprache, konnte sich unter diesen Umständen als Redakteur des unerwünschten Organs keine Sympathien erwerben. Nicht mal fünf Monate nach dem Erscheinen von *Triglav*, am 5. Mai 1865, bezog das Klagenfurter slowenische Blatt *Slovenec* [Der Slowene] Stellung zu der Laibacher Zeitschrift. Diese, so *Slovenec*, sei für das slowenische Volk vollkommen unnötig und schade dem slowenischen Volk mehr als es nütze (Malle 1979: 182). Die Angriffe wurden immer heftiger und bereits im Juni wurde auch Radics, der verantwortliche Redakteur des *Triglavs*, unter Beschuss genommen. Der „deutsche" *Triglav* schäme sich seiner Muttersprache, konstatierte ein Korrespondent aus Krain und prophezeite dem Blatt ein baldiges Ende. Ferner hieß es, dass der Redakteur des Blattes „sein Mantel so zu drehen versteht, wie es seinem ‚Dispositionsfonde' gefällt und der ‚Triglav' selbst sieht auch schon so aus, als ob er sich um einen Platz unter den Auserwählten des Wiener ‚Dispositionsfondes' bemühen würde" (ebd. 183).

Als im Jahre 1866 der Krieg zwischen Italien, Preußen und der Donaumonarchie ausbrach, traf Radics die Entscheidung, als Kriegsberichterstatter auf italienische Kriegsschauplätze zu ziehen. Im Frühling 1866 gab er die Redaktion auf und die Zeitschrift wurde vorübergehend eingestellt. Diesen Vorgang kommentierte das Klagenfurter Blatt *Slovenec* mit Blick auf die zuvor gemachte Prognose wie folgt: „Das

slovenische Bewußtsein soll durch das slovenische Wort gekräftigt werden, das ist und bleibt unser Gedanke“ (ebd.)

Ende der sechziger Jahre ging Radics nach Wien, enttäuscht und ernüchtert von seinen Erfahrungen in der Hauptstadt Krains, wo er feststellen musste, dass seine Ansichten, obwohl den Slowenen wohlgesinnt, nicht der Mehrheit der slowenischen Intelligenz der damaligen Zeit entsprachen. In Wien lernte er seine zukünftige Frau, Hedwig Kaltenbrunner (1845–1919), die Tochter des oberösterreichischen Mundartdichters Carl Adam Kaltenbrunner (1804–1867), kennen, heiratete und blieb zehn Jahre lang, von 1866 bis 1876, in der Haupt- und Residenzstadt. Er schrieb für diverse Wiener Zeitungen, war als Journalist und Redakteur tätig, jedoch konnte er sich in Wien nicht behaupten. Als im Jahre 1876 Gerüchte aufkamen, dass die Wiener Zeitung, der *Österreichische Volksfreund*, deren Mitarbeiter und zeitweise auch verantwortlicher Redakteur der Rubrik für Innenpolitik Radics war, sein Erscheinen einstellen würde, sah sich die Familie Radics genötigt, Wien zu verlassen und zurück nach Krain zu ziehen (Žigon 2009: 101–115). In dieser Hinsicht teilte Radics die Erfahrung vieler Intellektueller des 19. Jahrhunderts, die ihr Glück in der Hauptstadt der Donaumonarchie suchten, jedoch bald erkennen mussten, dass das Wirken in den jeweiligen Herkunftsländern manchmal die einzige Möglichkeit für ihr Überleben war. So kehrte auch Radics schließlich „nach Hause“, nach Krain zurück und verbrachte hier die letzten 36 Jahre seines Lebens.

Radics selbst sah sich als einen „Krainer der alten Wurzeln“ (Anonym 1912: 4). Die emotional geladenen Verse des deutschen romantischen Lyrikers Johann Ludwig Wilhelm Müller (1794–1827), die er seinem Erstlingswerk über Adelsberg und seine Grotten vorausschickte, begleiteten ihn sein Leben lang und waren seine wichtigste Devise:

> Es ist das kleinste Vaterland
> der größten Liebe nicht zu klein;
> Je enger es Dich rings umschließt,
> je näher wird’s dem Herzen sein (Radics 1861: unpag.).

In diesem Sinne war seine Rückkehr aus Wien in das Geburtsland Krain, in seinen Mikrokosmos, gleichsam ein Weg nach Hause, ein Weg aus der Metropole in die heimische Provinz. Hier konnte Radics seine in Wien gesammelten publizistischen Erfahrungen gut einbringen. Er war zunächst im Zeitungsgeschäft tätig, widmete sich aber später der Erforschung der Krainer Geschichte und veröffentlichte einige bedeutende Texte, allen voran eine erste wissenschaftliche Monographie über den Gelehrten Johann Weichard Freiherr von Valvasor. Dieser Krainer Polyhistor aus dem 17. Jahrhundert stand nicht nur im Zentrum seines wissenschaftlichen Interesses, sondern Radics fühlte sich mit ihm auch persönlich verbunden, denn auch Valvasor beschäftigte sich zeit seines Lebens mit der slowenischen Vergangenheit, schrieb über Sitten und Bräuche der Slowenen, setzte sich mit den geographischen und topographischen Fragen auseinander und fühlte sich als Krainer, obwohl auch seine Eltern keine Krainer waren, sondern aus der Region Bergamo in Norditalien stammten. Bereits als junger Student begann Peter von Radics unermüdlich zu Valvasor zu recherchieren und er setzte seine Forschungen in den 1890er Jahren mit viel Eifer und Energie fort, um die noch fehlenden Quellen über den Polyhistor zu sammeln. Im Alter von 74 Jahren unternahm er noch eine Studienreise nach London, wo er im Archiv der Royal Society drei

bis dahin unbekannte Briefe Valvasors eruierte und seine Monographie über Valvasor vollendete. Die Herausgabe finanzierte die Direktion des heimischen Geldinstituts, der Krainischen Sparkasse, was heutzutage in Slowenien die reinste Fiktion wäre. Mit seinem Lebenswerk, das zwei Jahre vor seinem Tod erschien, schuf Radics nicht nur eine breit gefächerte Grundlage für alle späteren wissenschaftlichen Auseinandersetzungen mit Valvasor, sondern es wurde ihm für sein Werk mit „Allerhöchster Entschließung" vom 28. Februar 1910 auch der Titel eines *Kaiserlichen Rates* verliehen (mehr dazu Žigon 2009: 236– 237).

GESCHEITERTE TRÄUME UND BEKANNTSCHAFT MIT ANASTASIUS GRÜN

Ein entscheidender Wendepunkt im Leben von Peter von Radics kollidierte mit seiner festen Überzeugung, dass nur eine gute Ausbildung einem ein besseres und unbekümmertes Leben garantiert. Unglückliche Umstände ließen ihn diesbezüglich scheitern: Der zu frühe Tod seines Vaters, der daraus resultierende Mangel an finanziellen Mitteln und ständige Erkrankungen hinderten ihn daran, das in Wien angefangene Studium der Geschichte, Geographie und der deutschen Sprache abzuschließen und ein staatlich geprüfter Lehrer zu werden. Nachdem er sein Studium an den Nagel gehängt hatte, war es noch schwieriger für ihn, eine feste Arbeitstelle zu bekommen und mittellos, wie er war, konnte er auch unmöglich die Kosten für seine wissenschaftlichen Recherchen und Veröffentlichungen tragen. So wie viele seiner Zeitgenossen steckte er in einer finanziellen Klemme, aus der ihm ein guter Freund und großzügiger Mäzen, Anton Alexander Graf Auersperg alias Anastasius Grün (1807–1876), des Öfteren half (vgl. Žigon 2009).

Die Bekanntschaft mit Anastasius Grün (vgl. zu seiner Person Scharmitzer 2010), der mit seinem anonym erschienenen Lyrikzyklus Spaziergänge eines Wiener Poeten (Hamburg, 1831), Aufsehen erregte und in der Donaumonarchie Wellen schlug,[3] hat das Leben von Peter von Radics entscheidend geprägt, zumal Grün an Radics und sein Talent glaubte und ihm in den düsteren Zeiten finanziell unter die Arme griff. Radics lernte Grün im Jahr 1857 in Graz im väterlichen Hause seines guten Freundes und Kommilitonen, des späteren Schriftstellers Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (1836–1895) kennen. Radics erinnert sich:

> Es war an einem schönen, unvergesslichen Abende der Gesellschafts-Saison im Winter 1857/58, daß wir das Glück hatten, eben in dem Elternhause meines Freundes, in dem Salon des damaligen Polizeidirektors von Graz, des Herrn Hofrates Ritter von Sacher-Masoch, und zwar bei Gelegenheit einer daselbst von uns Studenten veranstalteten Theateraufführung, dem für alle schöngeistigen Bestrebungen Empfänglichen vorgestellt zu werden. Da war u. a. auch Holtei, der treffliche Shakespeare-Vorleser und zugleich

[3] Eine ausführliche Monographie zum Leben und Werk dieses Vormärzdichters ist anlässlich seines 200. Geburtstages auch in Ljubljana, seiner Geburtsstadt erschienen (Miladinović Zalaznik 2009; vgl. auch Miladinović Zalaznik 2012, 2013). Demnächst erscheint in der neuen Ausgabe des *Slowenischen Biographischen Lexikons* ein längerer Beitrag über Grün aus der Feder der gleichen Autorin.

> unser freiwilliger Dramaturg anwesend, der dann nach der, wie man sagte, vorzüglich gelungenen Aufführung von Goethes „Geschwistern“ – eines Lieblings-Repertoirestückes unserer kleinen Bühne – sich in das aus dem Munde Grün-Auerspergs gespendete Lob mit uns, wie letzterer scherzend hinzufügte, teilen konnte (Radics 1906: 93).

An einer anderen Stelle berichtet Radics, dass diese Begegnung auch bei Grün einen starken Eindruck hinterlassen hatte und in seinem Gedächtnis haften geblieben war. So bemerkte er bei einigen Gelegenheiten Radics gegenüber wie folgt: „Nicht wahr, es muß Sie eigentümlich berührt haben das Milieu, in dem Sie dem ‚Wiener Spaziergänger’ persönlich begegneten, im Hause – des Polizeidirektors!“ (ebd.)

In den sechziger Jahren, als Radics erfolglos eine feste Arbeitsstelle in Wien suchte, wandte er sich immer wieder an Anastasius Grün, der ihm als Mäzen so manches Mal aus einer prekären Lage geholfen hat.[4] Allerdings machte sich Radics wegen der Bekanntschaft mit Grün keine Freunde im slowenischen Lager. Die Freundschaft mit dem liberalorientierten Auersperg, der beispielsweise 1863 im Krainer Landtag behauptete, dass Krain mit der ganzen ethnographischen Gruppe der Slowenen auf dem deutschen Kulturgebiet liege oder einige Jahre später, 1870, in einem Brief an den Krainer Politiker Karl Deschman (slow. Dragotin Dežman; 1821–1889) die Slowenen als „moderne türkische Horden geistlich Be- und Verschnittener“ (Pivec-Stele 1930: 64) bezeichnete und die slowenische nationale Bewegung für „pure Burleske“ (ebd. 66) hielt, sorgte eher dafür, dass Radics auch nach seinem Tode seine Verdienste im Bereich der slowenischen Kulturgeschichte abgesprochen wurden.

DER ÖSTERREICHISCHE PATRIOTISMUS UND LIBERALE ANSICHTEN

Ferner wurde das Leben und Werk von Peter von Radics grundlegend durch den österreichischen Patriotismus bestimmt. Am besten kann dies am folgenden Beispiel illustriert werden: Im Jahre 1874, zwei Jahre nach dem Tode von Franz Grillparzer, gehörte Radics zu den Mitbegründern des literarischen Grillparzer-Vereines (Žigon 2010). Die Aktivitäten des Vereines galten von der Person und dem Werk Grillparzers ausgehend, der Literatur-, Theater-, Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte der damaligen Zeit. Das wichtigste Ziel des Vereins war, wie Radics in einem Brief an die Schwestern Fröhlich schreibt, die „hohe Verehrung für den unvergesslichen Dichter und Patrioten“ (WStLB, Brief v. 6. Januar 1874), der das Wesen der österreichischen Seele schlechthin verkörperte und einer ganzen menschlichen und kulturellen Stimmung persönlichen Ausdruck verlieh (Magris 2000: 119).

Für die slowenische Kultur- und Literaturgeschichte erscheint es von besonderer Bedeutung, dass die Gründer des Grillparzer-Vereins aus Krain kamen; neben Radics gehörte zum initiierenden Personenkreis auch noch der Slowene Ludwig Germonigg

[4] Aus Dankbarkeit hat Radics auch zwischen 1876 und 1906 zwei umfangreiche Arbeiten und mehr als ein Dutzend Zeitungsaufsätze über Grün verfasst. Als erstes ist 1876 in Stuttgart Radics’ Festschrift zum siebzigsten Jubiläum des Dichters, *Anastasius Grün und seine Heimath* (Cottasche Buchhandlung in Stuttgart) erschienen. Dieser Arbeit folgte eine Monographie über Grüns Leben und Wirken, die zwei Jahre später, 1879, in Leipzig herausgegeben wurde. In allen Werken redet Radics über von Grün in den höchsten Tönen.

(1823–1909). Die Gründer und die Mitglieder des Grillparzer-Vereines zeigten einen aufrichtigen habsburgischen Patriotismus und ihre Loyalität Österreich gegenüber. Darüber hinaus kann ihre Motivation auch als ein patriotischer Akt erklärt werden: Die Etablierung einer „österreichischen" als „nicht-reichsdeutschen" Literatur unter der besonderen Berücksichtigung des Todes Grillparzers gerade zur Reichsgründung. In diesem Zusammenhang spielte auch die territoriale Identität „Krainer" eine entscheidende Rolle. Die meisten, vor allem die gebildeten Slowenen im 19. Jahrhundert definierten sich zunächst als national-slowenisch und konkretisierten darauf ihre Zugehörigkeit als regionale bzw. Landeszugehörigkeit, d. h. sie waren z. B. Krainer oder Steirer. Allerdings ist bei den Slowenen auch eine überregionale, staatlich österreichische bzw. dynastisch habsburgische Verbundenheit festzustellen (Vodopivec 2001: 71–84). Sie waren österreichisch-ungarische Untertanen, die in ihrer imaginären Vorstellung den Kaiser als Vater der Nation idealisierten. Die Literatur der damaligen Zeit lebte und zehrte eben von der Erinnerung oder der Verteidigung eines „Mythos", eben des Mythos von einer einstmals intakten, heilen, Schutz gewährenden Habsburger Kultur, wie das Claudio Magris (2000: 18) formuliert, und gerade dieser Mythos hatte auch für Radics und Germonik, die Gründer des Vereins, eine wichtige Bedeutung und einen besonderen Wert.

Als Letztes sind für das Leben und Wirken von Peter von Radics seine liberalen Ansichten von Bedeutung. Das Jahrhundert, im dem er lebte, wurde im europäischen Rahmen einerseits durch Kriege, andererseits durch die fortschreitende wirtschaftliche Entwicklung gekennzeichnet. Allmählich begeistert von dem Bau der Eisenbahnen, von der Modernisierung des Postwesens, der Einführung des Telegramms und des Telefons beschrieb er in seinen Artikeln die neuesten technischen Errungenschaften, was von seinem fortschrittlichen Denken zeugt. Auch im politischen Sinne identifizierte sich Radics mit den liberalen Forderungen: Er forderte persönliche, politische und religiöse Freiheit, eine Demokratisierung des Lebens auf allen Ebenen, die Einschränkung der Macht der Kirche und plädierte für Fortschritt und Modernisierung der Wirtschaft, was nicht immer im Sinne seiner eher konservativ orientierten slowenischen Freunde im Land Krain war.

FAZIT

Peter von Radics liebte sein Geburtsland Krain und es ist ihm zu verdanken, dass sowohl die historische Vergangenheit als auch die Kulturgeschichte Krains im ausgehenden 19. und im anbrechenden 20. Jahrhundert systematisch erforscht wurden. Er war in diesem Sinne das kulturelle und historische Gedächtnis des Landes Krain. Obwohl er seiner Abstammung nach kein Slowene war, fühlte er sich als Krainer und machte es sich zur Aufgabe, alles, was mit seinem Vaterland in Verbindung stand, aufzuschreiben, um es den kommenden Generationen zu erhalten. Bis heute sind seine Veröffentlichungen nicht in Vergessenheit geraten. Seine Werke verfasste er auf Deutsch und hat damit bewiesen, dass die Sprache allein nicht unbedingt ausschlaggebend für die nationale oder kulturelle Zugehörigkeit ist.

Peter von Radics versuchte sein Glück in Wien, er hat sich bemüht, seinen Raum unter der „Wiener Sonne" zu finden, doch es wurde ihm dort kein Erfolg be-

schert. Er teilte das Schicksal vieler Intellektueller seiner Zeit: In der Residenzstadt der Habsburger gab es kein Brot für ihn, er hatte zu wenige einflussreiche Beziehungen, zu viele Gegner und unzählige Konkurrenten, im kleinen Universum seines Vaterlandes Krain dagegen konnte er sich behaupten, überleben und bewundernswerte Erfolge erzielen und gehört zweifelsohne heute noch zu den produktivsten Autoren im 19. Jahrhundert in Krain.

Das Leben und Schaffen von Peter von Radics stellt einen Teil der slowenischen Vergangenheit dar. Er lebte in einem von Kämpfen um die Macht gezeichneten Zeitalter, in einer Zeit des unvorstellbaren wirtschaftlichen Fortschritts, aber auch in einer Zeit der sich zuspitzenden nationalen Verhältnisse in Österreich-Ungarn. Trotzdem hielt er an dem Konzept eines koexistenten Miteinanderlebens der verschiedenen Kulturen in der Donaumonarchie fest, weswegen er in Anbetracht der dominierenden politischen Anschauungen anachronistisch wirkte, seine Lebensdevise war bereits Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts überholt; sogar die „krainierische" Identität, zu der er sich sein ganzes Leben lang bekannte, begann in den letzten Dekaden seines Lebens allmählich zu verschwinden.

Peter von Radics kann man abschließend als einen aufgeklärten Intellektuellen bezeichnen, der seine öffentliche Bestimmung darin sah, mehrere Kulturen miteinander zu verbinden, insbesondere die slowenische und die deutsche bzw. deutschösterreichische. Er verstand sich als Mittler und Vermittler zwischen den Kulturen, was ihm kurz vor seinem Tod mit der Verleihung des Titels *Kaiserlicher Rat* auch öffentlich anerkannt wurde und was ihm auch heute noch hoch angerechnet wird.

Universität Ljubljana, Slowenien

QEULLEN- UND LITERATURVERZEICHNIS

Anonym. „Peter Pavel pl. Radics umrl." *Slovenec*, Nr. 22, 25. September 1912, S. 4.

Brix, Emil. „Die zahlenmäßige Präsenz des Deutschtums in den südslawischen Kronländern Cisleithaniens 1848–1918." *Geschichte der Deutschen im Bereich des heutigen Slowenien 1848–1918*. Hg. v. Helmut Rumpler und Arnold Suppan. Wien/München: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik/R. Oldenbourg, 1988. 43–62.

Cindrič, Alojz. *Študenti s Kranjske na dunajski univerzi 1848–1918*. Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, 2009.

Cindrič, Alojz. *Študenti s Kranjske na dunajski univerzi v prvi polovici 19. stoletja 1804–1848*. Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, 2010.

Grdina, Igor. „Dunaj – domiva ali tujina? / Vienna – a native or foreign land?" *Slovenski odnosi z Dunajem skozi čas.* Hg. v. Vincenc Rajšp. Dunaj/Wien: Slovenski znanstveni institute/Slowenisches Wissenschaftsinstitut; Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja, 2013.

Grošelj, Robert. "Oblikoskladnja starocerkvenoslovanskega nepredložnega mestnika v luči razvoja slovničnega opisa." *Jezikoslovni zapiski* 14/2 (2008). 39–61.

Hinrichsen, Adolf. *Das literarische Deutschland*. Berlin: Verlag des „Literarischen Deutschlands", 1891.

Hösler, Joachim. *Slowenien*. Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart. Regensburg/München: Verlag Friedrich Pustet; Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft, 2006.
Magris, Claudio. *Der habsburgische Mythos in der modernen österreichischen Literatur*. Wien: P. Zsolnay, 2000.
Malle, Auguštin. *Die slowenische Presse in Kärnten 1848–1900.* Wien: Slowenisches Wissenschaftsinstitut Wien, 1979.
Medved, Drago. *Slovenski Dunaj*. Celovec/Ljubljana/Dunaj: Mohorjeva založba, 1995.
Merchiers, Ingrid. *Cultural nationalism in the South Slav Habsburg lands in the early nineteenth century. The scholarly network of Jernej Kopitar (1780–1844).* München: Sagner, 2007.
Michler, Werner. „‚Die Deutschen in Krain'. Literarisches Feld und nationaler Konflikt nach 1848." *Zur Geschichte der österreichisch-slowenischen Literaturbeziehungen.* Hg. v. Andreas Brandtner und Werner Michler. Wien: Turia+Kant, 1998. 193–219.
Miladinović Zalaznik, Mira. „‚Ein jedes Volk hat einen Mann, den es sich von einem heiligen reinen Glorienschein umgeben denkt'. Ein kleiner Versuch über France Prešeren im 19. Jahrhundert." *Zur Geschichte der österreichisch-slowenischen Literaturbeziehungen*. Hg. v. Andreas Brandtner und Werner Michler. Wien: Turia+Kant, 1998. 91–103.
Miladinović Zalaznik, Mira. „‚Neben den Boxern in den illustrierten Zeitungen sehen die bekannten Schriftsteller schon miserabel genug aus: noch nicht Muskel und nicht mehr Geist.' Der österreichische Schriftsteller und Germanist Edward Samhaber (1846–1927) in Ljubljana." *Aufbruch in die Moderne. Wechselbeziehungen und Kontroversen in der deutschsprachigen Literatur um die Jahrhundertwende im Donauraum.* Hg. v. Anton Schwob und Zoltán Szendi. München: Südostdeutsches Kulturwerk 2000. 75–91.
Miladinović Zalaznik, Mira und Stane Granda (Hg.). *Anton Aleksander grof Auersperg – Anastazij Grün. Razprave*. Ljubljana: Nova revija, 2009.
Miladinović Zalaznik, Mira. „‚Daß die großen Fragen [...] nicht ohne Mitwirkung der mächtigen Slawenfamilie nachhaltig zu lösen sind, hat [...] das weithin vernehmbare Rauschen der alten und vielästigen Slawenlinde deutlich genug angekündigt': Anton Alexander Graf Auersperg (1806–1876) – ein Gönner der Krainer Kulturszene." *Gefühlswelten und Emotionsdiskurse in der deutschsprachigen Literatur*. Hg. v. Kristian Donko und Neva Šlibar. Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete, 2012. 57–69.
Miladinović Zalaznik, Mira: „Liberalec Anton Aleksander grof Turjaški – predmarčni pesnik Anastazij Grün in njegov odnos do Kranjcev." *Heroji in slavne osebe na Slovenskem.* Hg. v. Božidar Jezernik. Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba FF (Zupančičeva knjižnica 38). 65–88.
Nagl, Johann Williband, Jakob Zeidler und Eduard Castle (Hg.). *Deutsch-österreichische Literaturgeschichte. Ein Handbuch zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung in Oesterreich-Ungarn*. Bd. 4. Wien: Verlag von Carl Fromme, 1937.
NMS. Narodni muzej Slovenije [Slowenisches Nationalmuseum], Nachlass Peter von Radics, TE 1 / II / C, Nr. 12.

Orožen, Martina. „Janez Vajkard Valvasor o slovenskem jeziku.“ *Jezik in slovstvo* 39 (1993/94). 3–12.
Pisanski, Tomaž et al. (Hg.). *Jurij baron Vega in njegov čas. Zbornik ob 250-letnici rojstva/Baron Jurij Vega and His times: Celebrating 250 years.* Ljubljana: DMFA, Arhiv Republike Slovenije, 2006.
Pivec-Stele, Melita. „Pisma Antona Auersperga Karlu Dežmanu.“ *Glasnik Muzejskega društva za Slovenijo* 11/1–4 (1930). 43–71.
Radics, Peter von. *Adelsberg und seine Grotten*. Triest: Lloyd, 1861.
Radics, Peter von. *Der verirrte Soldat oder des Glück's Probierstein.* Agram: Commissions-Verlag der Suppan'schen Buchhandlung, 1865.
Radics, Peter von. „Unser Programm.“ *Triglav*, Nr. 1, 3. Januar 1865, S. 1.
Radics, Peter von. „Erinnerungen an Anastasius Grün.“ *Anastasius-Grün-Nummer der Laibacher Schulzeitung* 34 (1906). 93–97.
Scharmitzer, Dietmar. *Anastasius Grün (1806–1876). Leben und Werk*. Wien/Köln/Weimar: Böhlau, 2010.
Weiss, Peter. „Življenje in delo Janeza Žiga Valentina Popoviča.“ *Glossarium Vindicum/Janez Žiga Valentin Popovič (Johann Siegmund Valentin Popowitsch)*. Hg. v. Richrad Reutner und Peter Weiss. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2007. 101–105.
Vodopivec, Peter. „O socialnih in gospodarskih nazorih nemškega meščanstva na Kranjskem od konca 60. do začetka 80. let 19. stoletja.“ *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino*, XXVII/1–2 (1987). 7–32.
Vodopivec, Peter. „Slovenci v 19. stoletju: Miti in stvarnost.“ *Temeljne prelomnice preteklih tisočletij*. Hg. v. Stane Granda und Barbara Šatej. Ljubljana: Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, 2001.
WStLB. Wiener Stadt- und Landesbibliothek, Inv.-Nr. 73835: Brief von Peter von Radics an Ludwig August von Frankl-Hochwart vom 6. Januar 1874.
Zöllner, Erich. *Geschichte Österreichs*. Wien/München: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik/R. Oldenbourg, 1990.
Žigon, Tanja. *Nemški časnik za slovenske interese – Triglav (1865–1870)*. Ljubljana: Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, 2004.
Žigon, Tanja. *Zgodovinski spomin Kranjske. Življenje in delo Petra Pavla pl. Radicsa (1836–1912)*. Ljubljana: Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije in Znanstvena založba FF, 2009.
Žigon, Tanja. „Anastazij Grün in Peter Pavel pl. Radics.” *Anton Aleksander grof Auersperg – Anastazij Grün. Razprave*. Hg. v. Mira Miladinović Zalaznik und Stane Granda. Ljubljana: Nova revija, 2009. 227–246.
Žigon, Tanja. „Der Grillparzer-Verein. Ein von Krainern gegründeter literarischer Zirkel in Wien.“ *Literarische Zentrenbildung in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa*. Hg. v. Mira Miladinović Zalaznik, Maria Sass und Stefan Sienerth. München: IKGS 2010. 365–380.

UDK 821.111(73)–31.09Mahmoody B.:316.722(55:73)

ORIENTALISM IN *NOT WITHOUT MY DAUGHTER* BY BETTY MAHMOODY

Maja Mugerle

Abstract

The term Orientalism has long been used to describe constructed interpretations of the East by the Westerners. Nowadays, these stereotypes most frequently apply to Arabs and Muslims, as well as others who find themselves in conflicts with the USA. At an appropriate historical moment, a single story can have a devastating influence on our perception of the 'Other'. One example is the book by Betty Mahmoody, *Not Without My Daughter*, which was released in a period when the West showed an increased interest in the Iranian culture due to various conflicts in the region. The story of a woman and her daughter, who are held captive in Iran and finally make a heroic escape, became more than just a 'true' story of one individual. Instead of focusing on problems which need to be discussed, like the role of women in Muslim societies, it exposed a number of condemning cultural, ethnic and religious stereotypes about the East.

Key words: orientalism, the 'Other', islamophobia

1. 0. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In the last fifty years or so the tensions between Muslim cultures and the USA have become an important aspect not only when researching US history but in considering world history in general. These tensions, present both within and outside the USA, together with the mass media, have helped to create the image of the 'enemy'. The conflicts between the East and West (Gulf War, the hostage crisis, 9/11, Iraq War, etc.) have also contributed to the escalation of islamophobia. Politics, cultural background, the general atmosphere in a certain society, as well as the media, all contribute to the definition of the 'Other'.

The concept of the 'Other' has been discussed and formed throughout history. When we speak of the Muslim or Arab identity, we cannot ignore the impact of Orientalism[1], which therefore remains an important part of our perception of the East and,

[1] (from *The New Penguin Compact English Dictionary,* 621) : orientalism or Orientalism n 1 a characteristic feature of the peoples or culture of the Orient. 2 scholarship or learning in oriental subjects.

in the words of Edward Said[2], our "way of coming to terms with the Orient" (Said: 2). Although the set definition of Orientalism is an academic one, it represents far more than just the Western perspective on the East. Early on, in the colonial period, the term 'Orientalist' might have referred to those Westerners who studied the Orient, travelled there, came into contact with people and later described their encounters. But these were far more than just academic insights:

> [...] Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. (Said: 3)

Since most people never came into contact with the Orient, their perceptions of it had to be based on the insights of those who experienced it. Orientalism became a way of defining the East. With the emergence of the mass media, Orientalism has automatically become a part of its development.

In a time when the media are overwhelmed with images of Muslim extremists, US soldiers in desert gear and various political protests in Muslim/Arab countries, it seems almost impossible not to have an opinion about the situation. While we mostly consider the mass media to be informative, both books and films usually get perceived as 'relaxing', which is why they can often be overlooked as potential sources of manipulation. Whereas the media quickly get pegged for being 'subjective', 'nationalist' or 'hateful', individual texts and films frequently escape such criticism. Nevertheless, their role should not be underestimated, as they influence both our values and our emotions.

The media, literature and film therefore play an important role in defining the 'Other' and presenting it to their target audience. The things we read or see influence our perception of the world and at the same time help us define ourselves. By forming a definite image of the 'other' we also define 'us'. For example – placing images of Muslim believers together with those of terrorist attacks may seem 'logical' to some, but it can lead to several negative stereotypes – by defining all Muslims as extremists, choosing the 'Muslim' identity of the attackers as the only criteria (ignoring racial, ethnic and other identities), accusing the Islamic religion of promoting terrorism, etc. This negative identification of the 'Other' automatically creates a positive definition of 'us' – if we consider the example of 9/11, a lot of the media reports, as well other presentations, defined the USA as the 'victim'. Images of bloodied Americans, heroic firefighters and crying relatives helped unite the Americans against the 'Other'. Following the tradition of Orientalism such images help preserve the division of East and West, 'bad' and 'good', 'conservative' and 'modern', and particularly as of late – 'extremist' versus 'tolerant'.

Thus the influence of not only the media, but also the literary texts and films can be taken advantage of. Many mainstream texts and films – like for instance *Not Without My Daughter* – have helped shape the image of the 'Muslim', the 'Arab', their cultural and religious traditions and their life in the USA. In the absence of other – direct or indirect – contact with a certain culture, such presentations often become

[2] Edward Said (1935-2003) was an acclaimed author, academic and cultural critic, whose best known work is *Orientalism,* which was published in 1978.

definite. And since any representation of the 'Other' is constructed on the basis a certain cultural, religious, social and historical background, all of these things must be considered in its analysis. For example – if we want to understand why 'the Iranian' was so successfully demonized in *Not Without My Daughter*, we must first discuss the circumstances in which the story was released to the public.

1. 1. BACKGROUND

One of the most important factors in analyzing the influence of such presentations is therefore the particular historical moment in which they emerge. As Margaret Miles points out:

> Since every film is produced and circulated within a particulate climate of public events, conversation and concerns, it is only in relation to that "moment" that what a film communicates may be adequately examined. (Miles: xiii)

Considering the fact that in the last decades the American – and Western – society has adopted a predominately negative perception of the Arab and Muslim world, this creates a moment in which manipulating the audience is much easier. If we simplify the situation – in the months after 9/11 a story which includes a negative presentation of Muslims (e.g. a book about the exploitation of women in Islamic society) would have been found more interesting than a 'neutral' or 'positive' story (e.g. about the humanitarian crisis in Sudan).

The historical moment should therefore always be considered. Let us look at the story of Betty Mahmoody – *Not Without My daughter*, which was published in 1989, while the film was released in 1991. This was the period after the climax of Arabism (Hourani: 401-415) and the complex relationship between the East and the West was reaching a high point. In the East, alliances were changing, ethnic and religious divisions were more and more prominent and the West was making the most out of it. After 1967 the political situation was becoming increasingly unstable – most Arab countries and other countries in the region were at some point involved in military conflicts (Jordan, Israel, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Sudan, Iran, Iraq, etc.). More importantly, this was also the period of the Iran-Iraq War, which lasted for almost eight years (1980-1988) and the Gulf War or Operation Desert Storm (1990-1991), when the United States led an attack against the Iraqis, who had invaded Kuwait. This meant that the West (predominantly led by the USA) was in direct conflict with the East. The American media was full of news about the events, bombing their audience with images of American military skill and success.

There were also two events which exposed a more specific enemy – Iran, namely the Iran hostage crisis and the Iran Air 655 incident. In November, 1979, Iranian students took more than sixty American hostages at the US Embassy in Tehran. This was the Iranians' response to the American interference in their affairs. The hostages were freed 444 days later, in January, 1981 (Trotter). In 1988, 290 people were killed in the Persian Gulf, when a US navy cruiser shot down an Iranian passenger jet, claiming they had mistook it for a hostile Iranian fighter aircraft (Wilson).

In the 1980s and early 1990s the press covered all of these events in detail, providing a steady flow of information on the conflicting relationship between the East and West. The terminology the western media was using in this period underwent an interesting change. In the 1980s, the designation of the 'Other' changed from 'Arab' to 'Muslim' (GhaneaBassiri: 307). Both are, of course, stereotypes, but they indicate a change in the profile of the 'Other'.

As far as changes go, we should also focus on the 'Others' who were living in the USA at the time. In 1991, when the film was released in the USA, Arab Americans were in the process of establishing their position in American society. As Randa A. Kayyali points out: " ...in the 1980s and 1990s, Arab Americans began to seek special community designations." (Kayyali: xvi) This meant that being classified as 'white' was no longer adequate – the Arabs were fighting for their own identity. These third-wave Arab immigrants, fleeing from war, hunger and unemployment (Kayyali: 33), were looking to the West for new opportunities. As more and more Arabs were moving to the USA, a new Arab American identity was forming, and the Arab/Muslim community was becoming more 'present' in American society. People were identifying themselves as Arab Americans or Muslim Americans and different organizations were formed to help preserve their traditions and heritage. This meant that the 'Other' was, in a way, becoming more prominent.

As Margaret Miles (72) points out, there could hardly have been a more adequate moment for releasing the story about an Iranian extremist who forces his wife and daughter to live in Iran. The media was full of anti-Iranian, anti-Arab and anti-Muslim propaganda, and the emergence of new, stronger Arab/Muslim communities was stirring things up in American cities – the 'Other' was omnipresent.

2. 0. NOT WITHOUT MY DAUGHTER

2. 1. ANALYSIS

In the midst of this turmoil, Betty Mahmoody decided to share her tragic experience with her fellow Americans and later, with the whole world. The story about life in Iran, based on the testimony of an American, who starts her first trip to her husband's homeland by asking herself what an American woman was thinking "flying into a country that had the most openly hostile attitude towards Americans of any nation in the world" (Mahmoody: 12)[3] is anything but objective. And although the audience might realize that there is much more to the Iranian society than is depicted in the story, the absence of other opinions makes the story very misleading. Furthermore, this story is written in a manner which presents all of the background information as facts rather than opinions.

Not Without My Daughter, written by the authors Betty Mahmoody and William Hoffer and the subsequent film with the same title, tell the life story of Betty Mahmoody, an American, who marries Moody (Sayyed Bozorg Mahmoody), an Ira-

[3] Although similar in meaning, the Slovene translation of the novel reads »kaj išče Američanka na letalu, namenjenem v deželo, kjer Američane na smrt sovražijo« (Hoffer: 9). The »openly hostile attitude« is therefore replaced by »where Americans are hated to death«.

nian doctor. Once Moody loses his job in the USA, he decides to take his wife and his daughter, Mahtob, back to Iran to visit his family. Soon after they arrive, however, he shocks his wife and daughter with his decision to remain in Iran permanently.

Betty is deeply upset, as she desperately wants to return to the USA, but is prevented to do so by her husband and the Islamic law. Although devastated, she is determined to escape, and after a long and treacherous journey, she manages to return home with her daughter.

In the subsequent film there are some minor differences in the plot, mainly to do with Moody's transformation, but as Margaret Miles points out they "have less to do with particulars of Betty Mahmoody's story than with the conventions of the film narrative" (Miles: 75).

The autobiography of Betty Mahmoody was widely publicized as a 'true story'. Although the story was in fact based on the author's experiences, the term itself poses a problem. How does the reader know that the story is 'true' and what exactly does that mean? Does 'true' mean the same as 'objective'? We could of course state the obvious – it is 'true' because it was told by the person who experienced it. Yet we are then faced with another question: can the person who lived through such an ordeal and is, by her own accord, a tragic heroine at the very least, really be realistic? The fact is that the story is told by one person, without any real evidentiary support or any 'witnesses'. If Betty had decided to keep the story to herself or share it only with her friends and relatives, all of these questions would be irrelevant. At the moment when she decided to share her life story with the world as a 'true' story, she predetermined as to how it would be perceived. For all the readers and/or spectators, who had never been in contact with the 'Other', the effect was definite – Moody is portrayed as a tyrant, the Iranian society as fundamentalist and the religion as extremist. These elements are not introduced as impressions, but rather as facts. And since this is a 'true' story, there can be no doubt about that.

If the general impression is stereotypical, a more detailed reading shows a whole array of negative remarks about the 'Other' (Iran) and positive remarks about 'me' (the USA). In the beginning of the book Betty states that Iran is a country, where there is 'the most openly hostile attitude towards Americans of any nation in the world' (Mahmoody: 12). This statement is not substantiated in any way, it is mentioned in passing, when describing the flight to Iran. The reader never learns how Betty might have come to this conclusion – did she hear about it on television, read about it in a newspaper or heard about it from a friend? Similar 'facts' can be found in every chapter, sometimes on subsequent pages. The stereotypes are in regard to Iranian culture, religion and even everyday life.

Considering the fact that the story is told solely from Betty's perspective (first person account), the story is even less legitimate. Her statements are presented as absolute facts, while her use of the 'me and my daughter' acts as a false attempt at objectivity. Her daughter, Mahtob, never really gets a word in, but there is an implied agreement. This is not only a means of making the story appear 'real', but rather an emotional manipulation – a small child is less likely prejudiced. The idea that Betty was intentionally misleading people is plausible, but the same would probably not be true for Mahtob. Clearly, the question is not only whether Mahtob experienced Iran in the same way, but rather why her opinions were almost completely ignored.

And if Iran – as the 'Other' – is presented in a stereotypical manner, the same can be said about the USA, which is almost deified. Somewhere in between listing the horrors of life in Iran, Betty reacts in a surprisingly determined manner when she hears comments about the USA on the Iranian television broadcast:

> Americans were dropping like flies from AIDS. The American divorce rate was staggering. If the Iraqi Air Force bombed a tanker in the Persian Gulf, it was because America told them to do it. I quickly tired of the rhetoric. It this was what they said on the English-speaking news, I wondered, what did they tell the Iranians? (Mahmoody: 38)

Betty is also startled when she hears the exclamation 'Maag barg Amrika!' – 'Death to America!' (Mahmoody: 99) in the streets and in Mahtob's school. This means that Betty realizes that Iran is presenting the USA in a negative and stereotypical manner, but does not seem to realize she is doing the same. On the contrary, she leads us to believe that Iranian people can be easily misled – "I marveled at the power their society and their religion held over them" (ibid. 14).

On numerous occasions we are provided with remarks which extol the USA. For instance, this is how Betty describes her husband's life in his new homeland:

> He found a world far different from his childhood, one that offered affluence, culture and basic human dignity that surpassed anything available in Iranian society. (ibid. 68)

We cannot be certain as to what kind of 'affluence' Betty is referring to, but she is certainly very skilled in contrasting the two countries. On the previous page she makes this reference to the Iranians who live in America:

> Iranians proved to be stubborn about assimilating western culture. Even those who lived in America for decades often remained isolated, associating mainly with other expatriate Iranians. They retained their Islamic faith and their Persian customs. I once met and Iranian woman who had lived in America for twenty years and did not know what a dish-towel was. (ibid. 67)

If Betty obviously expects the Iranians to adapt to the American culture, she is obviously unwilling to adapt to theirs. And although this passage implies that she believes they have some sort of culture, they should, in her opinion, strive to discard it as soon as possible. Rather, they are expected to assimilate to the American way of life, which is clearly superior. She implies that before his disintegration, Moody was close to achieving this goal: " 'Anesthesiology is where the money is,' he replied, giving evidence that he was, indeed, Americanized" (ibid. 69). This passage also clarifies Betty's concept of affluence. By constantly referring to the fact that Moody was well educated and a doctor, she also implies as to what attracted her to her husband in the first place.

Their first encounter is portrayed as a kind of romantic Orientalist meeting of the East and West – Moody is described as being generous and an excellent lover – Betty states she "had never experienced such a strong physical attraction" (ibid. 70). He also excels in the role of a stepfather and the entire family is enthusiastic about his – Iranian – cuisine. Betty even shows an interest in Islam, although she clearly states

that Moody disapproves of the fundamentalism that is spreading throughout Iran. The initial encounter between the East and West seems to be quite optimistic. This was probably the result of the ideal conditions – Betty was in her homeland, while Moody was 'American' enough so that his quirks seemed exotic rather than harmless. While his origin is clearly stated, so is the fact that "he truly wanted to be a Westerner" (ibid. 68).

The romance is sadly short-lived. Underneath Moody's calm and loving exterior, Betty notices some problems:

> [...] no one knew Moody's paradoxical personality as well as I. Moody was a loving husband and father, yet given to callous disregard for the needs and desires of his own family. (ibid. 12)

Betty does not provide any specific examples as to how this is manifested, but clearly their relationship is less than ideal even before they head to Iran. There, things only get worse. This is not only true in regard to the relationship between Betty and Moody, but her opinion of the East in general also changes drastically.

Since Betty comes into first-hand contact with Iran, we would expect her to discuss her impressions and experience, but not in such an obviously judgmental manner. Teheran is described as an overcrowded, filthy place, and its inhabitants as unkind, shameless people with bad hygiene.

> Everywhere we went we encountered hordes of people, scurrying about their business, grim-faced. Not a smile was to be seen. Zohreh or Majid guided the car through incredible traffic jams, compounded by pedestrians willing to gamble their shabby lives and children who darted chaotically across crowded streets. (ibid. 43)

Betty reacts similarly to Iranian customs and traditions. If she states that Iranians who live in the USA should assimilate and except western traditions, she is unwilling to start the same process in Iran, making it apparent that she considers Iranian culture to be inferior. This is how she describes a traditional Iranian feast:

> [...] the Iranians attacked the meal like a herd of untamed animals desperate for food. [...] Within seconds there was food everywhere. It was shoveled indiscriminately into chattering mouths that spilled and dribbled bits and pieces [...] The unappetizing scene was accompanied by a cacophony of Farsi. (ibid. 26)

If becoming an 'American' is a good thing, being Iranian obviously is not. The Iranian people are described with a myriad of negative comments – aiming at different cultural and religious characteristics. However, these comments are not directed solely at strangers, but also the members of Moody's – and thus also Betty's – family.

One the most extreme is surely the portrayal of Moody's sister Ameh, whom Betty refers to as the wicked woman she hates (ibid. 103):

> Her nose was so huge I could not believe it was real. It loomed beneath greenish-brown eyes glazed with tears. He mouth was filled with crooked, stained teeth. (ibid. 19)

The apparent likeness to a witch is reaffirmed with further comments about her appearance, character ("the old crone approached me directly, screaming in Farsi at the top of her lungs", ibid. 102) and even her homemaking skills ("she left a thick trail of sugar along the carpets, inviting cockroaches to breakfast", ibid. 33). Some of the other relatives get a more positive review – Zia, for instance, charms Betty with his smile and appearance, but this is used as a sort of contrast to other Iranians – he is "taller than most small-statured" Iranians and "best of all, he was clean" (ibid. 16). Similarly, she describes a visit to Moody's relatives:

> We enjoyed our visits with Reza and Essey. [...] Essey and a few of the other relatives helped alleviate a measure of the boredom and frustration. But rarely was I allowed to forget that, as an American, I was an enemy. (ibid. 47)

Even though life in Iran was undoubtedly very different, even shocking for her, she seems to take this too far. Real issues become over-dramatized and every Iranian becomes the enemy. This creates an ominous atmosphere, which somehow becomes characteristic of Iran rather than Betty herself. This is exemplified by her description of the Iranian countryside, which is "as bleak as my soul'" (ibid. 101).

In the beginning, when Betty is on the plane, she sees "a woman on the ragged edge of panic" (9) and she wonders how she had lost control. The fact that her daughter is with her, only makes things worse. The "heat that seemed to physically press down upon us" (13), the "saggy mattresses, musty blankets, and prickly pillows" (29) and the general boredom and desperation caused "an assortment of physical ills" (77), which plagued Betty and Mahtob. Before she finally realizes that she will have to find a way to escape herself, Betty states:

> Days passed – countless miserable, hot, sickly, tedious, frightening days. I slipped further and further into melancholy. It was as if I were dying. [...] Why didn't somebody help me? (81)

The fact is that until her mother's call wakes her up, Betty seems almost complacent. Even though she regularly complains about Moody's sudden change, she still believes that his 'American persona' will eventually prevail and he will return to being 'himself'.

> How long must we endure? I could not bring myself to think in terms of years. Moody would not – could not – do this to us. He would view the filth around him, and it would sicken him. He would realize that his professional future was in America, not in a backward nation that had yet to learn the lessons of basic hygiene and social justice. He would change his mind. (74)

Of all the stereotypical elements, Moody has to be the most dramatic one. His transformation from a handsome Oriental into a demonic Iranian is one of the most controversial issues in this representation of the 'Other'.

First of all, Betty's descriptions of her husband are dubious from the start. On the one hand, she seems surprised at his behaviour in Iran, which is ironic, since she had obviously doubted him before they even left the USA.

> Try as I might, I could not bury the dark fear that had haunted me ever since Moody's nephew Mammal Ghodsi had proposed this trip. [...] But I was obsessed with a notion that my friends assured me was irrational – that once Moody brought Mahtob and me to Iran, he would try to keep us there forever. (12)

The fact that their friends have to defend Moody's intentions clearly suggests that his 'change' was not as sudden as implied. Even though he works in the USA and considers it as his home, Betty senses a conflict within him:

> His mind was a blend of brilliance and dark confusion. Culturally he was a mixture of East and West; even he did not know which was the dominant influence in his life. (12)

The 'dark confusion' seems to indicate his Eastern, pre-USA identity. While his Western identity seems to be closely linked to his profession and success, the other part of his persona appears to be more emotional. When he returns home, his reunion with family members and friends triggers the 'dark' in him and he no longer seems interested in returning to the USA and re-establishing his medical career.

> 'It doesn't matter,' I said. 'You can get another job, and I will go back to work.' Moody was inconsolable. His eyes grew dim and void, like those of so many other Iranians. (55)

By turning into an 'Iranian', Moody is also refusing his American identity. This would appear to be one of his greatest faults.

> Time seemed to mean nothing to the average Iranian, and Moody re-adopted this attitude easily. [...] Once he attended an anti-American demonstration and he came back babbling gibberish against the United States. (81)

This seems to be the turning point – once Betty realizes that Moody is satisfied with his life in Iran and he does not intend to 'reform' by rejecting his culture, she begins to plot her escape. If her first sacrifice was for her husband, when she 'tried' to accept his past, the second is for her daughter, as she saves her from a surely horrible life in Iran. Their flight is described in epic proportion and the following events are both dramatic and emotional. Since the entire story is told from Betty's perspective, we never learn what Mahtob really wanted. By letting the reader believe that Mahtob's wishes were the same as her own, Betty gives false credit to her story.

Mahtob is described as innocent and helpless – "sunshine" (13), "tiny and troubled" (62), "an innocent four-year-old caught among the cruel realities" (62). Everything that happens to Mahtob seems to end in disaster, and her father is usually to blame. There is an intense relationship between Mahtob and her mother, and while some tender moments between father and daughter are mentioned at the beginning, they stop quite abruptly upon arriving in Iran. Moody seems to be lost somewhere between being excessively caring towards his daughter and not being caring enough. Therefore it is up to Betty to provide a safe haven for Mahtob.

Betty constantly blames herself for her daughter's misfortune:

> All night long I berated myself. How could I bring her here? But I knew the answer. How could I *not?* Strange as it seemed, the only way I knew to keep Mahtob out of Iran permanently was to bring her here temporarily. Now even that desperate course of action had failed. (62)

This tells us two things – Betty obviously knew, at least to some extent, that Moody was not happy in the USA and that he wanted to return home. On the other hand, she seemed to have decided in advance that her daughter could not lead a happy life in Iran. Betty obviously had negative perceptions before she even left the USA – but what about Mahtob? As far as she was concerned, she was travelling to Iran with her loving parents to meet their family. Was Iran a cultural shock for such a small child? It might have been, but we never learn what Mahtob really felt and whether she was really as eager to leave as her mother. The fact is that by leaving Iran, she left behind her father and her family, and that she never saw them again, despite her father's attempts to be reunited with his daughter.

Mahtob is assigned the role of a victim because she had to go to Iran – but one could as easily argue that she was a victim because she had to leave. Although Mahtob is one of the main characters, she is actually not allowed to be the protagonist, because Betty takes the role so vehemently. Betty uses their child as a reason and as an excuse. Whatever she does right, she does because of her daughter and whatever she does wrong she does on her daughter's behalf.

Betty seems to be determined and confused at the same time – she plays the role of the heroine as well as that of the victim. She describes these feelings on subsequent pages:

> I detested and feared the man who slept on the other side of the bed. [...] All I ever wanted was happiness and harmony for my family. But that night, as my mind replayed a thousand memories, it seemed that what few sparks of joy we had experienced were constantly tinged with pain. (62)

> I felt good about myself and reveled in my newfound ability to handle my life independently. Everything pointed toward progress, toward the vague but real ambition I had set for myself as a teenager. (63)

Betty is therefore a very conflicting character – if she seems eager to fight in one moment, she gives up easily in the next. This is true both of her marriage and her reaction to the situation she finds herself in. These are characteristics in which many readers might recognize themselves and what is more, they provide Betty with a unique position of being both pitied and admired. The fact that Betty is represented as a victim is not a problem in itself – what is dangerous is that she exposes herself as just one of the victims. On several occasions, we are led to believe that American women living in Iran, as well as Iranian women, suffer in the same way, but are unable to express their feelings due to the male-oriented society. One can therefore only sense a "deep empathy" (151). This turns the focus from Betty's story to create the stereotype of women entrapped in a prison-like society.

If *Not Without My Daughter* were purely fictional, we might regard some of these stereotypes as merely remarks. The fact that it is a 'true' story probably makes

them more plausible. At the end of the story we find ourselves faced with a lot of conclusions: Iran is bad, the USA good; the USA is an example of a successful and tolerant society, while Iranian society is conservative and cruel; Americans strive for success and personal growth, Iranians are lazy and fanatically religious; Betty is the hero, Moody the villain.

On the other hand there are also a lot of unanswered questions. On the personal level – why would a father bother to fight for a daughter he does not care about, or wish to stay in such an oppressive environment? We are also left to wonder about the women in Iran and their thoughts on how they are presented in the story. Since there are no testimonies apart from Betty's, we are left to draw our own conclusions.

2. 2. CRITICAL RESPONSE

Neither the book nor the film seemed to excite the critics, since there were relatively few reviews. Many of the critics agreed that the representation of the 'Other' was negative and stereotypical.

Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun-Times (Ebert, *Not Without My Daughter*) points out the emotional component – while the film tries to evoke sympathy for Betty and Mahtob, it on the other hand includes troubling moral and racial stereotypes.

This is not to say that an emotional reaction is not expected, but rather that this is an easy way to manipulate the audience. Since Betty and Mahtob are presented as the victims, they are the ones with whom the audience sympathizes. While Moody undoubtedly also suffered throughout the ordeal, especially when his wife and daughter disappeared, the way he is presented prevents the audience from assigning him the role of the victim.

Ebert also stresses the importance of the historical moment – the film assigns various negative characteristics to groups of people who found themselves in the role of the 'enemy' of the United States. As Margaret Miles points out, the film was shot in a period when several crises in Iran stirred up interest in Iranian culture. Interestingly, the week when the film achieved its biggest success was the week when the Persian Gulf War began. This might be merely a coincidence, but the impact of the historical moment must not be ignored.

Vincent Canby of The New York Times (Canby, *Not Without My Daughter*) states the film "goes grossly comic when it means to be the most solemn" and describes it as "the first major clinker of the year". He also points out that even though the intention of the film was not to create prejudice about Muslims, this is what it achieved. All in all, such a complex issue should not be treated in a superficial manner.

Although it might seem impossible that a single 'true' story could make its audience believe that the Iranian nation as a whole is extremist, this is what can happen, at least in the absence of other presentations. Betty became the hostage of an Iranian brute and their daughter the victim of the conflict between the East and West. What is important is that, like her mother, Mahtob seemed to instinctively know which side to choose.

Caryn James from the New York Times (James, *Embrace the Stereotype; Kiss the Movie Goodbye*) proclaims the film to be "an artistic failure", which makes good use of the stereotype of the demonic Iranian as well as other cultural stereotypes. One of

the turning points in Moody's attitude is when he swears on the Quran – this is when he supposedly decides to abide to all Islamic traditions. This raises the interesting question of which identity causes a greater problem – ethnical or religious.

With regard to the religious stereotypes there were also some comments from the catholic side. They mostly emphasize the fact that the two female heroines were not only American, but also Christian.

The story is not all about what the 'wrong side' loses, but also about what the 'right side' gains. One of the winners is surely Christianity – although the heroine is almost too pathetic, she receives the audience's sympathy. Throughout the whole film her religion is shown as a minor but vital part of her existence – when things go wrong, Betty and her daughter comfort themselves with silent prayer. This is contrasted with the loud and violent fanatics who passionately impose Muslim beliefs onto others. When Betty and Mahtob arrive in Iran, they are immediately confronted with the fact that they must follow local traditions. Muslim women are portrayed as determined and almost violent, since they try to convince Betty to become a proper Muslim. All of this forcefulness can only be fought of by their secret and silent belief in the Lord, who helps them to understand and be patient. Although Christianity is not mentioned as the only religion, we could hardly say that the Muslim faith is portrayed as anything but fanatical.

Brett Willis (Willis, *Not Without My Daughter*) states that the film is in fact "somewhat anti-Muslim" but that Betty's story should be told as there are other women who might themselves in a similar situation.

The few other reviews mostly reiterated what has been stated above. The fact is that critics might not have shown much interest in the story, but it was still a 'hit' as compared to the 2002 Finnish documentary *Without My Daughter*. The documentary aimed to tell the story from Moody's perspective. Even though it did receive some positive reviews, since it aims to establish an intercultural dialogue, it reached a far smaller audience than the original story.

There are several reasons why this happened – first of all, *Not Without My Daughter* (both the book and the film) was released earlier, giving it a temporal advantage. Secondly, although the reviews were hardly positive, the book was translated into a number of languages – including Slovene. Thirdly, the film was quite successful as far as it reach is concerned – it was not only shown in cinemas, but is still occasionally televised. This means that although it did not succeed financially, it is available to a relatively large audience. We should not neglect to mention the historical moment – *Not Without My Daughter* was released at a very opportune time. Since the documentary was made much later, it also perhaps missed the right moment to state a counter-argument. Its audience was limited to those who frequented several film festivals (in Finland, Sweden, etc.) and the small number of people who learned about it and gained access to it over the internet or in some other manner. The documentary was released in 2002, after 9/11, in a period which was all about discussing the 'Other', but was not exactly tolerant towards Muslims and Arabs.

3. 0. CONCLUSION

My intention in analyzing *Not Without My Daughter* is not to judge whether Betty is a reliable witness or not, or if the events in the story really took place in the manner they were described. Nor do I want to deny the fact that Betty and Mahtob were indeed denied their freedom. The problem lies in the fact that any such story which is either unintentionally or intentionally full of stereotypes affects our understanding of the other. The portrayal of the 'demonic Iranian' in this story affected the beliefs of at least some of the hundreds of thousands who read the book or watched the film. Even thought Betty intended to tell the story as a warning to other women, who might find themselves in a similar situation, she achieved much more than that.

The story became a modern Orientalist text – the West's understanding of the East. Instead of exposing problems which need to be discussed – for instance the woman's role in contemporary Islamic society, it merely generalizes these issues. This trivializes many of the ethnical, religious and cultural issues that need to be questioned and talked about.

The fact that the book and the film were released at a moment in time when Iran was all over the news due to the turmoil of war and the conflicts in the East increased the importance of Betty's story. Images of American hostages being released after being held captive by Iranians at the U. S. Embassy for over 444 days, followed by the plight of innocent Mahtob from her cruel father can hardly leave one unaffected. The story not only condemned the 'Other' but also deified the USA, presenting it as a kind of global moral authority. Such presentations of the 'Other' can have a profound effect. The fact is that Betty's story ended with her and her daughter returning to the USA to resume their 'normal' lives. Moody – Sayyed Bozorg Mahmoody was left to spend his life trying to come into contact with his daughter. The Finnish documentary *Without My Daughter* from 2002 tried to tell the other side of the story – without much success. The attempt to establish a new dialogue between the East and West was unsuccessful. All progress aside, the story of the East mostly continues to be told by the West.

Ljubljana

WORKS CITED

Canby, Vincent. *Not Without My Daughter (1990).* The New York Times, January 11, 1991. Web, March 25th, 2013. Retrieved from: http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/35712/Not-Without-My-Daughter/overview.

Ebert, Roger. *Not Without My Daughter*. Chicago Sun-Times, January 11, 1991. Web. March 20th, 2013. Retrieved from: http://rogerebert.suntimes.com.

James, Caryn. *Embrace the Stereotype; Kiss the Movie Goodbye.* The New York Times, January 27, 1991. Web, March 25th, 2013. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/1991/01/27/movies.

GhaneaBassiri, Kambiz. *Islam in America*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Hourani, Albert. *A History of the Arab Peoples*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010.
Kayyali, Randa A. *The Arab Americans*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2006.
Mahmoody, Betty. *Not Without My Daughter*. London: Transworld Publishers LTD, 2004.
Mahmoody, Betty and Hoffer, William. *Ne dam svojega otroka*. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2006. Translation into Slovenian.
Miles, Margaret R. *Seeing and Believing: Religion and Values in the Movies*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996.
Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books, 1995.
Tohidi, Nayereh. *Stop Stereotyping Arabs and Iranians*. Los Angeles Times, January 21, 1991. Web, 1st April 2013. Retrieved from: http://articles.latimes.com/1991-01-21/entertainment/ca-583_1_iranian-women.
Trotter, Bill. *Mainer recalls time as hostage in Iran 30 years* ago. Bangor Daily News, 5th November 2009. Web, 3rd May 2013. Retrieved from: http://bangordailynews.com/2009/11/05/news/mainer-recalls-time-as-hostage-in-iran-30-years-ago.
Willis, Brett. *Not Without My Daughter*. Christian Answers. Web, March 20th, 2013. Retrieved from: http://www.christiananswers.net/spotlight/movies/2000/not-withoutmydaughter.html.
Wilson, George. C. *Navy Missile Downs Iranian Jetliner*. Washington Post, 4th July, 1988. Web, 3rd May 2013. Retrieved from: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/flight801/stories/july88crash.htm.

UDK 821.111–31.09Bridge A.:94(560)«1900/1922«

FACT AND FICTION: SUBVERTING ORIENTALISM IN ANN BRIDGE'S *THE DARK MOMENT*

Isil Bas

Abstract

While postcolonial criticism has extensively traced the Western women writers's accounts of the Orient, Ann Bridge's contribution to the genre remained unheard-of. In The Dark Moment she tells the story of the foundation of the Turkish republic after the struggle against Western imperialism, a theme highly controversial for a British diplomat's wife. Moreover, she plays with the conventions and representational strategies of traditional Orientalist narratives inverting each in turn to create an unprejudiced awareness of the historical context and the social and cultural specificities of Turkey and the Turk thereby foregrounding dialogical transculturality over intercultural penetration.

Key words: orientalism, Turkey, British literature, transculturalism

The image of the seductive Oriental in Ingres's *Odalisque a l'esclave* (1842) best examplifies what Edward Said theorized in his canonical book *Orientalism* (1978). The reclining nude with her eyes half shut with ecstasy, the slave playing music with the instrument half hiding her naked breasts, the eunich at the background gazing away from his mistress symbolising his ineffectual, powerless, and unmasculine position bordering on absence under the gaze of an organizing painter- spectator are synonymous with a feminised Orient, which, according to Said, represents the West's deepest and most persistent image of its ultimate Other. Within this conceptual frame work, Said went on to explore the imbalance of power between Western imperial dominance and Oriental submission, giving pertinent examples from the texts of some prominent Western writers from Aeschylus to Flaubert, Renan, Marx and von Grunbaum. While his approach reveals both the possibilities and limitations of Orientalist narratives implicated in the knowledge-power paradigm, nevertheless, according to other postcolonial critics his work is directed mainly toward the discourses of Anglo-French-American males about Arabs and Islam and he defines Orientalism as a monolithic discourse by not taking into account gender, class and racial diversities as well as the historical agency of the colonized.

As feminist critics like Reina Lewis, Melda Yegenoglu and Sara Mills have observed, women travellers played an important role in the vast tradition of the Western "constructions" of the Orient required for the self-definion and justification of the imperialist venture. Western literature, especially in the 19th and early 20th centuries, is no short of women writers who mostly in pursuit of their passions for sociology, archeology, missionary activities or simply for the spirit of adventurousness and exploration wrote extensively about their travels to the East. In fact the so-called "Orient" had always been a favourite destination and inspiration for Western women who, once away from the bonds of domesticity and routine in their respective societies, were free to explore new and exciting forms of existence. They were able to transcend not just geographical and cultural boundaries but those of the private and public spheres by simultaneously providing commentaries on local cultures including dress codes and domestic arrangements and reflecting upon the crucial political events as well as social and cultural changes in the regions they had turned their gaze upon.

Amongst many other writers Mary Kingsley, Isabella Bishop-Bird, Alexandra David-Neel, Amelia Edwards, Gertrude Bell, Lilias Trotter, Freya Stark and Lady Mary Wortley Montague produced records of their journeys in which they frequently portrayed cloistered women in their private space inaccessible to the Western man' gaze thereby revealing hitherto unknown truths to their Western readers. Bird cites a French women writer's opening lines as emblematic of nearly all Orientalist travelogues. At the very beginning of *Les Mystères du sérail et des harems turcs* (1863) Olympe Audouard writes that: ''Maintenant, chers lecteurs, si vous tenez absolument a savoir comment il se fait que moi, Française, je connaisse si bien les mystères du serail et des harems, ae que je vous parle si longoument des moeurs et usages des Orientaux, je vous l'expliquerai'' [Now, dear readers, if you absolutely insist on knowing how it is that, I, a Frenchwoman, know so much of the mysteries of the seraglio and the harems, and that I can speak to you at such length of the morals and customs of the Orientals, I shall explain to you] (Bird 2). In this way Western women were not only able to penetrate into the mysteries of Eastern women by becoming their "intimate confidante" but to carry "a little of the Oriental… a dangerous element of alterity, of other cultures and other constructions of gender identity, into the heart of the Empire." (ibid) Yet critics have long recognized that at the heart of their work the imperial gaze was still privileged and the voice of the colonized 'other' remained silent. Hence Western women travel writers's dual roles of accessing into the Orient's private realm and "producing Orientalist knowledge over the East" (ibid 3) enabled them simultaneously to occupy feminine and masculine positions.

Ann Bridge is in many ways different from earlier women travel writers. First of all her exporation of foreign cultures is not restricted to the Orient. By the time she wrote *The Dark Moment* (1952) she was already an established novelist combining her first hand experience in countries like China, Hungary, Italy, and Albania as the wife of Sir Owen O'Malley, a diplomat in British Foreign Service with fictional elements. Each of these countries with widely differing social and political positions enabled her to adopt a diversity of positions as botanist, historian, travel writer, biographer, journalist, commentator and novelist. It was perhaps this diversity and her fluid transitions between historical facts and masterful fiction that had made her one of the most popular writers in mid twentieth century Britain and the United States.

In her memoir aptly titled *Facts and Fictions* (1968) she describes her mission as "an endeavour to describe the interplay, in an author's mind, between actual, lived experience and the situations and events in that author's novels; and how the real impressions and experiences had to be adapted to meet the demands of the fictional characters in the books" (ix).

She was born Mary Dolling Sanders to James Haris Sanders and Marie Louis Day in Hertfordshire, England as the seventh child of a seventh child in 1889. Her mother was from New Orleans, Louisiana, the daughter of a slave-owner while her father came from a family of presbyterians in Devon. She was raised in both cultures with a keen interest in observing and recording the intricacies of each. In her biography of her mother, titled *Portrait of My Mother* (1955), she gives the clues of what later in her life will mark her as a "transcultural" rather than a "token" travel writer:

> ...a daughter, slowly and almost unconsciously picking up the threads that give a clue to her mother's life, usually shares with the mother, in some measure at least, a common background, social and national; and even more important, the visual and physical background of one country… But for me, when I began to take an interest in my Mother's past, it was not so. Her far-away chilhood lay in another continent; three thousand miles of the Atlantic rolled between her remote background and my own vividly present one. For her the Mississipi, for me the Thames; for her long summers the shores of New England, for mine the Dorset coast; my rows of wheatsheaves along the whitened stubbles at harvest-time had to be translated into her Louisiana cotton-fields, with the singing darkies picking steadily among them, and the dear familiars of my chilhood, the cheerful maid-servants indoors, the gardeners and grooms without, into the devoted slaves who brought her up, with their black loving faces, gaudy bandannas, and haunting songs… It has somehow so become part of my own life…(11-13)

Ann Bridge's first novel, *The Peking Picnic* (1932) was originally commissioned by Chatto & Windus publishers to whom she had suggested the idea of translating some Chinese short stories into English after having published "lively, first hand accounts" of China, their first official diplomatic post with her husband (*FF* 35). Instead, Harold Raymond, her publisher, asked her to write a novel about China which marks the beginning of her successful career as a novelist and the beginning of her use of pseudoynm Ann Bridge for political reasons:

> I must use a pseudonym, and no one was to know my real name; I must promise that. There had for a century or more been a tradition in the Service that if a diplomat's wife put pen to paper she would either ruin her husband's career, or provoke an international incident, or both.
>
> Back at the Bridge End we discussed the question of pseudoynms; Jock Balfour was down again that Sunday, and suggested taking Ann from "Mary Ann" and Bridge from "Bridge End"-and so this new entity was hatched. (41)

As Ann Bridge she wrote 16 novels based on her experience as the wife of a diplomat in various parts of the world. "In each of my novels the main character is a region or a country" she states in the foreword of *Facts and Fictions*. Yet, in all these novels she also portrays strong female characters like the amateur detective, Julia Probyn, the heroine of Bridge's popular spy thriller series, Lady Kilmichael in *Illyrian Spring* (1935), Raquel in *Frontier Passage* (1942), Susan Glanfield and Gloire Thurston, the two characters based on herself in *Singing Waters* (1945) and the Marchesa di Vill' Alta, the matriarch of *Enchanter's Nightshade* (1937). *The Dark Moment* is the only novel which is set in the Orient and tells the story of the foundation of the Turkish republic after the struggle against Western imperialism, a theme highly controversial for a British diplomat's wife. Moreover, unlike her predecessors, she adopts a stance against the unifying conception of the "Oriental woman" by depicting a series of nonwestern women characters who emerge from the limitations both by way of their innate strength, courage, curiosity and ability to adapt to the changes around them. Moreover, her foregrounding the experiences of these women characters and placing the British Expatriot, who in all her other novels has always had a central role, at a secondary position as the best friend of the main protagonist firmly places Ann Bridge much ahead of her time, almost as a proto-second wave feminist acknowledging sisterhood and solidarity despite differences among women.

The Dark Moment is also Bridge's only work in which both the characters and the events are not based on her first-hand experience. It was during the time she and her husband were stationed in Hungary that she first met the Turkish Minister to Budapest, Rusen Esref Aydın and his wife Saliha who were among the "earliest and closest adherents" of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the legendary leader of the revolution (133). When she went to Turkey in 1940 to raise money and order supplies for the British prisoners of war, an event that would later inspire Rosina Eynsham's journey in *A Place to Stand* (1953), she was invited to their villa on the island of Prinkipo in Istanbul. For the entire six weeks she spent there, she was able to get first-hand account of the events that took place at the end of the Ottoman Empire, during the War of Independence and the early years of the Republic:

> …most of the Turkish Ministers and officials were spending the summer there too,.. those men who had shared Ataturk's trials and struggles and triumphs…the subject uppermost in all their minds at that time was Mustafa Kemal, whose loss was still mostly felt, his memory fresh and warm in their hearts-Kemal and Turkey; what he had aimed at doing for Turkey, how he had set about it, what obstacles had stood in his way, what frustrations had not exasperated him. (*FF* 133-134)

Moreover the wives of these prominent men provided her with the details of their own experiences as they followed their husbands up to share in the primitive surroundings of Ankara:

> Now these women-most of them were little more than girls when they went up to Ankara-had been brought up in a fantastic degree of dependence and helplessness: attendants gave them their baths in the *hammam*, or

> bath-house; *dadis*, and later their maids, dressed them and did their hair; they never went outside their Gates without a female escort unless, again, accompanied by a pair of stockings in their lives… Hard going indeed, but somehow they managed; they described their struggles, in retrospect, with a certain humourous relish- what was clear was that much the worst part, what they had really minded, was appearing in public without the *pece and sans tulle*- without some form of veiling on their hair. (137)

As these accounts reveal Ann Bridge was highly affected by this great story of total transformation both on public and private levels. *The Dark Moment*, is, indeed, the epic-scale story of a people's quest from an imperial monarchy to a modern nation as represented in the journey of Feride, the heroine of the novel, from a protected childhood as the much-cherished daughter of a traditional aristocratic Ottoman family living at a spectacular mansion in Istanbul, the capital of the empire to active participation in the struggle of Independence as she learns how to endure pain, suffering and hardships together with her husband in Ankara, the capital of the new republic where she also becomes a vocal proponent of women's rights. In this way Bridge is able to narrate the key moments of change in various political, social and cultural discourses in Turkish history which thwarts one of the most important Orientalist paradigms, that of a static Orient and Oriental frozen in time and constitution.

Mohja Kahf in *Western Representations of the Muslim Woman: From Termagant to Odalisque* (1999), writes that in pre-colonial Western literary works the Muslim women had been depicted as "multivalent" but from the 18th century onwards they were transformed into a single typology, as passive victims with unlimited sexuality. In fact this is very much in line with what Edward Said wrote about an Egyptian courtesan, Kuchuk Hanem who was solely defined by her sexuality, stupidity and passivity in Flaubert's accounts of the East. He observed that "she never spoke of herself, she never represented her emotions, presence or history. He represented her" (6). While this is equally applicable to the writings of the majority of European women who traveled throughout the Orient *The Dark Moment* depicts women not as submissive and subjugated but as active and disruptive females. Moreover they are diverse and multifaceted, neither wholly Eastern nor Western.

The novel opens with Feride and her best friend Fanny playing hide-an- seek concealing themselves in the vast garden of the yalı overlooking the Bosphorus. The Ottoman and English girls's taking turns in hiding and finding each other is symbolic of Ann Bridge's emphasis on intersubjectivity and dialogue between the East and the West throughout the novel. Fanny lives with her uncle Dr. Pierce, an Orientalist who spends most of his time in Istanbul, the seat of the sultanate collecting folkloric art works and doing research throughout the empire. Both Fanny and Dr. Pierce are regulars at Fanny's father's Grand yalı as Pasha, himself, is a connoisseur of art as well as a much respected political figure. Pierce and Pacha's common interests and friendship underline the harmony rather than the hierarchies between their differences. As they walk "up and down beside the balustraded sea-wall, deep in conversation… Dr. Pierce's panama and the red fez both [catch] the light as they [cross] the patch of sunlight between the two" (13). Similarly Fanny and Feride often share rooms, clothes and secrets which once again subverts

the self/other and subject/object dichotomies in Orientalist writings. Moreover Fanny's frequent presence in the harem of the yalı positions her as part of it, as a Westerner she is not penetrating into the East unveiling its secrets but one in interaction with it. Hence both Feride and Fanny are "gazers" and "gazed at" occupying the same space.

The yalı itself is a combination of Western and Oriental art and architecture almost as cosmopolitan and hybrid as Istanbul itself. It is described as "[l]ight, fragile, somehow uncertain in its general effect… along the shores of Bosphorus-where for centuries East and West have, whatever Kipling may have said, met"(10). All the members of Pacha's household speak perfect French and Feride is raised by two women, Mademoiselle Marthe, a French governess and her deceased mother's maid, Dil Feride denoting the harmonious connection between the West and the East in Feride's education. Similarly Fanny speaks perfect Turkish, can write in the Ottoman script and can even translate documents to help her uncle.

As opposed to Western prejudices about the place of women in Ottoman families the person everyone in the yali respects the most is the matriarch, Refiye Hanım. She is Feride's maternal grandmother and after the death of her mother she was the one shaping her values and beliefs with her inner wisdom. While a confidant of her son she can oppose his wishes and carry out her own decisions. Feride shows that she has taken after Refiye Hanım when she openly challenges her father's orders and beliefs throughout the novel.

Perhaps it can be argued that during the time she was writing the Ottoman and Britain Empires had already been a thing of the past therefore it was inevitable that Ann Bridge represents a break from the classic Orientalist paradigms. With the Turk no longer to be feared and the West no longer "the sole arbitor of and owner of meanings about the Orient" (Lewis 2) she was able to approach the Turkish experience beyond classificatory terms.

Symmetrical relations of power between the East and the West, the past and the present, the masculine and the feminine worlds are much nuanced in Bridge's novel. Yet of course one should not forget the fact that she did not have the opportunity to experience the events first-hand and that her source was a Turkish woman with strong connections with all of the above. That may be the reason why writing and identity are not linked in her novel as is the case in the work of other women writers like Colette whose first-hand experiences of the First World War (Bird 48) had been a means for self-fashioning, a process of becoming by way of contact with one's others.

Throughout the novel Ann Bridge uses multiple perspectives although the narrator remains a westerner by occasionally providing comparisons between her own world and that of the Ottoman. For example as readers we are always aware that it is an English woman, in fact Bridge herself, who is describing "[the] scent of thyme-from bushy plants far larger than the creeping thyme of England"(4) and "that familiar English evergreen; Rhododendron ponticum, growing wild on its native heath" (128).

Nevertheless, as stated before, the novel revolves around Feride, the young Turkish woman from whose perspective we evaluate the events that lead to grand transformations both on personal and public levels. In fact, Ann Bridge writes that Feride is very much based on Saliha Unaydın who provided Bridge both with the details of her own experience and help in the creative process:

> I told Saliha that before I went to Turkey I must have the plot of the book worked out thoroughly, so that I should know what to look for in the way of *mise-en-scene*; and together, in that hospital room…we arranged the whole thing, I propped up in bed making copious notes, she sitting beside me, frowning with concentration, while we planned the dramatis personae, the unfolding of the plot, and above all the names of all the characters. This was something I could never have done alone, with any real vraisemblance; the book is really as much Saliha's as mine. (*FF* 150)

This way Ann Bridge challenges the agency of Western writer and abolishes the traditional distinction between the active observer and passive object. Moreover by interspersing into Saliha/Feride's account detailed descriptions of historical events based on Winston Churchill's "The Aftermath" that chronicles the period 1914 to 1923 she gives equal footing to oral history, women's narration and the perspective of the "other" alongside official history.

"I intended to call the book The Falcon in Flight" she writes in *Facts and Fictions* (151). While the book was later on published with the title, The *Dark Moment*, its basic framework is very much in line with a popular Turkish folk-song, ''I Launched my Falcon in Flight" which Bridge quotes as Ahmet, Feride's brother sings it just before he joins the revolutionary society of Mustafa Kemal fighting against both the sultanate and the occupying forces: "I launched my falcon in flight/From the one fortress to the other fortress-/But waking alone in the night/I found the darkness full of tears" (26).

Obviously the falcon has symbolic meanings on many levels. It is, simultaneously, Ahmet and Orhan, Feride's brother and husband who leave the Yalı to fight alongside Mustafa Kemal, Turkish transformation from the old regime to the new, Mustafa Kemal himself who started as a young general in the Ottoman army and ended as the founder of the Republic and Father of Turks (Ataturk), Istanbul caught between Europe and Asia, two different worlds and cultures and Feride herself, "flying" away from Istanbul to Ankara to accompany her husband. Indeed, her journey from Istanbul to Ankara, which covers 3 chapters of the book is both her journey to married life in the new capital without the luxuries she has previously been accustomed to and to a new future charged with ideologies of modernism and liberation.

As she moves further and further away from Istanbul into the poor, dusty and vast plains of Anatolia under many hardships she encounters situations that are emblematic of a new understanding of womanhood. First of all she travels with Nilufer, her sister-in–law, without the accompaniment of a man which symbolizes a significant breach of tradition. On the way she comes across Anatolian women who are not trapped in the private spheres of their homes and traditions but have the initiative, courage and both physical and mental power to fight alongside men against the occupying armies. Feride is fascinated by their casualness about the veil, a tradition which, in Istanbul, is an unquestionable symbol of a woman's modesty and integrity and by their perseverence and endurance:

> Most astonishing of all, more than three-quartes of the carriers were women, some in the pink-skirted local dress, others in brightly-flowered cherry-colored trousers; quite a number were carrying a baby in their arms as well

> as a shell bound on their backs, others were accompanied by two or three small children, who pattered beside them in the greasy mud…
>
> 'This is wonderful!' Feride said to Nilüfer. 'What endurance! They are the caryadides of our time!' she exclaimed, again leaning out to study the faces of the plodding women, some of which were indeed contorted with the strain. (128-129)

By way of this journey Feride, herself, becomes almost a travel writer, she observes and records in her mind all she encounters with the agency of a gazer. This is also a road Ann Bridge had once taken to follow the steps of Saliha before her. Hence Feride's journey becomes yet another element in the novel that collapses the distinctions between fact and fiction, self and other.

With Feride's arrival at Ankara Ann Bridge recounts how the world appeared to the women at the time of major political and cultural transformations at the end of the late Ottoman period and early Republic. After a series of victories over the occupying armies, the Ottoman Empire and the institutions under its control were abolished to construct a secular nation-state with a modern identity. The new Turkish Republic was established with the meeting of the Turkish Grand National Assembly on April 23, 1920. Together with the symbols of Islamic tradition the old Ottoman capital of Istanbul was also renounced. Mustafa Kemal and his revolutionist team chose Ankara, already the centre of the war of independence, as the new capital that would convey the spirit of the young nation.

Ankara also became the symbolic locus for the republican ideologies that promoted nationalism, modernisation, secularism and westernization as the final break from the Ottoman past which the republicans blamed for backwardness and corruption. It was also in Ankara that new gender roles were negotiated and created. The republicans backed by the ideas of Ziya Gokalp, late Ottoman sociologist, poet and political activist, gave women a central role in the creation of its utopian "New Nation" both as educators and transmitters of civilization. Based on Gokalp's belief that in ancient Turkish tribal and Shamanistic societies women were honoured and treated equally as men Mustafa Kemal Ataturk started a major transition in the politics of gender, sexuality and public space.

Ann Bridge glorifies Ataturk's project through both Feride and Fanny who after many years comes to visit her in Ankara. As her husband is Ataturk's right hand Feride is often in company of the nation's leader. In implementing a modern state Ataturk believed that a system modeled after the West should penetrate every aspect of social life. He was personally involved in demonstrating the disciplines and techniques that would create the modern Turkish identity. Bridge gives an account of his reforms by way of Feride's presence in all crucial events thereby demonstrating how these major shifts directly affected women's lives and their efforts in leaving the past behind and embracing, although reluctantly at first, their changing roles and lifestyles. Danielle J. Van Dobben writes that " the image of Ataturk dancing with his adapted daughter at her wedding" (86) symbolizes a major shift in social norms. Men and women in close bodily contact waltzing to Western music dressed in the latest European fashions was not easy to accept for the moslem Turks. Yet Ataturk, determined to cut all ties with

an Islamic world view insisted on these visual manifestations of change and asked the new republic's bureaucrats and their wives to socialize in ballrooms. In the novel he asks Feride to come to a ball "*en grande toilette*, if possible with a *décolletage* and even without a scrap of tulle on her head" (261):

> Feride, with a reluctance which she did not allow to appear, agreed-she could hardly do anything else. But when he had gone- 'This is going to be exceedingly disagreeable!' she exclaimed to Fanny. 'With the diplomats it is all well. They know how to behave. But there will be many among our own people who will disapprove furiously, and will make themselves unpleasant, you will see.'(261)

Feride, clearly, is not an "alafranga", the stock character who represents totally westernized, dangerous, tempting loose women in the Turkish novels from the Tanzimat period to early Republican era. In fact Westernization and modernization projects are not specific to the republican period. Following the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire after a series of military defeats and economic losses sultans starting with Selim III had implemented reforms based on Western models. These reforms were not accepted by all sections of the Ottoman society and were viewed as attacks on the traditional family system. As Deniz Kandiyoti argues the Ottoman/Turkish novel increasingly displayed " ultimate degradation … reached when Westernism, in the guise of foolish and feckless young men and 'fashionable' loose woomen, enters the home, corroding the moral fabric of the family and by extension of society as a whole" (38). "Alafranga" women in the work of such major writers as Ahmed Mithat Efendi, Namık Kemal, Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, Peyami Safa are all Western/emancipated characters marked by licentiousness and corruption. Feride, on the other hand, represents the female patriot who simultaneously preserves the honour of the nation and of herself although she has adapted herself to civilization. This, again is very much in line with Gokalp's understanding of women as emancipated but respectful and chaste, a theme running through the works of such nationalist writers as Namık Kemal and Halide Edip.

To underline this specific characteristic of Republican woman image, Bridge emphasizes the difference between Feride and Fanny. While Feride has become a modern woman she is not totally Westernized, therefore, acts differently from Fanny. Having met "the brilliant soldier, the harsh politician, the ruthless creator of a state out of the ruins of an old one" Fanny immediately falls in love with Ataturk despite the fact that she is engaged (256). Totally charmed by this great man she risks becoming *affichée* with him forgetting the fact that his priority is his nation. Fanny's attraction to the charismatic leader is almost reminiscent of popular Orientalist desert novels in which the Western woman falls desperately in love with the dangerous Oriental.

As Ann Bridge recounts the feelings of Feride towards her friend's behaviour she hints a disapproval of the image of ''New Woman'', a significant cultural icon of the feminist movements of the fin de siècle:

> Feride's instincts were feminine and sure, based on a natural wisdom unclouded by modern notions of rights or economic independence or any pschopathic theories of 'self-expression' for women ; it was unaccountable

> to her that Fanny should not see what she saw clearly ; that gossip about an affair between the Head of the State and foreign woman was breach of taste, a breach of style, which was altogether impossible, inadmissable. (289)

Interestingly Fanny, the English woman, represents uncontrollable desire while Feride remains an emblem of proper moral and social codes and rationality, qualities that have always been associated with the West. At the end of the novel Feride is able to convince her friend that she has misunderstood Ataturk's attention. The unfulfilled love between Fanny and Ataturk may also be symbolic of the Turkish republican policy of learning the ways of the west as much as possible yet never to be fully Westernized. As Gokalp wrote : ''The mission of Turkism is to seek out the Turkish culture that has remained only among the people and to graft onto it Western civilization in its entirety and in a viable form'' (33).

When her friend goes back to England Feride remains in her country to form a ''feminine corps d'élite'' to educate other women thereby finalizing her own journey from the private realm of her father's traditional yalı to the public sphere in modern Turkey endowed with a mission. Her emergence as a woman who is able to defy traditions and a carrier of new liberties and values once again defamiliarizes stereotypical configurations of Eastern female identity.

The Dark Moment, despite the negativity in its title, represents the key moment of the transformation of discourses of gender, sexuality and identity as Turkey changed from a theocratic, multiethnic empire to a modern and secular nation state. Rather than turning the East into a consumable narrative with stereotypical configurations in a typical Orientalist manner Ann Bridge plays with the conventions and representational strategies inverting each in turn to create an unprejudiced awareness of the historical context and the social and cultural specifities of Turkey and the Turk investing neither in desire nor repulsion. By subverting the boundaries between reality and expectation, historical fact and literary creation, insider and outsider, narrator and narratee she presents a vast canvas of various perspectives to a multitude of issues and highlights richnesses over differences and dialogical transculturality over intercultural penetration.

Bogazici University, Turkey

WORKS CITED

Bird, Dunlaith. *Travelling in Different Skins: Gender Identity in European Women's Oriental Travelogues, 1850-1950.* Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2012. Print.
Bridge, Ann. *Peking Picnic,*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1932. Print.
_____. *Illyrian Spring*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1935. Print.
_____. *Enchanter's Nightshade*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1937. Print.
_____. *Frontier Passage*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1942. Print.
_____. *Singing Waters: A Novel*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1946. Print.
_____. *The Dark Moment*. New York: Macmillan, 1952. Print.

_____. *A Place to Stand: A Novel*. New York: Macmilian, 1953. Print.
_____. *Portrait of My Mother*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1955. Print
_____. *Facts and Fictions*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1968. Print.
Gokalp, Ziya. *The Principles of Turkism*. Trans. Robert Devereux. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968. Print.
Kahf, Mohja. *Western Representations of the Muslim Woman from Termagant to Odalisque*. Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1999. Print.
Kandiyoti, Deniz. "Slave Girls, Temptresses and Comrades: Images of Women in the Turkish Novel. *Feminist Issues* 8.1 (1988): 35–50. Print
Lewis, Reina. *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2004. Print.
Mills, Sara. *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism*. London: Routledge, 1991. Print.
Said, Edward W.. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 19791978. Print.
Van Dobben, Danielle J. ''Dancing Modernity: Gender, Sexuality and The State in the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Turkish Republic.'' Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 2008.
Yegenoglu, Melda. *Colonial Fantasies Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Print.

UDK 821.111–313.2.09Morris W.:929Hudson W. H.

DREAMERS IN DIALOGUE: EVOLUTION, SEX AND GENDER IN THE UTOPIAN VISIONS OF WILLIAM MORRIS AND WILLIAM HENRY HUDSON

Caterina Novák

Abstract:

The aim of this article is to explore the parallels between two late-nineteenth-century utopias, William Henry Hudson's *A Crystal Age* (1882) and William Morris's *News from Nowhere* (1891). It aims to explore how these two works respond to the transition from a kinetic to a static conception of utopia that – under pressure from evolutionary and feminist discourses – took place during the period. Particular focus lies on the way in which this is negotiated through the depiction of evolution, sexuality, and gender roles in the respective novels, and how the depiction of these 'disruptive' elements may work as a means of ensuring the reader's active engagement in political, intellectual and emotional terms.

Keywords: William Henry Hudson: *A Crystal Age*, William Morris: *News from Nowhere*, treatment of evolution, treatment of sexuality, utopian fiction

The history of utopia – in the sense of man's dream of a perfect society – may well go back to the origins of mankind itself. As a literary phenomenon, too, its history extends much farther back than to the seventeenth-century work which lent its name to the genre. While different scholars have identified different periods as the heyday of the literary utopia, there seems to be near-universal agreement that utopian fiction, in decline for most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, rose to prominence again towards the close of the Victorian period (Kumar 35). Critics have attributed this upsurge of interest in utopian fiction partly to a strong belief in the ultimate perfectability of human society that owed much to nineteenth-century notions of technological progress and theories of (social) evolution of the kind best described as "not 'Darwinian' but 'Darwinistic' (or, crudely, erroneous)" (P. Morton, *Science* 9). In part, however, literary utopias also served a consolatory function, offering escape from the bleak realities of the present and the realisation that utopian perfection – if it could be attained at all – would be achieved only in the remote future. This holds true especially within a Socialist context, as the likelihood of a proletarian revolution diminished in the face of the increasing internal fragmentation of the movement (Kumar 67; Kinna 744).

Both in form and conception, these late Victorian utopias differ significantly from their literary precursors. Until the last third of the nineteenth century, most utopias had followed the traditional pattern in which a traveller to distant lands accidentally discovers an ideally perfect society flourishing in some remote region of the globe, in a state of isolation from its neighbours and uncontaminated by intercourse with the rest of the world (Kumar 23). By the 1870s, however, imperialist expansion had deprived writers of blank spaces on the map (A.L. Morton 192). At the same time, the incorporation of notions such as progress as an inherent function of human history, biological evolution as a way towards the perfection of the human race, and a strong belief in technological advancement introduced a crucial new element into utopian fiction: time. By the late nineteenth century, the device of a narrator who goes to sleep in the present, only to find himself, upon his awakening, in some ideally perfect society several hundred years in the future had become a standard feature of literary utopias (Kumar 38f.), popularised not least by two of the most influential contemporary examples of the genre, Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1885) and William Morris's *News from Nowhere* (1891).

As a consequence of these developments, the traditionally static conception of utopia as a state of perfection that, once reached, needs only to be maintained, gave way to the realisation that, in the words of H.G. Wells, "the utopia of a modern dreamer must needs differ in one fundamental aspect from the Nowheres and Utopias men planned before Darwin quickened the thought of the world [...] the Modern Utopia must not be static but kinetic, must shape not as a permanent state but as a hopeful stage, leading to a long ascent of stages" (Wells 11).[1]

Moreover, Darwinism had inevitably introduced the issue of human sexuality into utopia, either in the form of greater sexual permissiveness to facilitate natural selection, or in the shape of strictly regulated policies of procreation along Malthusian and eugenicist lines (Sedlak 221). Predictably, treatment of this subject did not remain on a purely theoretical footing, leading to the inclusion of a romantic element into utopian fiction that is notably absent from earlier works, and that gave female characters a more prominent position, typically in the twin functions of love interest and guiding figure for the male narrator (Baccolini 701). At the same time, the ever-growing pressure exerted by the feminist movement was such that by the end of the Victorian era, "sexual equality [...] [had become] a central issue in utopia" (Baruch 34). Nonetheless, many authors merely "prospected solutions and reforms which were nonetheless never revolutionary, but often ambiguous", and the roles of wife and mother almost invariably remained the central ones envisaged for women (Baccolini 701). If the greater prominence afforded to female characters did nothing to transform the "historically misogynistic genre of utopia" (Lewes 23), however, it nonetheless was not without its impact, adding another element to disrupt the static nature of traditional utopian societies (Baccolini 701; Domenicelli 367ff.).

This article sets out to explore how this network of disruptive influences is negotiated in two utopian novels published during the last decades of the nineteenth century, William Morris's Socialist classic *News from Nowhere*, and William Henry Hudson's *A Crystal Age*. It goes without saying that Morris' treatment of women in *News from Nowhere* has already received a significant amount of attention, as have most

[1] cf. also Partington non pag. and Pinkney 51.

other aspects of the novel, and this article can only provide a very selective overview of those arguments which are germane to the topic at hand. *A Crystal Age*, in contrast, has attracted far less notice, both at the time of its publication and in recent decades. This relative critical neglect is only partly attributable to the novel's lack of literary merit (indeed, the main point on which it incurs criticism – i.e. its flat characterisation and meagre plot – is one that it shares with many utopian novels, not least Morris' own work[2]). In part, it may well be due to the fact that it differs markedly from the remainder of Hudson's extensive oeuvre, and the tendency on the part of his biographers to concentrate on his work as a naturalist and travel writer. An important reason also must be sought in the utter improbability of Hudson's utopian vision, and its remoteness from everyday experience. As A.L. Morton remarks in his classic *The English Utopia*, "[t]he most striking thing, perhaps, about *A Crystal Age* is its complete lack of relation to anything in the existing world, except by antipathy" (206).

First published in 1887, *A Crystal Age* is highly unusual, if not unique, among utopian romances of the period for two important reasons. Firstly, it envisages a period in the remote future when evolutionary processes have done away with the human sex drive, so that the social organisation of the Crystallites[3] resembles nothing so much as that of the beehive, with a single married couple presiding over a large group of entirely asexual workers.[4] Idiosyncratic as it may seem to modern readers, Hudson's vision of a sexless society is not simply an expression of the author's individual tastes. By the fin de siècle, a number of theorists had begun to voice the opinion that the abnormal development of human sexual instincts had turned them into a disease, while more extreme feminists explicitly stated their hopes that social evolution would eventually lead to an entirely sexless state (Fernando 23). Hudson's novel, it would seem, draws on these feminist fantasies; on the other hand, however, it also reflects the attitude of many contemporaries who, despite their dissatisfaction with the status quo, found this alternative "even more depressing than present sexuality" (Fernando 23).

The work is not only unique in its treatment of love and sexuality. The second, and perhaps much more radical, departure from established genre conventions lies in the absence of a clearly defined guiding figure to ease the narrator's entry into utopian society: unaccountably transported several millennia into the future after a fall down a ravine, the young botanist Smith encounters a group of Crystallites, and becomes strongly attracted to a beautiful young woman named Yoletta. While he is hospitably accepted into her father's household, neither she nor any other character takes it upon themselves to explain to Smith the intricacies of life in the Crystal Age. In addition, both the Crystallites' readiness to take offence at Smith's inadvertent transgressions against established codes of conduct, and the narrator's reluctance to confess his ignorance for fear of lowering himself in his beloved's estimation, make for a series of misunderstandings that is frustrating for narrator and reader alike.

[2] cf. for instance Willmer xxxvi.

[3] I have borrowed the term "Crystallites" and the related adjective from Battaglia.

[4] Although indignantly refuted by the author, it seems probable that Hudson drew on two papers by the biologist and neo-Darwinian sociologist Benjamin Kidd on the behaviour of bees (from which Kidd then drew conclusions about human society) for his idea, which is unparalleled in the history of utopian fiction (P. Morton, "Tracing" 61ff.; P. Morton, *Science* 80; for the analogy of the beehive, cf. also Battaglia 145; Suvin 33). An important difference, however, lies in the fact that there are no drones.

While hardly gifted with overmuch intelligence or intuition, Smith can only in part be blamed for his blunders, given the amount of change that has taken place: the population of England has decreased significantly; towns and all signs of industrialisation have disappeared, and people live in isolated, largely self-sufficient households. In many instances, the society in which the narrator finds himself is revealed as the exact opposite of Victorian England: most of the things valued "in that feverish, full age" (Hudson 294) have been "consumed to ashes: politics, religions, systems of philosophy, isms and ologies of all descriptions; schools, churches, prisons, poorhouses; stimulants and tobacco; kings and parliaments; cannons [...] and pianos [...] the press, vice, political economy, money and a million things more..." (Hudson 293-4).

Apart from its asexuality and matriarchal organisation (of which more shall be said later on), the most striking feature of Crystallite society is the importance each family attaches to the house in which it lives: as A.L. Morton points out, it is almost as if the people existed to serve the house, rather than the house to shelter the people (207). The house is regarded as a symbol of the world, and the act of decorating it as a conscious emulation of God's act of creation and thus a religious duty. Like the world itself, houses are believed to have neither beginning nor end, and to speak of building or pulling down a house is regarded as blasphemy. Consequently, decorative arts and knowledge pertaining to the beautification of the house are held in high esteem, while all other branches of science (especially natural science) are abhorred as having caused the downfall of nineteenth-century civilisation.

Each house is presided over by a single married couple, who are nominally (and in most cases also biologically) the Mother and Father of all other members of the household. The parents' word is considered law, and the couple – especially the "august Mother of the House, from whose sacred womb ever comes to it life and love and joy" (Hudson 88) – are treated with the utmost veneration by their children. Despite the Malthusian propensities of the Crystallites, who see overpopulation as the root of most of the evils of the social order they have left behind, a large number of children is regarded as eminently desirable in a Mother: the amount of love and worship she receives during her lifetime increases in proportion, as does her chance of being remembered after death. While undeniably problematic in regard to women's roles in Crystallite society (a point which will be discussed at greater length below), the system ostensibly abolishes the patriarchal power structure typical of Victorian families. If there is a gender hierarchy, it is the female who is, in theory at least, accorded the dominant role, since the main function of marriage, i.e. the begetting of children, is her task.

Towards the ends of their lives, the parents choose their successors, who then undergo a period of initiation into the secrets of procreation prior to becoming the new parents of the house. Although it is likely that the parents are aware of individual preferences and take these into account when selecting the new couple, the man and woman involved have no say in the matter and are only informed of their parents' decision after it has been taken. Since the Crystallites are entirely ignorant of the concepts of sexual and/or romantic love, this does not prove a problem to the couple involved, the honour conferred upon them apparently outweighing the lack of freedom in their choice of marriage partner. Throughout the book, the Crystallites' insistence that there exists only one kind of love – i.e. filial and brotherly affection – and their rational attitude towards

unhappiness ("we seek no other support in all sufferings and calamities but that of reason only" [Hudson 197]) at times makes them appear almost inhuman in comparison with the narrator. The depiction of Smith's unrequited love thus serves a double function: on the one hand, it engages our sympathy for a narrator whom the educated reader is otherwise bound to find somewhat irritating (especially when he confesses his aversion to reading or flaunts his ill-considered opinions on the Woman Question), but who through his ability to love emerges as far more human than the Crystallites.

On the other hand, however, the inclusion of a love interest underlines the inherent ambiguity of Hudson's utopia: while it is certainly difficult, as Peter Morton has argued, to read the novel as an intentional dystopia (*Science* 75; 80), the importance of authorial intention – questionable in any case – palls when one considers the discomfort the nineteenth-century narrator experiences in a society that has ostensibly achieved perfection, and the strong sense of nostalgia for Victorian England that permeates the text.[5] Increasingly, Smith moves from enjoyment of life among the Crystallites – "It seemed to me now that I had never really lived before, so sweet was this new life – so healthy, and free from care and regret" (Hudson 149) – to despair about their lack of mutual rapport when it comes to his all-consuming passion for Yoletta. The more strongly the reader is moved to sympathise with Smith's plight, the more blurry becomes the distinction between the narrator's viewpoint of Crystallite society, and the more favourable one mapped out for the reader.

In his treatment of the narrator's passion for a woman from the Crystal Age, Hudson acknowledges, but fails to negotiate, the key problems that the inclusion of a romantic element poses for utopian fiction: how to bridge the emotional gap between 'ordinary' humans and the more perfect beings that inhabit utopia? And how to reconcile the possibility of personal unhappiness with utopia's promise of universal happiness? In the beginning of the novel, the narrator is convinced that he and the Crystallites may differ widely in numerous points, "like the widely diverging branches of a tree; but, like the branches, we have a meeting-place, and this is, I fancy, in that part of our nature where our feelings are" (Hudson 32). As it turns out, however, this is precisely the point at which they differ most: in *The Crystal Age*, both sexual love and intense suffering, grief, and despair can only be experienced by the Mother; they are "the penalty she must pay for her higher state" (Hudson 191). For this reason, she is the only one in the household who can even attempt to understand the narrator's feelings, which even to her "seem unlike [theirs]" (Hudson 190). At the end of the novel, Smith – having become convinced that Yoletta will never come to love him in the same way as he loves her – chances upon a draught which he believes will grant him immunity from his sexual impulses. When he drinks from the bottle, the potion transports him back into the Victorian age. He fades out of the Crystal Age at the very moment that his beloved arrives to tell him that they have been chosen to succeed the present Father and Mother of the house. The book ends with Yoletta's scream when she discovers her lover's motionless body.

[5] In the preface to the second edition, however, the author himself admits that his dream of human perfection, which seemed immeasurably remote even at the time of writing, has finally given way to the conviction that an absence of (sexual) competition can only lead to degeneration and decay (viii).

There is no evidence that William Morris had read *A Crystal Age* when he wrote his much more influential *News from Nowhere*, commonly assumed to have been intended as a direct response to Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (e.g. A.L. Morton 198; Willmer xxxv). As A.L. Morton points out, however, it is not implausible that he may have heard of Hudson's work through mutual acquaintances (206). As it is, there are numerous points of contact between the two works, to the extent that *A Crystal Age* tends to be mentioned – if it is mentioned at all – in connection with Morris' utopia. It is only A.L. Morton, however, who makes a sustained attempt to highlight the similarities between the two novels, coming to the conclusion that "*A Crystal Age* has certainly features which remind us of *News from Nowhere*, the socialism, of course, always excluded" (206).[6] Morton mentions both its conception of utopia as "an epoch of rest" (*vide* the subtitle of Morris's book), and its depiction of a peaceful, pre-industrial society whose members live in harmony with each other and with nature. In many other respects, too, the Nowhereans resemble the Crystallites: they relish simple, home-cooked food; delight in colourful clothing apparently inspired by medieval fashions; are extremely good-looking, healthy, and long-lived;[7] own little or no personal property; are ignorant of the concepts of buying and selling; place great value on beautiful architecture and house decoration; have abjured technological and scientific advancement; have done away with all forms of institutionalised education, religion, and government; display a marked lack of interest in history; and live in harmony with nature. Moreover, both utopias allow the reader to retrospectively rationalize the narrator's experiences as part of a dream (A.L. Morton 207).

While certainly accurate as far as it goes, Morton's two-page comparison of the two works remains very much on the surface, failing to pinpoint several important parallels: both utopias are similar in that they postulate a cataclysmic event (the Socialist Revolution of 1952 in *News from Nowhere*, the outbreak of a devastating disease in *A Crystal Age*) which destroys nineteenth-century civilisation and gives mankind the chance to evolve into a higher state. In both, "childhood and rest are represented as making the ideal condition of man", as Lionel Trilling (158) remarks of *News from Nowhere*. As such, they both embrace the same paradox: they depict the inhabitants of their respective utopias as the products of evolutionary processes that appear to have taken them not forward, but back to a lower, more child-like state of development. Moreover, they are informed by a sense of nostalgia for an imaginary lost Golden Age that harks back to former historical periods for inspiration. In addition, both utopias feature narrators who can be read as ironic self-portraits of their authors[8] and who display a keen interest especially in the charms of utopian women;[9] both works strive (but ultimately fail) to redefine established gender roles; and finally, both utopias enter

[6] Not all contemporary readers would have agreed with this point: in his foreword to the 1916 American edition, Clifford Smyth states that "[i]t has been said that *A Crystal Age* renders a perfect picture of the Socialist state" (xii).

[7] The scene in which Guest discovers the true ages of his companions – whom he has taken to be several decades younger than they actually are – closely resembles the scene when Smith finds out the ages of Yoletta and her family, with the distinction that Morris' estimates are a trifle more credible.

[8] For this point about *News from Nowhere*, cf. e.g. Willmer xxxv.

[9] For sustained discussion of this aspect of *News from Nowhere*, cf. Marsh, "*News from Nowhere* as Erotic Dream".

into the question of the ultimate realisability of their visions through the abortive love relationships between the narrator and a female inhabitant of utopia. When Darko Suvin describes *A Crystal Age* as "well rendered if ultimately ambiguous and self-defeating" (33), he might as well have been commenting on the many inconsistencies within Morris' *News from Nowhere* which have given rise to scholarly debate during recent decades.[10] In contrast to existing scholarship, however, this article compares and contrasts the two works in order to explore how their inconsistencies not only provide important points of contact, but throw light on their respective impact on the reader.

What is most noticeable, in this context, is the prevalence of what might be termed 'Hudsonian' moments in *News from Nowhere*: scenes in which Morris appears to take up themes from *A Crystal Age*, and to directly address questions raised by Hudson's vision. One of these is certainly the scene in which the young boatman Dick Hammond (one of William Guest's guides through Nowhere) explains to the narrator how the Nowhereans can "live amidst beauty without any fear of becoming effeminate" (Morris 194). Dick's statement appears somewhat out of context in Morris's novel, and seems to counter a charge that might more justifiably be raised against Crystallite men, whose appearance lacks most of the characteristics traditionally considered masculine:

> [...] I was at first puzzled to know whether the party was composed of men or women or both, so much did they resemble each other in height, in their smooth faces, and in the length of their hair. On a closer inspection I noticed the difference of dress of the sexes; also that the men, if not sterner, had faces at all events less mild and soft than the women, and also a slight perceptible down on the upper lip. (Hudson 15)

In *News from Nowhere*, Morris is careful to stress the 'masculine' credentials of his male characters; in fact, "manly" is among the first adjectives Guest uses of his new-found friend Dick even as he describes his ornate clothing, refined speech and mild manners (Morris 47). Morris capitalises on the one counter-argument Hudson might likewise have emphasised: the greater physical strength and endurance that men develop in the absence of machinery to take over the more strenuous tasks. While Hudson merely draws attention to the physical fitness of Crystallite women – like their Nowherean sisters sensibly clothed rather than "upholstered like armchairs" (Morris 53) and accorded much greater scope for their bodily development – Morris draws on this point to emphasise the 'masculine' credentials of his mild-mannered, art-loving male Nowhereans.

As it is, the issue of gendered identity is the point at which Morris might have learnt most from Hudson's mistakes, given the problematic treatment the issue receives in *A Crystal Age*. Not only are the male Crystallites difficult to distinguish from their sisters in outward appearance. In addition, Crystallite society differs from the Victorians in that it does not differentiate between 'masculine' and 'feminine' virtues. Instead, both sexes display traits which its Victorian narrator regards as traditionally feminine, such as submissiveness to a higher authority, a general lack of aggression, and, above all, a high degree of moral purity and chastity. Even the Crystallites' insistence on the impossibility of building new houses, and their dedication to the preservation of the existing ones reads like an extension of Ruskin's definition of femininity: the Crystallites

[10] For a brief overview of the debate up to the 1990s, cf. LeMire.

lack the male intellectual make-up that would allow them to be "doers" and "creators"; instead of dedicating their powers to "invention and creation", they have to content themselves with "sweet ordering" and preservation.[11] (As if to provide a direct contrast, Morris' Nowhereans appear almost inordinately fond of building, taking obvious delight in tearing down the architectural remnants of the Victorian age and replacing them with lavishly decorated new ones.)

On the surface, their apparent lack of 'masculinity' is presented as a positive feature of the "mild-eyed men with downy, unrazored lips" (Hudson 248) that inhabit the world of the Crystal Age, and even the proudly 'masculine' narrator comes to acknowledge their superiority. On a superficial level, *A Crystal Age* seems to argue against the 'gendering' of certain character traits, and for the acquisition of positive characteristics across gender lines.[12] Closer analysis, however, reveals the limits of this vision: while men have evidently acquired a range of positively connoted 'feminine' characteristics, there is no indication that Crystallite women are encouraged to develop 'masculine' features. Instead, most of the characteristics Victorian society would have regarded as 'masculine' (and hence arguably superior) have been rendered obsolete, thus severely limiting the possibilities of character development open to both sexes. There is no indication, however, that this is perceived as a drawback: as Battaglia observes, "to Hudson's mind and heart eutopia belongs to the other sphere, that is to a sphere that, being alternative to male values, may in comparison be defined as female" (145).

Crystallite society thus appears to reverse Victorian gender hierarchies by privileging femininity over masculinity – an attitude that ostensibly shows itself also in their veneration of the Mother. In this context, it becomes highly problematic that 'femininity' in the novel is consistently associated with a lower state of development. It is only the children of the house who display the androgynous characteristics described above; once a couple has passed into the higher state of parenthood, their gender characteristics diversify along traditional lines.[13] The Father acquires not only a beard as an outward sign of his masculinity, but also the ability to rule over the family and to mete out justice to his children. The Mother of the House, who wears her hair longer than her daughters as an outward token of her femininity, not only develops a capacity for motherly love that exceeds that of all others, but also, it would seem from the example of Chastel, begins to display many of the negative qualities traditionally associated with women:

> My very first glance revealed to me that she differed in appearance and expression from all other inmates of the house: [...] There was something wonderfully fascinating to me in that pale, suffering face, for, in spite of suffering, it was beautiful and loving; but dearer than all these things to my mind were the marks of passion it exhibited, the petulant, almost scornful mouth, and the half-eager, half-weary expression of the eyes, for these seemed rather to belong to that imperfect world from which I had been severed, and which was still dear to my unregenerate heart. (Hudson 175-6)

[11] cf. Ruskin, "Of Queen's Gardens" (qtd. in Parker, 13); Peter Morton also comments on the adrogynous appearance of the Crystallites (*Science*, 79).

[12] Similar arguments were brought forward by contemporary feminists e.g. Emily Davies (Parker, 3).

[13] This is in accordance also with Darwin's identification of women with a lower evolutionary state (Beer 200).

It becomes evident from this passage that the full realisation of Chastel's femininity has separated her from the state of purity and perfection which characterises the other Crystallites, and has brought her closer to the imperfect (but more human) state Smith associates with the Victorian age. Moreover, it is also significant that Chastel, the Mother of the House and thus the only fully developed woman in the novel, is ravaged by a terminal illness which confines her to her room and limits her sphere of action, evoking the Victorian association between disease and the female body. In addition, her behaviour throughout many scenes suggests that she is suffering from hysteria (Battaglia 145), that typically female complaint of the Victorian period (Wood 163ff.), in addition to her physical malady. Moreover, Hudson's interpretation of Chastel's illness serves to re-enforce gendered medical discourses of the Victorian era, suggesting that her hysterical outbursts stem from the fact that her physical illness prevents her from fulfilling her 'natural' function of motherhood.[14]

Another problematic aspect emerges when one considers the close association between women and nature which characterises Crystallite attitudes towards the female sex: as has already been explained, a woman can only achieve a higher state of existence (in a social as well as evolutionary sense) through the fulfilment of her 'natural', biological function of motherhood. Moreover, the highest religious feast day of the Crystallites is the harvest festival, intended to honour both the bounty of nature and the fertility of the Mother – a correlation that has prompted Snodgrass to describe Chastel as an "isolated, somewhat pompous Gaea, or earth mother figure" (563). This association of femininity with nature, imperfection and/or a lower evolutionary state appears as an echo of Victorian theories on the subject. As such, it is highly problematic in a utopian novel which has been praised for its feminist credentials, and effectively invalidates any claims *A Crystal Age* might have had to a more enlightened stance towards gender. Rather than depicting a true matriarchy, as some critics have claimed, "[t]he utopian world of *A Crystal Age* is in fact the Victorian female world dominated by the Ruskinian ideal of the Mother of the House" (Battaglia 145).

Indeed, Hudson's picture of Chastel reads like an exaggeration of the Victorian ideology of the separate spheres: once a woman has been chosen to become Mother of the House, all other interests she might have had disappear; she is no longer required to participate in the work carried out by her former brothers and sisters, but spends a year in virtual seclusion acquiring the special knowledge reserved for Mothers. After this period, she moves into the Mother's Room, and her newly acquired official status is acknowledged by all members of the household, who pay homage to her and promise to love and serve her. From this point onwards, her entire life is geared towards the fulfilment of her biological function. In view of this consideration, it is difficult to understand why Snodgrass, in her analysis of the work, speaks of the "liberation of one woman per household" at the expense of "dooming the remaining females to celibacy" (564). While Chastel is, in fact, 'liberated' from the patriarchal authority of the Father of the House, she is subject to the constraints placed upon her by Crystallite society, and tormented by her preoccupation with fertility and the realisation that she will never

[14] Similar claims were advanced by opponents of the New Woman movement, who asserted that young women's diseases (bodily and mental) stemmed from their refusal to conform to accepted gender stereotypes (Wood 163).

bear more than one child. The extent to which she herself defines her value in terms of her status and the number of children she has borne becomes strikingly apparent in her reaction to Smith's account of Victorian attitudes to women and motherhood:

> "That all people should be equal, and all women wives and mothers seems to me a very disordered and a very repulsive idea. The one consolation in my pain, the one glory of my life could not exist in such a state as that, and my condition would be pitiable indeed…." (Hudson 196)

Moreover, Crystallite practice as experienced by the narrator diverges markedly from the matriarchal ideal proposed by Hudson. Due to Chastel's illness, her sphere of action is even more limited than Crystallite custom demands: she participates in the life of the household only through the intermediary of her children, who visit her room regularly and inform her of their everyday life. As a matter of fact, Smith never experiences the Crystallite system of matriarchal rule in action. In the only house he visits, all authority is concentrated in the person of the father: it is he who decides minor everyday matters, but also allots their respective tasks to all members of the household, and determines the appropriate punishment in cases of misdemeanour. Only the mother has the right to veto the father's decisions; what seems like an extension of women's privileges in comparison to the nineteenth century, however, turns out to be nothing but a confirmation of existing gender roles and stereotypes. While the father (the only obviously 'male' member of the family) metes out justice, the mother (the ultimate 'female' element) embodies mercy; a division which is entirely in keeping with Victorian notions.[15]

A similar discrepancy between theory and practice becomes evident in Hudson's depiction of women's work: the absolute equality which reigns between the androgynous children of the house initially encourages the assumption that there is no division of labour along gender lines in Crystallite society. However, this supposition is soon revealed to be erroneous: although women are not prevented from indulging in 'masculine' pursuits such as illustrating books and other branches of art (but not, it would seem, in rough outdoor activities such as ploughing fields and hewing wood), there are some occupations which are clearly regarded as exclusively feminine, such as teaching, nursing the sick, the preparation of the family's food, and all branches of needlework.

Moreover, it is interesting to observe that it is only these latter occupations and their results which the reader is allowed to witness through the eyes of the narrator: Smith comments favourably on the "succulent dishes" served by "picturesque handmaidens" (Hudson 53) who wait on the family (and whose status within the household is never explained), and frankly admires the beautiful clothes prepared by "the daughters of the house, whose province it is to make these things" (Hudson 68). Indeed, the majority of descriptions of women at work involve, in Smith's words, "some kind of wool-work" (Hudson 73) – the vagueness of his remark implying that the exact nature

[15] It is interesting to note, moreover, that legal immunity is not a privilege reserved for the mother of the house alone; although this is nowhere explicitly stated in the book, it is obvious that the father, who, in the absence of codified legislation embodies justice, likewise stands above the law. There is no indication that the mother has the right to punish him for his transgressions (the assumption being that his higher moral state makes it impossible for him to commit any), just as she cannot sit court over her children in the manner of her husband.

of their work is beyond his notice. In contrast, there is no description of women engaged in less traditionally feminine pursuits. The only partial exception is the account we receive of Yoletta's occupation as an illustrator; significantly, however, there is no favourable description of any of her drawings, but only of her trial and condemnation to thirty days' solitary confinement after she has spoiled a page and accidentally torn the book in a fit of pique.

In *News from Nowhere*, a similar tendency is observable: most women appear to be involved in that most traditional of feminine occupations, housework, and are said to be entirely happy with this state of affairs: "it is a great pleasure to a clever woman to manage a house skilfully" (Morris 94), Guest's Nowherean informant, old Hammond, asserts. In addition, he implies that women are by nature more suited to this type of work, invoking "an old Norwegian folk-lore tale called How the Man minded the House" (Morris 94) which ends in domestic disaster (Mineo 10). In addition, the only woman whom the reader encounters engaged in some other form of work is Philippa, the female master mason, who is noteworthy more for her antisocial behaviour than the beauty of her carvings (indeed, there is the suggestion that she overvalues the importance of her work). Moreover, in a society whose members are otherwise remarkable for their longevity and robust health, Philippa is reported to have only recently recovered from a severe and protracted illness. Like Hudson, Morris establishes a connection between illness and a lack of 'proper' femininity: while Chastel appears to suffer from hysteria because of her inability to fulfil her child-bearing duty, Philippa's illness is mentioned in connection with her 'unfeminine' occupation, and establishes a contrast to the healthy, beautiful women serving food at the guest hall.

While Morris does not go to the same lengths as Hudson in *A Crystal Age* as regards the importance of motherhood, it is made clear that child-bearing is assumed to be a vital part of women's lives: "How could it possibly be but that maternity should be highly honoured amongst us?", Hammond asks, going on to assert that all women possess an "instinct for maternity" (Morris 95) that is strengthened in a society which has done away with the "*artificial* burdens of motherhood" (Morris 94; italics in original). (One might even suggest Philippa's one redeeming feature is the existence of her beautiful and affable daughter, inserted probably to show that in Nowhere, child-bearing and a career are not mutually exclusive – and, more importantly, to assuage male readers' fears that women would leave off bearing children once they were given access to a greater range of professional opportunities.)

In the treatment of human relationships, however, Morris shows himself vastly superior to Hudson, who merely shelves the problem by envisaging a society in which sexuality is no longer an issue. Crucially, however, he fails to provide either a plausible explanation for this evolutionary step, or a means of making it palatable to the average contemporary reader, who is positioned so as to empathise with Smith's dilemma. In *News from Nowhere*, in contrast, the issue is addressed directly through the relationship between Clara and Dick, the crime of passion committed in the house Guest visits on his journey up the Thames, and lastly the strong attraction the narrator experiences for the enigmatic Ellen. The former two episodes serve to explain that Nowherean society, while not able to "get rid of all the trouble that besets the dealings between the sexes" (Morris 91), has at least ceased to be "commercial" or "*artificially* foolish" (Morris 92;

italics in original) in its love matters, and to impose social sanctions on what (since the abolition of personal property) is essentially a private matter.

Morris proposes "eminently sensible" (Willmer xxxviii) solutions to matters of the heart which are clearly intended as comments on the Victorian status quo.[16] The episode between Dick and Clara goes to show that Nowherean society is not only astonishingly liberal as regards divorce and remarriage, but also accepts that both men and women possess sexual appetites and a need for emotionally fulfilling relationships. In contrast to nineteenth-century views on the subject, Morris implies that sexuality is not a distinguishing factor between the genders, giving his Nowherean women the freedom of choice. The episode, however, leaves the reader in some doubt whether this permissive stance is actually a good thing: when Guest is introduced to Clara, he is told that she deserted Dick for another man, leaving their children in the care of one of his aunts. Since then, however, she has (under the guidance of Dick's uncle, old Hammond) realised the error of her ways and is now hoping to return to her former husband, who has not formed any new attachments in the meantime. The implication is, of course, that women are more fickle than men, but will return to their families once they have sown their wild oats and been made to see the error of their ways; it also shows, however, that the greater freedom Nowherean society affords women causes severe emotional stress for men (even though old Hammond maintains that Nowhereans "shake off these griefs in a way which perhaps the sentimentalists of other times would think contemptible and unheroic, but which we think necessary and manlike" [Morris 92]).[17] Ellen's admission that she has "often troubled men's minds disastruously" (Morris 208) strikes a similar note, as does the episode of the crime of passion committed in the house they visit on their journey upstream. In the latter case, a love triangle between a woman and two men that has resulted in murder; in both instances, "the cause of the disturbance is imputed to the beauty and charm of women" (Mineo 13). If Morris' proposals do not appear entirely satisfactory, however, this is not only because they do not always seem to work in practice: on the one hand, the reader is left emotionally dissatisfied with solutions that presuppose a more rational attitude than is compatible with our own, less perfectly balanced psychological make-up.[18] On the other hand, they do not conform to the reader's expectations of utopia, showing that Nowhere does not guarantee its inhabitants a state of perfect bliss, but merely a framework in which social and institutional obstacles to personal happiness have been removed.

It is in this respect that Morris most evidently engages in a dialogue with Hudson: in both novels, desire for a woman is equated with desire for utopia, and in both novels, this desire is ultimately denied.[19] *A Crystal Age* culminates in the narrator's realisation that Crystallite bliss is unattainable, and a final act of impatient despair that puts an end to his hopes at the very moment of their fulfilment. Morris's novel likewise acknowledges that utopia is not attainable for its nineteenth-century readership, but implies that – because biological evolution is presented as the result of political revolution

[16] For sustained discussion of this topic, cf. Mineo, "Eros Unbound".

[17] It is tempting to speculate that the episode is informed by Morris' own experience and – as it turned out, unfounded – hopes concerning his private life; a similar suggestion is put forward by Mineo (13).

[18] Cf. Clive Willmer's (xxxviii) criticism that Morris' proposals are not in accordance with Freudian psychology.

[19] For this point about *News from Nowhere*, cf. Marsh 23; Willmer xxxvii.

rather than the opposite – it can be gained through patience and hard work (A.L. Morton 207). The reactions of the narrator's respective beloveds are indicative of the chances Victorian society – metonymically represented by Smith and Guest – has of achieving the ideal represented in the two novels: *A Crystal Age* ends with a scream of frustration; *News from Nowhere* with an encouraging look that promises the fulfilment of Guest's hopes at some point in the future. They also indicate, however, the chances their respective societies have of incorporating the disruptive element represented by the narrators.

As outlined above, both Hudson and Morris are caught up within an evolutionary paradigm that implies that living beings are subject to constant change, and are written during a period which subscribed to an ideology of technological progress, imperialist expansion, and a teleological conception of history. Obviously, all of these notions are starkly at odds with the essentially static nature of the traditional utopia: once perfection has ostensibly been attained, all further change becomes unnecessary, even undesirable. In the end, the success of the two novels depends not on the state of perfection achieved by the respective utopian societies, but – in keeping with the evolutionary paradigm – by their ability to adapt and respond to outside influences. In *A Crystal Age*, the narrator's love endangers the stability of Hudson's perfect society, and is therefore resisted by Yoletta until (too late) a means is found of incorporating into the Crystallite way of life. In contrast, Morris – instead of postulating an evolutionary stage at which humankind has, in one important respect, ceased to be truly human – shows that the problems caused by "dislocated erotic drives" (Mineo 12) can be absorbed by an otherwise harmonious and well-regulated society. If Morris's utopia, like the Crystal Age, is peopled by "a new species of human beings" (Mineo 8), it is a species that the reader can relate to and empathise with, and that can in turn learn to empathise with the narrator. However, Morris lays great emphasis on another problem that is present in both novels: having no interest in history, most utopians lack the background knowledge that would enable them to communicate effectively with the narrators and, more crucially, to avoid unwittingly repeating the mistakes of the past. *A Crystal Age* makes short shrift of the issue by insisting that several millennia of human evolution have made it constitutionally impossible for the Crystallites to relapse into nineteenth-century modes of thought. In *News from Nowhere*, in contrast, it is not Guest's love for Ellen but his sense of history and intimate knowledge of the past which exclude him from Nowhere;[20] moreover, it also exposes one of its most important shortcomings. Significantly, however, Nowherean society shows itself open to criticism from within: while in *A Crystal Age*, the only voice that is occasionally critical of Crystallite society is that of the narrator, in *News from Nowhere* one of the most crucial impulses for further development – a heightened awareness of history – comes from Ellen herself.

From the point of view of the twenty-first century reader, both utopias fall short of perfection: like *A Crystal Age*, Morris's novel is frequently ambiguous and self-contradictory in its treatment of gender and sexuality as well as "dangerously anti-intellectual [and] culpably blind to history" (Pinkney 53). More than a decade before Wells's *Modern Utopia*, however, it already takes into account the necessity of a utopia that is "not static but kinetic". The inclusion of Ellen shows that women and sexuality can be "productively disturbing", foreshadowing the possibility of the "leaner, more

[20] For sustained discussion of this point, cf. Hillgärtner, 128ff.

challenging, more energetic, fully historicised and politicised world" (Pinkney 54) that may eventually evolve out of Morris's Nowhere.[21] Pinkney's suggestion highlights two crucial features of the novel: in contrast to Hudson's vision, *News from Nowhere* depicts perfectability, not perfection; as such, it admits the possibility of improvement, and invites active participation on the reader's part in the imaginary task of envisaging its further development (Wilmer xxxv). Moreover, as the example of Ellen shows, the Nowhereans may yet come to develop the historical understanding that would enable them to relate to Guest not only in emotional, but in intellectual and political terms, and thus to fully integrate him (and the nineteenth-cenutry reader) into utopia.

Somewhat paradoxically, the main attraction of *News from Nowhere* thus lies in its evident flaws, much like Chastel's main attraction for Smith stems from her all too obvious weaknesses. Ultimately, Hudson's utopia fails because it does not act on the principle laid down in this scene: Crystallite society, it appears to insist, is indeed perfect. Thus it is entirely geared towards the preservation of the status quo: biological evolution has evidently reached its zenith; technological progress is regarded as harmful; and history appears to have come to a standstill. Hence, any change that can result from the (re)introduction of a disturbing element (be it historical knowledge or human sexuality) can only be for the worse. Just as the utter strangeness of the Crystallites leaves no room for empathetic involvement, their alleged perfection affords no scope for the reader's imagination.[22] Moreover, the Crystallites' lack of flexibility precludes the establishment of the common ground which Smith so desperately seeks throughout the book, and prevents him from carving out a space for himself among them: unlike Guest, who proves a rich source of information to those Nowhereans who are interested in history, Smith has nothing to offer the Crystallites because they profit neither from his love nor from historical information.

If both novels thus feature narrators who have to return to the present partly because they are not yet ready for utopia,[23] they also depict societies which are not (yet) ready for them. Ultimately, both novels suggest that utopia can only be attained through evolution and adaptation; Morris goes a crucial step beyond Hudson, however, when he shows that utopian visions succeed best when these processes work both ways, allowing narrators and readers to actively contribute to, rather than just passively admire, the imaginary societies they depict.

University of Vienna, Austria

[21] The subtitle also implies that the period Guest experiences is merely an "epoch of rest", an interlude between politically and socially more turbulent eras (A.L. Morton 206; Beaumont 183).

[22] As A.L. Morton notes, "[n]o one could imagine himself living, or could wish to live, in this Utopia any more than one could live in a stained glass window" (207).

[23] For this point about News from Nowhere, cf. Hillgärtner, 128.

WORKS CITED:

Baccolini, Raffaella. "Woman." In: Fortunati, Vita and Raymond Trousson. *Dictionary of Literary Utopias. Dictionaires & References. 5.* Paris: Champion, 2000. pp. 699-705.

Baruch, Elaine Hoffman. "'A Natural and Necessary Monster': Women in Utopia." In: *Alternative Futures*, 2:1 (1979). pp. 29-48.

Battaglia, B. "Crystal Age (A)." In: Fortunati, Vita and Raymond Trousson. *Dictionary of Literary Utopias. Dictionaires & References. 5.* Paris: Champion, 2000. pp. 143-145.

Beaumont, Matthew. *Utopia Ltd. Ideologies of Social Dreaming in England 1870–1900*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005.

Beer, Gillian. *Darwin's Plots*. 2nd ed. Cambridge et al.: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Boos, Florence S. and William Boos. "News from Nowhere and Victorian Socialist-Feminism." In: *Nineteenth-Century Contexts,* 14:1 (1990). pp. 3-32.

Domenicelli, Mario. "Love." In: Fortunati, Vita and Raymond Trousson (eds). *Dictionary of Literary Utopias. Dictionaires & References. 5.* Paris: Champion, 2000. pp. 367-72.

Fernando, Lloyd. *"New Women" in the Late Victorian Novel.* University Park; London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977.

Ferns, Chris. *Narrating Utopia: Ideology, Gender, Form in Utopian Studies. Liverpool Science Fiction Texts and Studies. 19.* Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1999.

Fortunati, Vita. "History." In: Fortunati, Vita and Raymond Trousson (eds). *Dictionary of Literary Utopias. Dictionaires & References. 5.* Paris: Champion, 2000. pp. 286-92.

Fortunati, Vita and Raymond Trousson (eds). *Dictionary of Literary Utopias. Dictionaires & References. 5.* Paris: Champion, 2000.

Kinna, Ruth. "The Relevance of Morris's Utopia." In: *European Legacy: Toward New Paradigm,* 9:6 (Dec. 2004). pp. 739-50.

Hillgärtner, Rüdiger. "William Morris: ews from Nowhere; or, an Epoch of Rest: being some Chapters from a Utopian Romance (1890). " In: Heuermann, Hartmund and Bernd-Peter Lange (eds). Die Utopia in der angloamerikanischen Literatur: Interpretationen. Düsseldorf: Bagel, 1984. pp. 120-38.

Holm, Jan. "The Old Grumbler At Runnymede." *JWMS* 10.2 (Spring 1993): 17-21.

Hudson, William Henry. *A Crystal Age*. New York: E.P. Dutto and Co., 1922.

Kumar, Krishan. *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1987.

Lawton, Lesley. "Lineaments of Ungratified Desire: William Morris's News from Nowhere as Utopian Romance." In: *Anglophonia: French Journal of English Studies,* 3 (1998). pp. 113-23.

Marsh, Jan. "Concerning Love: News from Nowhere and Gender." In: Coleman, Stephen and Paddy O'Sullivan (eds). *William Morris & News from Nowhere: A Vision for Our Time.* Hartland: Green Books, 1990.

Marsh, Jan. "*News from Nowhere* as Erotic Dream." *JWMS* 8.4 (Spring 1990): 19-23.

Morris, William. *News From Nowhere and Other Writings*. Ed. Clive Wilmer. London: Penguin Books, 1998.
Morton, A.L. *The English Utopia*. Berlin: Seven Seas Publishers, 1968.
Morton, Peter. *The Vital Science. Biology and the Literary Imagination 1860-1900*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984.
Morton, Peter. "Tracing a Theme in W.H. Hudson's *A Crystal Age*." In: *English Language Notes*, 25:4 (June 1988). pp. 61-65.
Parker, Christopher (ed.). *Gender Roles and Sexuality in Victorian Literature.* Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1995.
Partington, John S. "The Time Machine and A Modern Utopia: The Static and Kinetic Utopias of the Early H.G. Wells." In: *Utopian Studies. Journal of the Society for Utopian Studies,* 13:1 (2002). pp. 57-68.
Pfister, Manfred (ed.). *Alternative Welten*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1982.
Sargent, Lyman Tower. "Women in utopia." In: *Comparative Literature Studies* 10 (1973). pp. 302-316.
Sedlak, Werner. "Utopia und Darwinismus." In: Pfister, Manfred (ed.). *Alternative Welten*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1982. pp. 216-225.
Smyth, Clifford. "A Foreword." In: Hudson, William Henry. A Crystal Age. New York: E.P. Dutto and Co., 1922. pp. x-xix.
Snodgrass, Mary Ellen. *Encyclopedia of utopian literature*. Santa Barbara, Cal. et al.: ABC-CLIO, 1995.
Wells, H.G. *A Modern Utopia*. (1905) Eds Gregory Claeys and Patrick Parrinder. London: Penguin Books, 2005.
Wood, Jane. *Passion and Pathology in Victorian Fiction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

UDK 821.111(73)–311.6.09Mailer N.

NORMAN MAILER - THE MOST INFLUENTIAL CRITIC OF CONTEMPORARY REALITY IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Jasna Potočnik Topler

Abstract

Norman Mailer, one of the most influential authors of the second half of the twentieth century, faithfully followed his principle that a writer should also be a critic of contemporary reality. Therefore, most of his works portray the reality of the United States of America and the complexities of the contemporary American scene. Mailer described the spirit of his time – from the terror of war and numerous dynamic social and political processes to the 1969 moon landing. Conflicts were often in the centre of his writing, as was the relationship between an individual and the society; he speaks of political power and the dangerous power of capital, while pointing to the threat of totalitarianism in America. Mailer spent his entire career writing about violence, power, perverted sexuality, the phenomenon of Hitler, terrorism, religion and corruption. He continually pointed out that individuals were in constant danger of losing freedom and dignity.

Keywords: American novel, political power, Norman Mailer, literary journalism

Norman Kingsley Mailer, a Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and journalist, and one of the most influential authors of the second half of the twentieth century, faithfully followed his principle that a writer should also be a critic of contemporary reality. One of his biographers Mary V. Dearborn wrote, »In the case of Norman Mailer, the man and his life are of equal, often competing stature with his work, and it is for his life as well as his work that he will be remembered« (Dearborn 8). He did not hide who he was or how he felt or what he thought. Columnist Jimmy Breslin said that he was »one of the half-dozen original thinkers in this century« and that his ideas would last (Dearborn 3). His works are, no doubt about that, very popular and always among best-sellers, including his last novel *The Castle in the Forest* (2007) (nmwcolony.org). 2013 marks the 90th anniversary of Mailer's birth.

In eighty-four years Mailer wrote more than forty books, married six times, had nine children, ten grandchildren, he experienced many different roles and was, among other things, actively engaged in politics. In 1969, he was a candidate in the Democratic primary race for mayor of New York City, sharing a ticket with the equally outrageous journalist Jimmy Breslin, running for president of city council. Their campaign slogan

was: »The other guys are the joke!« Mailer received only 41,000 votes (Breslin got 75,000 but still came in fourth of five candidates). Fortunately, Mailer applied his drive and energy with more success in service of the literary community and continued writing. It is not emphasized enough that Mailer was instrumental in fortifying literary life for writers of all genres. He was a co-founder of *The Village Voice*, which in its early years »had a greater impact on the non-fiction/journalistic world than any other single publication, with the possible exception of *Esquire* and *The New Yorker*« (Gutking 6). In his later years, Mailer was, among other things, a president of the PEN American Center and – according to his contemporary Gay Talese, a member of the organization at the time – used his prestige and devoted his time to putting the organization on the map, nationally and internationally (*ibid*.).

Norman Mailer died on November 10th 2007, but his legacy contiues at Norman Mailer Society and Norman Mailer Center. The Norman Mailer Society is a non-profit organization, founded in 2003 to celebrate Norman Mailer. It has approximately 300 members and meets annually for three days for panels, papers, films and informal discussion about the life, work and reputation of the late chronicler of the American contemporary reality. The organization also publishes *The Mailer Review*, which is co-sponsored by the University of South Florida (normanmailersociety.org). The Norman Mailer Center and Writers Colony is also a non-profit organization for educational purposes, and has been established to honour Norman Mailer's work and lifelong interest in and commitment to writers and writing programmes. The Mailer house in Provincetown serves as the Center's and Colony's headquarters for students, fellows, writers and scholars from all over the world (nmcenter.org). Official biographer of Norman Mailer is J.Michael Lennon, Emeritus Professor of English at Wilkes University, Texas. He maintained a close personal relationship with Mailer for more than thirty years. Lennon has published widely on Mailer, including (with Donna Pedro Lennon), *Norman Mailer: Works and Day* (2000), and edited several of Mailer's works, including *Pieces and Pontifications* (1982), *Conversations with Norman Mailer* (1988), *The Spooky Art: Some Thoughts on Writing* (2005), and *On God: An Uncommon Conversation* (2007). Lennon's collection of Mailer correspondence consists of eight folders of outgoing and incoming letters with Mailer. Carbons and photocopies of Lennon's letters to Mailer date from 1971 to 1993 and include Lennon's first letter to Mailer regarding Mailer's appearance with Gore Vidal and Janet Flanner on »The Dick Cavett Show,« December 2, 1971. Original typed and handwritten letters from Mailer to Lennon date from 1972 to 1993 and contain Mailer's comments on his literary and personal activities. Estimations show that there are about 50,000 letters (research.hrc.utexas.edu). J. Michael Lennon comments that »perhaps no career in American literature has been as brilliant, varied, controversial, public, productive, lengthy and misunderstood« as Mailer's and believes that Mailer matters for three main reasons:

> 1. Mailer was the key innovator in the new wave of participatory journalism that took place in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He argued that there were no immutable boundaries, no lines drawn in heaven, between the genres, and demonstrated this by drilling holes through all the watertight compartments dividing them.

2. Mailer was the most important public intellectual in the American literary world for over 30 years, and along with other figures such as William Buckley, Saul Bellow, Gore Vidal and Susan Sontag, helped establish the creative writer as important a commentator as politicians, pundits and professors. Mailer presented his ideas and commentary on modern politics and culture in every major media venue, save the Internet, and he even dabbled there in his final years. No American writer going back to Mark Twain mastered the modes of communicating with a variety of audiences for as long or as well as Mailer. He wrote for every sort of magazine and journal, underground and aboveground—*Partisan Review, Parade, Esquire, Playboy, Way Out, Fuck You: A Magazine of the Arts, Dissent, Life, Look, Village Voice, Nugget*, the *NYRB* and the *New Yorker*—over 100 different periodicals. He appeared on every major talk show, and many obscure ones.

3. Mailer was the most important chronicler of and commentator on the major events and figures of American life during the last half of the twentieth century. He had daring ideas and insights on the great events and phenomena of the period: the Depression and World War II, McCarthyism and the Hollywood blacklist, the Cold War, Black Power, the sexual revolution, Vietnam and civil disobedience, the Women's Liberation Movement, technology and the space program, prize fights and political conventions (he covered six), and some of the most loved and hated persons of the 20th century: Muhammad Ali and Marilyn Monroe, Hemingway, Castro, Nixon, Gary Gilmore, Lee Harvey Oswald, Madonna, Jackie Kennedy, Picasso and Henry Miller, and at the end of his life, Adolph Hitler (Lennon, normanmailersociety.org).

Most of Norman Mailer's works portray the reality of the United States of America and the complexities of the contemporary American scene. Mailer described the spirit of his time – from the terror of war and numerous dynamic social and political processes to the 1969 moon landing. Conflicts were often in the centre of his writing, as was the relationship between an individual and the society; he speaks of political power and the dangerous power of capital, while pointing to the threat of totalitarianism in America. Mailer spent his entire career writing about violence, power, perverted sexuality, the phenomenon of Hitler, terrorism, religion and corruption. He continually pointed out that individuals were in constant danger of losing freedom and dignity.

The article reveals the areas of social and political contemporary life that were most often critically referred to by Mailer. My analysis concentrates on his fictional works *The Naked and the Dead* (1948), *An American Dream* (1965) and *Why Are We in Vietnam?* (1967) as well as on his non-fiction works *The Armies of the Night* (1968), *Miami and the Siege of Chicago* (1968), *Of a Fire on the Moon* (1970), *The Executioner's Song* (1979) and *Why Are We at War?* (2003). Further on, I discuss how Mailer's work influenced thought and action in America and conclude by elaborating on Mailer's influence on Slovenian literary creation.

Mailer writes about how fighting for freedom and democracy can run afoul of laudable intentions. His first book *The Naked and the Dead,* is as much a remarkable novel about the Second World War as it is a pessimistic account of the future. *The New York Times* wrote that this was »the most impressive novel about the Second World War /.../ Mr. Mailer is as certain to become famous as any fledgling novelist can be« (Mils 100). Mailer was a great and obsessed stylist:

> The division task force had been warned that the forests of Anopopei were formidable, but being told this did not make it easier. Through the densest portions, a man would lose an hour in moving a few hundred feet. In the heart of the forests great trees grew almost a hundred yeards high, their lowest limbs sprouting out two hundred feet from the ground. Beneath them, filling the space, grew other trees whose shrubbery hid the giant ones from view. And in the little room left, a choked assortment of vines and ferns, wild banana trees, stunted palms, flowers, brush and shrubs squeezed against each other, raised their burdened leaves to the doubtful light that filtered through, sucking for air and food like snakes at the bottom of a pit. In the deep jungle it was always as dark as the sky before a summer thunderstorm, and no air ever stirred. Everything was dam and rife and hot as though the jungle were an immense collection of oily rags growing hotter and hotter under the dark stifling vaults of a huge warehouse. Heat licked at everything, and the foliage, responding, grew to prodigious sizes. In the depths, in the heat and the moisture, it was never silent. The birds cawed, the small animals and occasional snakes rustled and squealed, and beneath it all was a hush, almost palpable, in which could be heard the rapt absorbed sounds of vegetation growing. (Mailer, *Naked* 37)

Also Morris Dickstein says that »Mailer had a genius for description, for evoking atmosphere,« (2007: 123).

In *The Naked and the Dead* Mailer notices that the army and society alike are crippled by inhumanity, violence and brutality, dehumanisation, materialism and corruption, and concludes that this is devastating for the United States of America. His subjects are inequality, terrorism, religion, the question of Jewishness and the pathology of power. He is critical towards people in power that tolerate, enable and even encourage violence. Later, Mailer emphasises that big corporations have far too much influence on American life. According to him, the American society is threatened by totalitarianism. Gabriel Miller says that this is »ultimately a political novel« (68), and continues: »In this first novel Mailer equates the army with society and thereby explores the fragmented nature of that society, which has militated against social development, revolutionary or otherwise« (*ibid*.). As far as the style of the novel is concerned, Miller (68) clearly states: »The novel exhibits a hodgepodge of styles and influences: the works of James Farrell, John Steinbeck, and John Dos Passos inform its structure and form.« And Mailer himself commented on the novel as follows:

> I didn't have much literary sophistication while writing *The Naked and the Dead*. I admired Dos Passos immensely and wanted to write a book that

> would be like one of his. My novel was frankly derivative, directly derivative … I had four books on my desk all the time I was writing: *Anna Karenina, Of Time and the River, U. S. A.*, and *Studs Lonigan* ….The atmosphere of *The Naked and the Dead*, the overspirit, is Tolstoyan; the rococo comes out of Dos Passos; the fundamental, slogging style from Farrell, and the occasional overrich descriptions from Wolfe. (Manso 101)

In *An American Dream*, the salient themes are religion, church, God, the Devil, life after death, and violence. The protagonist Stephen Richards Rojack from New York is a murderer:

> I struck her open-handed across the face. I had meant – some last calm intention of my mind had meant – to make it no more than a slap, but my body was speaking faster than my brain, and the blow caught her on the side of the ear and knocked her half out of bed. She was up like a bull and like a bull she charged. Her head struck me in the stomach (setting off a flash in that forest of nerves) and then she drove one powerful knee at my groin (she fought like a prep-school bully) and missing that, she reached with both hands, tried to find my root and mangle me. That blew it out. I struck her a blow on the back of the neck, a dead cold chop which dropped her to a knee, and then hooked an arm about her head and put a pressure on her throat. She was strong, I had always known she was strong, but now her strength was huge. For a moment I did not know if I could hold her down, she had almost the strength to force herself up to her feet and lift me in the air, which in that position is exceptional strength even for a wrestler. For ten or twenty seconds she strained in balance, and then her strength began to pass, it passed over to me, and I felt my arm tightening about her neck. My eyes were closed. I had the mental image I was pushing with my shoulder against an enormous door which would give inch by inch to the effort. (Mailer, *American* 35)

The novel had definitely divided critics. Andrew Gordon (1980: 14) said:

> Mailer wanted to return America to an awareness of its suppressed desires, to tap into the buried dream life of the nation … Thus he wrote a novel, *An American Dream* (1965), a blend of pop fiction thriller and heroic myth. *An American Dream* is a phantasmagoria of the unconscious in which rationality is thrown out the window (along with the hero's wife). In this novel, what Freud called 'the primary process,' the workings of the id, rules: the dense imagery and symbols seem formed through the psychic processes of condensation and displacement, and the plot is deliberately riddled with bizarre coincidences and irrational and magical events – all the logic of a dream.

And another critic Donald L. Kaufmann pointed out: »*An American Dream*, with its tantalizing cluster of images, metaphors and near-symbols, is a novel of suggestion, not explanation, a trap for any critic or reader on a symbol hunt« (2007: 201).

In *An American Dream* »much is implied« and »little substantiated« (Kaufmann 201), and that is why outer reality could also be interpreted as a metaphor for the United States of America. Kaufmann (194-195) continues:

> Mailer's *An American Dream* does not focus on the gross Dream of an America crisscrossed with telephone wires and television antennas, whose fad of the sixties is the conquest of the moon. Rather Mailer's novel, based on total cultural delicacies, is a dramatic critique on those nuances underlining the ambigous values in contemporary America, on those individual roots of American aspirations and ideals.

Mailer believes that American society is too dependent on religion and church, and that that is the reason why people avoid important subjects: »Since the Church refuses to admit the possible victory of Satan, man believes that God is all-powerful. So man also assumes God is prepared to forgive every last little betrayal. Which may not be the case. God might be having a very bad war with troops defecting everywhere. Who knows? Hell by now might be no worse than Las Vegas or Versailles« (American 221).

Church is also strongly criticised by Mailer because it represents the interests of the wealthy elites. Comparing Las Vegas and Versailles, he points towards the corrupted world of the rich, who are lacking in values. Mailer is strongly engaged in criticising the American type of capitalism and consumerism. He raises several other important questions, among them the problem of abortion and the responsibility for the unborn child. And of course he is very critical of irresponsible reporting done by the media. Implicitly, he even states that American society is not only totalitarian but also incestouous. »In *An American Dream*, Mailer took a cliché (as indicated by his title) and made of it an allegorical indictment of American society« (Leeds 2002: 84).

Despite Mailer's disbelief in the American myth of a promised land, he maintains a firm faith in the United States of America. In *The Armies of the Night*, he implies that hope lies in the young generations:

> At any rate, we have an army of at least 35.000 amateur soldiers consisting of doctors, dentists, faculty, veterans groups, housewives, accountants, trade unionists, Communists, Socialists, pacifists, Trotskyists, anarchists, artists, and entertainers, no, even historians may have a joke – there was no more than a smattering and a sprinkling of such professionals at the Pentagon. Present in the majority were college students from all over the East, and high school students and hippies and Diggers and bikers. (Mailer, *Armies* 274)

As a moral example, he presents the courage of the protesters in the 1967 march against the Pentagon – the symbol of power. He questions the relationship between history and fiction and emphasizes the irresponsible reporting of media, who sell fiction as facts, as a major problem. He sees America as a very divided society – there is a discrepancy between the left and the right, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, the whites and the blacks. In the book subtitled *History as a Novel/The Novel as History*, for example, he not only explained his opposition to the Vietnam War but laid bare his feelings and his political commitment. He skillfully enmeshed political rhetoric into storytelling. In 1968 Kazin wrote: »I believe that it is a work of personal and political

reportage that brings to the inner and developing crisis of the United States at this moment admirable sensibilities, candid intelligence, the most moving concern for America itself. Mailer's intuition in this book is that the times demand a new form. He has found it« (*nytimes.com*). And continued:

> The book cracks open the hard nut of American authority at the center, the uncertainty of our power - and, above all, the bad conscience that now afflicts so many Americans. *Armies of the Night* is a peculiarly appropriate and timely contribution to this moment of the national dramas, and among other things, it shows Mailer relieved of his vexing dualities, able to bring all his interests, concerns and actually quite traditional loyalties to equal focus. The form of this diary-essay-tract-sermon grew out of the many simultaneous happenings in Washington that weekend, out of the self-confidence which for writers is style, out of his fascination with power in American and his fear of it, out of his American self-dramatizing and his honest fear for his country. (nytimes.com)

In *The Armies of the Night* Mailer exercised »participatory journalism«:

> On a day somewhat early in September, the year of the first March on the Pentagon, 1967, the phone rang one morning and Norman Mailer, operating on his own principle of war games and random play, picked it up. That was not characteristic of Mailer. Like most people whose nerves are sufficiently sensitive to keep them well-covered with flesh, he detested the telephone. Taken in excess, it drove some psychic equivalent of static into the privacies of the brain; so he kept himself amply defended. He had an answer service, a secretary, and occasional members of his family to pick up the receiver for him – he discouraged his own participation on the phone – sometimes he would not even speak to old friends. Touched by faint intimations of remorse, he would call them back later. He had the idea – it was undeniably oversimple – that if you spent too much time on the phone in the evening, you destroyed some kind of creativity for the dawn. (Mailer, *Armies* 14–15)

In *The Spooky Art* Mailer wrote that the style of *The Armies of the Night* was the influence of Henry Adams:

> The influence of Henry Adams on *The Armies of the Night* is peculiar. I had never read much Adams. In my Freshman year at Harvard, we were assigned one long chapter of *The Education of Henry Adams*, and I remember thinking at the time what an odd thing to write about yourself in the third person. Who is this fellow, Henry Adams, talking about himself as Henry Adams? I remember being annoyed in that mildly irritable way Freshmen have of passing over extraordinary works of literature. To my conscious recollection, I hardly ever thought about him again. Yet, start reading *The Armies of the Night*, and immediately you say – even I said – »My God, this is pure Henry Adams.« It's as if I were the great-grandson. Contemplate, therefore, how peculiar is influence: Adams must have remained

> in my mind as a possibility, the way a painter might look at a particular Picasso or Cezanne and say to himself, »That's the way to do it.« Yet the influence might not pop forth for twenty or thirty years. When it does, the painter could say, »Oh yes, that was a Picasso I saw at MoMA twenty-five years ago, and I've always wanted to try such a palette, and now I have.« In effect, that's what happened with Henry Adams. (Mailer, *Spooky* 99)

Mailer was talking about himself in the third person, which he commented:

> While it seemed interesting up to a point to speak of a protagonist named Norman Mailer, it was, on the other hand, damned odd. I was halfway into the book before I got used to it. It is even a dislocating way to regard oneself. Yet by the time I was done, I missed this character of Norman Mailer so much that I brought him back for book after book. It never worked as well again. The commitment has to be there. In *The Armies of the Night*, I was a true protagonist of the best sort – half-heroic, three-quarters comic. (Mailer, *Spooky* 127)

Also *Why Are We in Vietnam?* portrays the violence of American society. In accordance with his left-conservatism, Mailer strongly opposes the war in Vietnam. He believes that America's involvement in Vietnam is unjust and perverted and that fighting wars in foreign countries for the hidden reasons of wealth and corruption is immoral. Later Mailer commented on the novel:

> *Why Are We In Vietnam?* is the only novel I ever finished under the mistaken belief I was writing another. /…/ I imagined a group of seven or eight bikers, hippies and studs plus a girl or two, living in the scrub thickets that sat in some of the valleys between the dunes. Only six feet high, those thickets were nonetheless forests, and if you could find a path through the thorns and cat briars, nobody could track you, not in a hurry. So I peopled the thickets with characters: My characters were as wild as anyone who ever came to Provincetown. /…/ I began the book in the spring of '66. It attracted me too much not to begin. Yet because I could not thrust Provincetown into such literary horrors without preparation, I thought I would start with a chapter about hunting bear in Alaska. A prelude. I would have two tough rich boys, each as separated from social convention as any two rich boys could be – Texans I would make them, out of reserve memories of Texans I had served with in the 112th Cavalry out of San Antonio. The boys would still be young, still mean rather than uncontrollably murderous – the hunting might serve as a bridge to get them ready for more. They would come back from the Alaskan hunting trip ready to travel; Provincetown would eventually receive them. (Mailer, *Spooky* 233–234)

Mailer also reminds us, in *Miami and the Siege of Chicago*, that freedom should not be taken for granted; rather, it should be fought for every day: »Freedom does not work unless we work at it,« he said, »and that I believe to be part of the reason for the spirit and determination of so many of the young people« (Mailer 200). He elaborates

on many other topics and problems, including youth, finance, and environmental pollution. The book, however, is very important because it is an excellent example of how politics can abuse rhetoric. Between the lines, the author once again shows that insidious American political decisions taken mean that American politics has characteristics of totalitarianism:

> Politics is property; property relations are law-abiding. Even seizure of property can be accomplished legally. So the history of a convention must concern itself with law-abiding citizens; conversely, a study of law-defying citizens who protested the deliberations of this convention in the street ought to find them propertyless, therefore not in politics. In fact, it does not. Not quite. There were two groups to the army of young people who assembled in Chicago; one could divide them conveniently as socialists and existentialists. The socialists, you can be certain, believed in every variety of social and revolutionary idea but membership in the Socilist Party, which of course, being young people, they detested; for the most part they were students of the New Left who belonged to SDS, the Resistance (a movement of confirmed draft resisters) and a dozen or more peace organizations. While their holdings were almost entirely in moral property, it would take a strong country mind to claim that socialists have no property relations in their own politics, since indeed there are ideologies among these sissies, Governor Maddox, which have passed down like a family trust through the generations, and the war for control of a radical committee will often revolve around the established seat of the Chairman. (Mailer, *Miami* 128)

Mailer is often very pessimistic about the future of the United States of America. *Of a Fire on the Moon* is a book-length example of this pessimism. He realises that the driving force of everything, including the space flights, is corporate capitalism. The landing of Apollo on the moon opened the way to space imperialism. Consequently, the world will never be the same. Mailer contemplates the future of the planet and is very worried because technology has come to prevail over nature:

> So the century feels a profound anxiety. That anxiety lives like the respirations of a clam in the clammy handshakes of all too many technologists and technicians. They know their work is either sufficiently liberating to free man from the dread of his superstition-ridden past, or their work smashes real and valuable taboos, and so becomes sacrilegious acts upon a real religious fundament. Could this not yet destroy the earth as it has already disrupted every natural economy of nature? That is the primary source of the great anxiety of the technologist as he stands before the idea that a machine may have a psychology. (Mailer, *Fire* 152)

Mailer believes that with progress there will be less nature and consequently less future. Self destruction is often on Mailer's mind.

The writer's left-conservatism is also seen in his criticism of complex and divided American society in *The Executioner's Song*. Mailer explained his decision to write a novel about Gilmore in *The Spooky Art*:

> I may not be a good intellectual, but my avocation is, nonetheless, to create intellections. I put them on like adhesive plasters. In the case of Gary Gilmore, however, I had to pull them off. As I explored deeper into what Gilmore's nature might be, I decided that every concept I had about him was inadequate. So I wanted the reader of *The Executioner's Song* to confront the true complexity of one human. That state of perception will always arise by studying any person close enough. That he was a murderer made my task simpler, because we are all fascinated by killers. But any person studied in depth will prove fascinating. It is certainly the yeast in any good marriage. Take any soul alive, and he or she can prove exceptional provided you get to know him or her well enough. Of course, if we are dealing with a sad case, the exceptional element is more likely to be found in the canyons of their horrendous bad luck or in the contortions of an ongoing cowardice. Or both. Bad luck feeds fear; the obverse may be equally true. (Mailer, *Spooky* 152–153)

In the novel, the author stresses the lack of values, along with violence, the irresponsibility of the media and of course the dilemma of the death sentence that is in opposition to the value of life.

Why Are We At War? is a book that deals with topics that have accompanied Mailer since his first book in 1948. Once again, he clearly articulates his opinion on patriotism, terrorism, capitalism, totalitarianism and American foreign policy:

> Probably half of America has an unspoken desire to go to war. It satisfies our mythology. America, goes our logic, is the only force for good that can rectify the bad. George W. Bush is shrewd enough to work that equation out all by himself. He may even sense better than anyone how a war with Iraq will satisfy our addiction to living with adventure on TV. If this is facetious, so be it – the country is becoming more loutish every year. So, yes, war is also mighty TV entertainment. (Mailer, *War* 54)

He is further on worried about curtailing of liberties:

> If we have a depression or fall into desperate economic times, I don't know what's going to hold the country together. There's just too much anger here, too much ruptured vanity, too much shock, too much identity crisis. And, worst of all, too much patriotism. Patriotism in a country that's failing has a logical tendency to turn fascistic, just as too much sentimentality will corrupt compassion. Fascism in America is not going to come with a political party. Nor with black shirts or brown shirts. But there will be a curtailing of liberties. Homeland Security has put the machinery in place. The people who are running the county, in my opinion, simply do not have the character or wisdom to fight the concept of freedom if we suffer horrors; no, not if we suffer dirty bombs, terrorist attacks on a huge scale, virulent diseases. The notion that you're going to have your freedom saved by people who work for security agencies is curious at best. They're on a one-way street. Anything bad of that sort is very bad for them. So they're going to

> do their utmost to restrict the freedom of people during critical situations. In the final analysis, democracy is inimical to security. Americans have to be willing to say at a certain point that we're ready to take some terrorist hits without panicking, that freedom is more important to us than security. (Mailer, *War* 105-106)

In *Why Are We at War?* Mailer points out that the fact that a country was once a democracy does not guarantee it will be a democracy forever.

Despite topic themes and his extraordinary writing style, Norman Mailer was often overlooked in Slovenian literary environment. The Slovenian media wrote about him when his new novels were released, and his personality was of great interest to them, but reflexive reviews were rare – with the exception of the national Radio Slovenia. Mailer is, however, an interesting subject for theses and dissertations among students at Slovenian universities.

Ljubljana

WORKS CITED

Dearborn, Mary V. *Mailer: A Biography*. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999.

Dickstein, Morris. »How Mailer bacame 'Mailer': the writer as private and public character«. *The Mailer Review: Inaugural Issue* (2007): 118 – 131.

Glenday, K. Michael. »The Hot Breath of the Future: *The Naked and the Dead*.« *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Norman Mailer* (2003): 197 – 210.

Gordon, Andrew. *An American Dreamer.* Toronto: Associated University Press, 1980.

Gutkind, Lee. »A tribute to Norman Mailer on the 30th anniversary of the Executioner's Song's Pulitzer Prize.« *Creative Nonfiction* (2010): 6.

Kaufmann, Donald L. »*An American Dream*: The Singular Nightmare.« *The Mailer Review: Inaugural Issue* (2007): 194 – 205.

Leeds, Barry H. *The Enduring Vision of Norman Mailer*. Bainbridge Island: Pleasure Boat Studio, 2002.

Mailer, Norman. *An American Dream*. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1969.

_____. *The Armies of the Night: History as a Novel, the Novel as History*. New York: The New American Library, 1968.

_____. *The Executioner's Song*. Boston, Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1979.

_____. *A Fire on the Moon*. London: Pan Books Ltd., 1970.

_____. *Miami and the Siege of Chicago: An informal history of the American political conventions of 1968*. Harmondsworth, Victoria: Penguin Books Ltd., 1969.

_____. *The Naked and the Dead*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1976.

_____. *The Spooky Art: Some Thoughts on Writing*. New York: Random House, 2003.

_____. *Why Are We in Vietnam?: A Novel.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1967.

Manso, Peter (1985): *Mailer: His Life and Times*. New York: Penguin Books.

Miller, Gabriel. »A Small Trumpet of Defiance: Politics and the Buried Life in Norman Mailer's Early Fiction.« *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Norman Mailer* (2003): 67 – 80.
Potočnik Topler, Jasna. »Družbenokritična ost v delih Normana Mailerja« (doktorska disertacija). Ljubljana: FF, 2012.

Online sources:

Kazin, Alfred. "The Trouble He's Seen." New York Times, 5. 5. 1968. (nytimes.com), 24. 11. 2011.
Lennon, J. Michael. ''Why Mailer Matters.'' (normanmailersociety.org/2011/12/29/participatory-journalism-of-norman-mailer), 30. 12. 2011.
Lennon, J. Michael. »A Preliminary Inventory of His Correspondence with Norman Mailer at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center.« (research.hrc.utexas.edu)
Siegel, Lee. "Maestro if the Ego." *New York Times*. 21. 1. 2007. (query.nytimes.com), 28. 4. 2007.
The Norman Mailer Society (normanmailersociety.org)
The Norman Mailer Center (nmcenter.org)

UDK 821.112.2–94.09Dückers T.:316.772.4

UN(BE)GREIFBARE BILDER DES FAMILIENGEDÄCHTNISSES IN DER DEUTSCHEN ZEITGENÖSSISCHEN LITERATUR: TANJA DÜCKERS´ *HIMMELSKÖRPER*

Tina Štrancar

Abstract

This article first presents in brief recent theories of memory, their relevance for literary theory (literature as a medium of collective memory), and then performs a reading of the novel Himmelskörper by German author Tanja Dückers through the lens of family memory. It signals attention to the strategies of fictionalisation of and reflection on communicative memory, manifest in the novel in the form of family conversations, and the transformation of communicative memory into cultural or collective memory.

Schlüsselwörter: Gedächtnistheorien, Gegenwartsliteratur, Familiengeschichte, Tanja Dückers

EINLEITUNG

Der vorliegende Beitrag setzt sich zum Ziel, anhand einer repräsentativen fiktiven Familiengeschichte plausibel zu machen, wie in den Familienromanen der jüngsten deutschsprachigen Literatur Familiengedächtnis bzw. Familienerinnerungen wieder- und weitergegeben werden, sowie wie die durch die Selbstinszenierung einer kritischen Reflexion unterworfen werden. Am Beispiel Tanja Dückers Romans *Himmelskörper* – d. h., am Beispiel eines fiktiven Erzähltextes, der mit genuin literarischen Mitteln den Gedächtnisdiskurs reflektiert – wird gezeigt, wie der Übergang des kommunikativen Gedächtnisses ins kulturelle Gedächtnis literarisch inszeniert werden kann. Dabei gilt die besondere Aufmerksamkeit dieses Beitrags den Narrativierungsstrategien, die eine Familiengeschichte und dadurch auch Familienerinnerungen erzählbar machen.

GEDÄCHTNISTHEORETISCHES PLÄDOYER

Ausgehend von einem dialogischen Verhältnis zwischen den fiktionalen Gedächtniswelten bzw. den literarischen Inszenierungen des Erinnerns und den kultur-

wissenschaftlichen Gedächtnistheorien hat sich in den letzten Jahren die Literaturwissenschaft bemüht, die Frage zu beantworten, welche Gedächtniskonzepte der Literaturwissenschaft zu unterscheiden sind. Ebenso wurde die Frage hervorgehoben: „Welche neuen Perspektiven und Forschungsfelder eröffnen sich durch die literaturwissenschaftliche Gedächtnisforschung?“ (Erll, Nünning 2005: 2).

Die führenden Forscher auf diesem Gebiet, Ansgar Nünning und Astrid Erll, haben in ihren Studien im Groben zwischen drei Ansätzen: ‚Gedächtnis *der* Literatur‘, ‚Gedächtnis *in* der Literatur‘ sowie ‚Literatur als *Medium* des Gedächtnisses‘ unterschieden und sie danach detaillierter in fünf Gedächtniskonzepte der Literaturwissenschaft subsumiert: das Gedächtnis der Literatur bzw. Intertextualität und Medialität, Gattungen als Orte des Gedächtnisses, Kanon und Literaturgeschichte als institutionalisiertes Gedächtnis von Literaturwissenschaft und Gesellschaft, Literatur als Mimesis des Gedächtnisses sowie Literatur als Medium des kollektiven Gedächtnisses in historischen Erinnerungskulturen.

Der vorliegende Beitrag bemüht sich ebenso zu zeigen, wie die kulturwissenschaftlichen Ansätze der Gedächtnisforschung auch für die literaturwissenschaftliche Textanalyse fruchtbar gemacht werden können. Neben des Verständnisses der Literatur als Medium des kollektiven Gedächtnisses wird im Folgenden Fokus vor allem auf den Ansatz, der Literatur als Mimesis[1] des Gedächtnisses konzipiert, gesetzt. Dieser Ansatz zeichnet sich dadurch aus, dass bei den „Untersuchungen zur literarischen Inszenierung von Erinnerung und Gedächtnis [ ] die dialogische Beziehung von Literatur und außerliterarischen Diskursen“ (Erll, Nünning 2003: 16) stärker im Fokus stehen. Die Hauptprämisse dieses Konzepts geht von der Annahme aus, dass „Literatur auf die außertextuelle kulturelle Wirklichkeit Bezug nimmt und sie im Medium der Fiktion beobachtbar macht“ (Erll, Nünning 2005: 2). Mit dem Paul Ricœurs dreistufigen *Mimesis-Modell* können diese verschiedenen Ebenen des Verhältnisses von Literatur und Gedächtnis zunächst folgendermaßen veranschaulicht werden: „Literarische Werke sind erstens bezogen auf außerliterarische Gedächtnisse, stellen zweitens deren Inhalte und Funktionsweisen im Medium der Fiktion dar und können drittens individuelle Gedächtnisse und Erinnerungskulturen mitprägen.“ (Erll, Nünning 2003: 17)

Bevor es an das Familiengedächtnis und an dessen Inszenierung sowie Reflektion im Roman näher herangegangen wird, bedarf es zuerst eines kurzen Überblicks der Gedächtnistheorien und Gedächtnistypologie, um die Inszenierung des Familiengedächtnisses besser einordnen zu können. Wie es heutzutage schon allgemein anerkannt ist, stellt die ausgehende, grundlegende Prämisse vieler Gedächtnistheorien gerade das gemeinsame Erinnern dar, was zur Folge hat, dass jeglicher Erinnerungsvorgang als ein sozialer Prozess zu interpretieren ist. Der Erste, der darauf hingewiesen hat, und dadurch zum ‚Vater‘ des Begriffs „kollektives Gedächtnis“ wurde, war Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945). Sein Novum war die Bezeichnung des Gedächtnisses als „Kulturphänomen“ – was bedeutete, dass er das Gedächtnis aus der soziologischen, und nicht mehr aus der neuropsychologischen Sicht, wie bis damals üblich war, betrachtete. Die

[1] „[D]er Begriff Mimesis bezieht sich […] auf die literaturwissenschaftliche Theoriebildung zur aktiven Erzeugung von Wirklichkeiten (‚Poesis‘) durch literarische Texte, welche sich allerdings zugleicht […] durch einen Bezug auf außerliterarische Wirklichkeit auszeichnen.“ (Erll, Nünning 2003: 16)

wichtigste Fragestellung, die er sich im Zusammenhang mit der sozialen Bedingtheit des Gedächtnisses gestellt hat, war die Frage, was lebendige Menschen als Gruppen zusammenhalte, wobei er zur Erkenntnis gelangt ist, dass das wichtigste Mittel der Kohäsion die gemeinsamen Erinnerungen sind: „Es gibt kein mögliches Gedächtnis außerhalb derjenigen Bezugsrahmen, deren sich in der Gesellschaft lebenden Menschen bedienen, um ihre Erinnerungen zu fixieren und wiederzufinden." (Halbwachs 1985: 121) Diese Erkenntnis erweiterte er in eine Theorie des „Gruppengedächtnisses", wobei er hervorgehoben hat, dass es nicht nur die Erinnerungen sind, die eine Gruppe stabilisieren, sondern dass auch die Gruppe die Erinnerung stabilisiert. (Vgl. A. Assmann 1999: 131) Sein Konzept des kollektiven Gedächtnisses hat er in drei Büchern entfaltet: 1925 erschien *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (*Das Gedächtnis und seine sozialen Bedingungen*, 1985). In diesem ersten Buch weist er zum ersten Mal darauf hin, dass für jeden individuellen Erinnerungsvorgang ein stabilisierender und anpassungsfähiger sozialer Bezugsrahmen (cardes soziaux) der Rekonstruktion von Vergangenheit notwendig ist, und belegt dies am Beispiel von Religionsgemeinschaften, von sozialen Klassen und Familien. Danach arbeitete er fünfzehn Jahre an der Schrift *La mémoire collective* (*Das kollektive Gedächtnis*, 1967), die erst postum, 1950 nach seinem tragischen Tod in Buchenwald erschienen ist. Zuvor wurde sein drittes Buch veröffentlicht – 1941 *La Topographie légendaire des Évangiles en Terre Sainte* (*Stätten der Verkündigung im Heiligen Land*, 2002).

Angenommen, dass es die „sozialen Rahmen" sind, die die Erinnerungen der Einzelnen organisieren, bedeutet das nichts anderes, als dass die Erinnerung immer ein Resultat der Interaktion des Individuums mit seinem sozialen Umfeld ist. An bedeutsame (bzw. erinnerungswürdige) Lebensereignisse und -erfahrungen wird erinnert, indem man darüber in einer bestimmten Gruppe (das kann ein Freundes-, Familienkreis o. Ä. sein) in Dialog tritt. Im Prozess des Erinnerns kommt also der Kommunikation die entscheidende Rolle zu. Wenn diese abbricht, oder wenn sich die Bezugsrahmen ändern oder sogar verschwinden, ist das Vergessen die Folge.

In dieser Hinsicht des Erinnerns als kommunikative Angelegenheit erscheint es sinnvoll, das Familiengedächtnis auch an die Theorie des kommunikativen Gedächtnisses anzuknüpfen, die im deutschsprachigen Raum von Aleida und vor allem von Jan Assmann geprägt wurde. Jan Assmanns Theorie des kommunikativen Gedächtnisses kann als eine Nachfolge von Halbwachs´ Überlegungen zum Generationengedächtnis gesehen werden und zugleich als ein Forschungszweig der *Oral History*, die sich in den 1980ern als eine neue Forschungsrichtung im Rahmen der Geschichtswissenschaft (die bisher in erster Linie auf schriftliche und bildliche Dokumente zurückgriff) etablierte. Die Methode von *Oral History* bestand darin, die lebendigen Erinnerungen organischer Gedächtnisse an die Ereignisse, die für ein Kollektiv von Bedeutung waren, fruchtbar zu machen. So wurden mit den jeweiligen Zeitzeugen lebensgeschichtliche Interviews geführt, wobei auch Rückschlüsse auf historische Wahrnehmungs- und Verhaltensweisen gezogen wurden. (Vgl. Erll 2003a: 22) Nach Jan Assmann ist ein Geschichtsbild, das sich in derartigen Erinnerungen und Erzählungen konstruiert, eine „Geschichte des Alltags", eine „Geschichte von unten" (J. Assmann 1992: 51).

Allen drei Begriffen Generationengedächtnis, kommunikatives Gedächtnis und Oral History ist gemeinsam, dass es wegen des Fehlens von externen Speichermedien zu einer eigentümlichen Gewichtung des Vergangenheitsbezugs kommt. (Vgl. Pethes 2008: 62) Erinnerungen an selbst Erlebtes, die auch biografische Erinnerungen genannt werden können, existieren also in den erzählten Geschichten, die auf sozialer Interaktion beruhen, indem sie innerhalb von Familie erzählt werden. Nach Jan Assmann umfasst das kommunikative Gedächtnis eine Zeitspanne von achtzig bis hundert Jahren und ist damit drei bis vier zugleich lebenden Generationen zugänglich.

Die Abhängigkeit von der mündlichen Überlieferung hat zufolge, dass das kommunikative Gedächtnis instabil ist: Auf der inhaltlichen Ebene ist es einerseits der Tendenz unterworfen, dass bei jedem (Weiter)Erzählen unabsichtlich oder absichtlich etwas hinzugefügt oder verschwiegen wird. Andererseits wechseln aber die Inhalte des kommunikativen Gedächtnisses zwangsläufig auch dadurch, dass die Instanzen aussterben, die über das Erzählte noch als biografische Erinnerung verfügen. Diese mitwandernde Vergessenheitsschwelle wird auch *floating gap* genannt. (Vgl. J. Assmann 1992: 50). Am historischen Beispiel der deutschen Vergangenheitsbewältigung spricht aber Jan Assmann auch von einer anderen kritischen Schwelle, die im Rahmen des kommunikativen Gedächtnisses die Zeitspanne von 40 Jahren darstellt. Denn in dieser Zeit treten die Zeitzeugen, die als Erwachsene ein bedeutsames Ereignis erlebt haben, aus dem „zukunftsbezogenen Berufsleben heraus und in das Alter ein, in dem die Erinnerung wächst und mit ihr der Wunsch nach Fixierung und Weitergabe." (51)

GERETTETE FAMILIENERINNERUNGEN

Ausgehend von Jan Assmanns Überlegungen zum *floating gap* lässt sich auch die Popularität und der Boom der zeitgenössischen Familiengeschichten um die Jahrtausendwende erklären. Wie das Familiengedächtnis in Form des kommunikativen Gedächtnisses im Medium der Literatur inszeniert und reflektiert werden kann, wird im Folgenden auf einem der „typischen Beispiele" der gegenwärtigen deutschen Familiengeschichte gezeigt – auf dem Roman *Himmelskörper* (Aufbau Verlag 2003) der Berliner Autorin Tanja Dückers. Die 1968 in West Berlin geborene Autorin ist die Angehörige der so genannten Dritten Generation[2] (bzw. Generation der Enkelkinder der Zeitzeugen von Holocaust) und gehört zu den SchriftstellerInnen, die in ihrem Werk um die Jahrtausendwende mithilfe der Erinnerungsgemeinschaft Familie Bezug auf die deutsche Vergangenheit genommen haben. Eine Repräsentantin der Dritten Generation ist aber auch die Protagonistin des Romans – die Ich-Erzählerin Eva Maria Sandmann mit dem mythologischen Kosenamen Freia. Die Kindheit von Freia und ihrem Zwillingsbruder Paul wird im Wesentlichen von den großelterlichen Erzählungen geprägt,

[2] Nach den mittlerweile schon allgemein anerkannten Kriterien, die nicht mehr mit den Begriffen der Kinder- (2. Generation) und Enkelgeneration (3. Generation) operieren wollen, zählen zu der Ersten Generation die s. g. Zeitzeugen, die den Nationalsozialismus schon bewusst (als Erwachsene) erlebt haben und darauf biografische Erinnerungen haben. Unter der Zweiten Generation ist die Generation gemeint, die zu den Kriegszeiten entweder noch zu jung war, um die Ereignisse bewusst wahrzunehmen oder noch gar nicht geboren. Bei den Erinnerungen, die diese Generation an den Krieg hat, handelt es sich schon um vermittelte Erinnerungen von der Ersten Generation.

in denen die Großmutter Jo und der Großvater Mäxchen vom Jahr zum Jahr mehr bereit sind, über den Januar 1945 zu erzählen – über die Fluchtgeschichte der Familie aus Danzig. Im Laufe der Zeit kommt Freia dem sorgfältig gehüteten Familiengeheimnis auf die Spur: Es war damals ihre Mutter, die als fünfjähriges Mädchen die Familie vor der Katastrophe auf dem Schiff Wilhelm Gustloff gerettet hat. Indem sie die Nachbarfamilie vor der Besatzung des Minensuchbootes Theodor angezeigt hatte, dass sie schon lange nicht mehr den Hitler-Gruß benutzen, sicherte sie den letzten freien Platz auf Theodor ihrer Familie. Die Nachbarfamilie ist so zusammen mit Wilhelm Gustloff untergegangen. Unter diesem Schuldgefühl leidet Freias Mutter ihr ganzes Leben lang, bis sie letztendlich Selbstmord begeht. Nach dem Tod der Großeltern und dem Selbstmord der Mutter entscheiden sich Freia und Paul, dass sie die äußerst geheimnisvolle Familiengeschichte, die sie Stück für Stück seit ihrer Kindheit zusammengestellt haben, irgendwie (künstlerisch) bearbeiten, verschriftlichen müssen, und zwar so märchenhaft wie möglich. Selbst die erzählte Zeit des Romans reflektiert also die gegenwärtige Situation – oder mit Jan Assmanns Worten *floating gap* – also die Zeit des Aussterbens von Zeitzeugen des Holocausts bzw. der Generation, für die die Zeit des zweiten Weltkriegs noch ihre eigenen biografischen Erinnerungen darstellen. Die bildhaften Szenen und fiktive Familiengespräche, die die „Erinnerungen" mehr oder weniger in der Form von unschuldigen Geschichten, in denen immer wieder dies oder das verschwiegen oder uminterpretiert wird, widergeben, ergeben ein mehrschichtiges Familienporträt, das die immer wieder aktuellen Fragen bezüglich der zwischengenerationellen Beziehungen und deren Sicht auf die problematische deutsche Vergangenheit eröffnet.

Die Protagonistin Freia begreift ihre Schwangerschaft als Anlass, ihre Familiengeschichte samt allen Geheimnissen zu Ende zu recherchieren – oder wie es im Roman heißt: „Es gibt so viel Ungeklärtes in unserer Familie, das mir plötzlich keine Ruhe mehr läßt. [ ] vielleicht ist es ein unbewußter Drang, zu wissen, in was für einen Zusammenhang, in was für ein Nest ich da mein Kind setze" (HK 26). Die Überlegungen der Protagonistin: „Plötzlich war ich ein Teil einer langen Kette, einer Verbindung, eines Konstrukts, das mir eigentlich immer suspekt gewesen war" (HK 26) weisen die Merkmale der jüngsten deutschen Familiengeschichten auf, die Aleida Assmann folgend formuliert hat: Es geht um „die Fokussierung auf ein fiktives oder autobiographisches Ich, das sich seiner/ihrer Identität gegenüber der eigenen Familie und der deutschen Geschichte vergewissert." (A. Assmann 2007b: 73) Aus Freias Aussage folgt aber auch, dass die Geschichte, die sie schreibt, die Umstände des eigenen Entstehens reflektiert, was heißt, dass es sich um einen metahistorischen Generationenroman handelt, der nicht nur die Familiengeschichte rekonstruiert, sondern auch ihre Entstehung reflektiert.

VON „FAMILIENERINNERUNGEN" ZUR FAMILIENGESCHICHTE

Wie bereits im vorigen Absatz erklärt, wird also einerseits die bewusste und gewollte Rekonstruktion von Freias verdrängter und verschwiegener Familiengeschichte dargestellt, wobei es sich bei Freias Erinnerungen um die Erinnerungen aus der zweiten Hand handelt, um die „Erinnerungen nach der Erinnerung", für die die amerikanische

Literaturwissenschaftlerin Marianne Hirsch den Begriff der „*Postmemory*“ geprägt hat. Freia schreibt also über die geschichtlichen Erfahrungen (mit dem Nationalsozialismus), woran sie aber als Nachgeborene keine persönlichen Erinnerungen haben kann.

Andererseits wird anhand der Figur Freias exemplarisch gezeigt, wie sich der Kreis des Erinnerungsdiskurses schließt bzw. wie das kommunikative Gedächtnis ins kulturelle bzw. kollektive Gedächtnis übergehen kann. Dabei wird im Roman zwischen mehreren Handlungs- und Erinnerungsebenen unterschieden. Die drei Haupthandlungsebenen – also Gegenwart, aus der Freias Buch geschrieben wird, Freias Kindheit und Jugend sowie die Flucht der Großeltern, die in Geschichten und in Familiengesprächen rekonstruiert werden – treten nicht chronologisch auf, sondern werden durch den ganzen Roman zerstreut. Anders ist es mit den Erinnerungsebenen, die im Roman als chronologische Erzählstütze auftauchen und mit den Phasen des Erwachsenwerdens von Ich-Erzählerin verbunden sind. Die erste Erinnerungsebene stellen so die frühen Erzählungen von Großeltern dar. Als Freia und Paul noch Kinder waren, pflegte es z. B. die Großmutter Jo, den Enkeln beim Flechten von Freias Zöpfen Geschichten zu erzählen. Diese Erzählungen, in denen noch sehr viel verschwiegen wurde, deren Leerstellen also, werden von den beiden Kindern durch ihre phantasievollen Geschichten über Gespenster aus dem See, die dem Großvater das Bein abgebissen haben sollte, ergänzt. Die nächste Phase stellt die Konfrontation mit der deutschen Geschichte in der Schule dar, als auch die Eltern und Großeltern begriffen haben, dass die Zwillinge alt genug sind, um die „Wahrheit“ zu erfahren. Diese Phase knüpft unvermittelt an die Phase der „Familiengespräche“ an, die im Sinne Kepplers „Tischgespräche“, als ritualisierte Erzählungen von früher, die immer gleich erzählt werden und die die Zuhörer eigentlich bereits schon kennen, vorkommen.

Weiter unternimmt Freia als junge Erwachsene zwei Reisen – nach dem Tod vom Onkel Kazimiez fährt sie mit ihrem damaligen Freund Wieland nach Warschau und ins Warschauer Ghetto, nach dem Tod ihrer Großmutter Jo reist sie zusammen mit ihrer Mutter nach Gdynia, um den Tatort des Familienschicksals zu besichtigen. Auf die topografischen Elemente der Spurensuche, wo die jüngeren Generationen mithilfe von Orten, an denen die Ahnen agiert haben, die Familiengeheimnisse recherchieren und aufdecken, wird im Rahmen des vorliegenden Beitrags nicht näher eingegangen. Es muss jedoch betont werden, dass solche Spurensuche einen in Familiengeschichten wesentlichen Teil der Erinnerungsstützen aufbaut.

Als die beiden Großeltern sterben, folgt noch eine für die Familiengeschichten typische Phase bzw. Erzählstütze, mit deren Hilfe viele Familiengeschichten beginnen, und zwar das Motiv der Wohnungsauflösung. Anhand von Fundstücken (Nazi-Relikte), die über eine andere Existenz der Großeltern zeugen, erkennt Freia noch eine andere „Wahrheit“, die sie aus den Familienerzählungen nicht kennt.

Diese erzählerischen „Erinnerungsstationen“ schließen dann den Kreis mit Freias und Pauls so genannter „Transformationsarbeit“, in der die beiden ihre eigene Wahrheit bzw. Version der Familiengeschichte künstlerisch (bzw. mithilfe der Kunst) zu bearbeiten versuchen, wodurch die Ereignisse eigentlich aus der Gegenwart rekonstruiert werden. Paul beginnt in seine Collagen die Fundstücke einzubauen, die Freia „märchenhaft“ zu beschreiben bzw. verschriftlichen versucht. Jedoch vergeblich, das Ergebnis hat die Familiengeschichte noch rätselhafter gemacht:

> Unsere "Transformationsarbeit" sollte doch die schwerfällige Ansammlung von Besitztümern, Reminiszenzen an die "glücklichste Zeit" unserer hundsnormalen Familie in etwas Leichteres, Klares, Transparentes verwandeln – statt dessen machte Paul alles umständlicher und rätselhafter als vorher. Ich war zunehmend unzufrieden mit unserem Projekt. Ich wollte Klarheit gewinnen, nicht ein weiteres Labyrinth aufbauen. (HK 270f)

Wie der Umriss der Erinnerungsstationen weiter oben zeigt, bietet Roman *Himmelskörper* ein breites Spektrum des Erinnerungsdiskurses, der sowohl inszeniert als auch reflektiert wird, und damit darauf hinweist, welche Rolle bzw. Funktionen Literatur bei der Bildung und Aufbewahrung des Kulturgedächtnisses haben kann. Da dieses Spektrum, wie bereits gesehen, sehr breit ist, schränke ich mich in diesem Beitrag nur auf das Familiengedächtnis ein, und wie es sich im Roman im Sinne des kommunikativen Gedächtnisses in der Form von Familiengesprächen manifestiert.

FAMILIENGESPRÄCH – EINE VON DEN NARRATIVIERUNGSSTRATEGIEN DER FAMILIENGESCHICHTE

Familiengeschichten und Familienromane (oder auch Generationenromane, wie sie von einigen Literaturwissenschaftlern bezeichnet werden) stellen ein hervorragendes Medium des kollektiven bzw. kulturellen Gedächtnisses (und dadurch auch Erinnerung an den Nationalsozialismus) nicht zuletzt dadurch dar, dass sie die Geschichtsereignisse aus der Sicht mehrerer Generationen schildern können. Um diese Multiperspektivität zu erreichen, gibt es unterschiedliche Literarisierungsstrategien. Dabei erwies sich bei der Frage, wie die Geschichte weitergegeben werden kann – mit welcher erzählerischen Form – dass jede Generation aus ihrer Sicht sprechen kann, die Übernahme bzw. Inszenierung des Familiengesprächs noch als besonders fruchtbar. Auch in dem Roman *Himmelskörper* kommt unter den literarischen Strategien, die eine Familiengeschichte erzählbar machen, dem Familiengespräch eine wichtige Rolle zu, wodurch Tanja Dückers einzelnen Generationen das Wort gibt und sie von sich erzählen lässt (bzw. sich selbst so darzustellen lässt, wie ihr Selbstbildnis ist).

Jedenfalls weist das fiktionale Gespräch aus dem Roman viele Parallelen mit den realen Familien- bzw. Tischgesprächen auf, die aus den soziologischen Studien herausgehen. Die führenden Persönlichkeiten, die sich in den letzten Jahren im deutschsprachigen Gebiet mit der mündlichen Tradierung von Erinnerungen auf den Nationalsozialismus in den deutschen Familien auseinandergesetzt haben, sind die Soziologin Angela Keppler und der Sozialpsychologe Harald Welzer. In ihren Studien *Tischgespräche* (Keppler) und *„Opa war kein Nazi". Nationalsozialismus und Holocaust im Familiengedächtnis* (Welzer) haben sie die Familiengespräche über den Zweiten Weltkrieg analysiert. Beim Versuch, das Familiengedächtnis zu definieren, sind die beiden zur Folgerung gekommen, dass die „kommunikative Praxis des erinnernden Gesprächs-in-Geschichten [ ] die Basis aller Familiengeschichte und allen Familiengedächtnisses" (Keppler 1994: 207) darstelle, oder, wie dies Harald Welzer formuliert:

Familiengedächtnis ist „kein umgrenztes und abrufbares Inventar von Geschichten [ ], sondern [besteht] in der kommunikativen Vergegenwärtigung von Episoden [ ], die in Beziehung zu den Familienmitgliedern stehen und über die sie gemeinsam sprechen." (Welzer 2002: 150) Außerdem haben die beiden Studien gezeigt, dass die mehrgenerationellen Familiengespräche gewisse Gemeinsamkeiten aufweisen. Aus der Studie *Tischgespräche* geht hervor, dass es typische Muster vom Ablauf der Familiengespräche gibt – sogar Rituale.

Im Hinblick auf die Thematisierung der Vergangenheit sind (größere) Familientreffen, bei denen mehrere Generationen anwesend sind, nicht zu übersehen. „Solche Vergegenwärtigungen finden in der Regel beiläufig und absichtslos statt – Familien halten keine Geschichtsstunden ab[.] Die Praxis des gemeinsamen Erinnerns ist in Familien etwas völlig Selbstverständliches" (Welzer 2002: 150). Auch die Inszenierung der Familiengespräche in *Himmelskörper* ist immer mit Besuchen der Großeltern verbunden, bei denen sich spontan Familiengespräche bzw. Akte des gemeinsamen Erinnerns entwickeln, die meist an ein Interview erinnern, wobei die Angehörigen der jüngeren Generationen (also der Zweiten und der Dritten) Fragen an die ältere, so genannte „Zeitzeugengeneration" stellen.

In dem Zusammenhang weist Welzer auf das Phänomen hin, dass die Zuhörer, also die Nachfolgergenerationen, die jeweiligen Geschichten in den meisten Fällen bereits kennen, womit „eine auf den ersten Blick paradoxe Aufforderung an den historischen Akteur [ergeht]: Er möge doch erzählen, was seine Zuhörer schon kennen." (Welzer et al 2002: 19)

Im Folgenden werden mit Beispielen aus *Himmelskörper* typische Merkmale der Familiengespräche nach Harald Welzer dargestellt, die nicht nur in realen Familiengesprächen, sondern auch in literarisierten und/oder fiktiven Familiengeschichten inszeniert werden können.

Wenn man die Reflektion des Familiengedächtnisses und familiären Erinnerns im Kreis von Freias Familie chronologisch – mit dem Erwachsenwerden der Zwillinge – verfolgt, wird schon am Beginn des Romas klar, dass gewisse Themen in Familiengesprächen tabuisiert werden. So wird in der Familie Sandmann bis Freia und Paul darüber in der Schule lernen z. B. *nicht* über den Krieg gesprochen. Diese Tabuisierung reflektiert dann die erwachsene Ich-Erzählerin folgendermaßen:

> Auf unsere neugierigen Fragen, warum Großvater denn so ein Schrumpelbein habe, bekamen wir immer die gleiche Antwort, nämlich daß der Großvater „im Krieg" gewesen sei. Was das bedeuten sollte, wurde uns nicht klar. „Krieg" schien jedenfalls ein schrecklicher Ort zu sein, die Gefahrenzone, in die aus irgendeinem Grund nur Männer kamen. Es hieß noch, daß „Großvater hart gekämpft und Großmutter lange auf ihn gewartet" habe. (HK 78)

Immerhin lieben die Zwillinge in ihrer Kindheit und in den ersten Jahren der Grundschule die Geschichten „aus den alten Zeiten". Die Lücken, die sie sich selbst

nicht erklären können, regen ihre Phantasie auf, so dass sie sich eigene Geschichten ausdenken, die ein Geflecht von Fakten und Phantastik sind. So sollte z. B. dem Großvater das Bein ein Gespenst aus dem Teich abgebissen haben. Andererseits ahnen die beiden schon etwas und provozieren damit die Eltern und Großeltern, um endlich die Wahrheit zu erfahren.

> [W]ir [stellten] verschiedene Überlegungen an, wie Großvater denn wohl zu seinem Sumpf gekommen war. Den vagen Begriff „Krieg“, von dem die Eltern entweder mehr wußten als sie sagten, oder selber nicht viel Ahnung hatten, wollten wir mit einer schlüssigen Geschichte füllen. [ ] Paul und ich waren uns nicht ganz sicher, ob “Krieg” eher einen Ort oder ein Ereignis bezeichnete. Ganz sicher aber war Vollmond, als „Krieg“ passierte. (HK 78f)

Dieser Phase, in der die Zwillinge die Geschichten der Großeltern einfach mit den Märchenmotiven (z. B. dem Vollmond) ergänzt haben, folgt eine Phase der Begeisterung über die schon weniger rätselhaften Geschichten, die sie von ihrer Großmutter Jo erzählt bekommen haben. Den Höhepunkt dieser Art von Geschichten stellt das Kapitel „Verschwundene Zöpfe“ dar. Die Großmutter pflegt nämlich die Gewohnheit während des Flechtens von Freias Zöpfen lustige Geschichten aus der Zeit, in der sie jung war, zu erzählen. Es geht um die schönen Erinnerungen an Ferien, Sommerlager, Mädchengruppen – die Großmutter Jo zeigt den Enkelkindern einmal sogar das Foto, auf dem sie diegleichen Zöpfe wie jetzt die Enkelin hat. Die Großmutter nennt diese Zeit „die glücklichste in [ihrem] Leben“ (HK 62). Nach Harald Welzer geht es bei dieser Erscheinung, die auch in der Realität oft vorkommt, um das Phänomen der Faszination, was nichts anderes heißt, als dass die Angehörigen der Ersten Generation während der späteren Erweckung von Erinnerungen im Familienkreis immer noch begeistert von der nationalsozialistischen Propaganda sind. Im Roman sind an dieser Stelle die Enkelkinder noch nicht mit der deutschen nationalsozialistischen Vergangenheit belastet, sie füllen auch keinen Bedarf danach, die „glücklichste Zeit“ ihrer Großmutter irgendwie in einen geschichtlichen Kontext einzuordnen. Außerdem wird an keiner Stelle wörtlich erwähnt, welche Zeit die Großmutter meint – jedoch ahnt der Leser sofort, was sich dahinter versteckt.

Als die Zwillinge älter sind und sich mit der deutschen Vergangenheit in der Schule auseinandersetzen, beginnen auch die Eltern und Großeltern endlich über den Krieg zu sprechen. In dieser frühen Jugendphase kommen auch die typischen mehrgenerationellen Familiengespräche vor. In diesen Gesprächen ist es meist die Großmutter Jo, die das Wort übernimmt, und mit dem Großvater Mäxchen ein eingeübtes Erzählertandem bildet.

Das zentrale Merkmal solcher Geschichten nach Welzer ist, dass sie immer wieder gleich wiedergegeben werden bzw. immer gleich erzählt werden. Freia gibt an einer Stelle zu: „Die Geschichte ihrer Flucht kannte ich schon auswendig. Wie einen Weg, den man sehr oft abgeschritten ist, kannte ich fast jede Redewendung, jede sprachliche Ausschmückung.“ Sie wusste „genau, welche Höhepunkte, Kunstpausen oder retardierenden Momente Jos Fluchtgeschichte kennzeichneten.” (HK 98) Diese

schon im Voraus ausformulierten Geschichten, die vom stereotypen Erzählen geprägt sind, bauen eine Distanz dazu, was die Zeitzeugen tatsächlich erlebt haben, und stellen dadurch einen Verweis auf die Fiktionalisierung des Erlebten dar.

Aus Welzers Untersuchungen folgen diesbezüglich noch zwei Erkenntnisse: Erstens, dass den Familienmitgliedern in Bezug auf die nationalsozialistische Vergangenheit immer eine Opferrolle zugeschrieben wird und zweitens, dass sie im Zusammenhang mit Juden immer heroisiert werden (sie inszenieren sich als ihre Retter, also als Helden). Diese sogenannte Heroisierung ist nach Welzer vor allem für die jüngeren Generationen (Enkel- und Urenkelkinder) typisch, die ihrem eigenen Geschichtswissen entsprechend, die Erzählungen ihrer Großeltern interpretieren – und diese Geschichten über die Erlebnisse von Großeltern so interpretieren, dass sie ihnen eine Heldenrolle zuschreiben. Andererseits kommt es zu dieser Umwandlung in die Heldentat manchmal auch schon beim ersten Schritt, also bei der Ersten Generation, die sich in ihren Erzählungen als hilflos innerhalb des nationalsozialistischen Regimes inszeniert. In *Himmelskörper* stellt ein solches Beispiel die „berühmte Bananengeschichte" dar. Freias Großmutter hat Ende der dreißiger Jahre in einem Lebensmittelladen bemerkt, dass neben ihr ein schwächlicher kleiner Junge mit dem Davidstern steht. Er tat ihr leid und für einen Augenblick kämpfte sie mit dem Gedanken, ihm eine Banane zu geben. Jedoch tat sie es nicht, denn sie hatte zu große Angst, vom Verkäufer gesehen zu werden. Trotz der Heroisierung bzw. Opferisierung ihrer Tat sieht die erwachsene Enkelin die Geschichte durch:

> Das Absurde an der Bananengeschichte war, daß Jo ihr Abwägen, ihren Wunsch zu helfen, ihre Unsicherheit und Angst jedesmal derart dramatisch schilderte, daß man am Ende fast den Eindruck bekommen konnte, Jo hätte ein KZ befreit. Irgendwie gelang es ihr, das Unterlassen einer Handlung zur Heldentat zu stilisieren. (HK 105)

Obwohl die Enkelin Freia im Laufe ihrer Recherche der Familiengeschichte auch mithilfe von materiellen Beweisen, die man nicht übersehen kann, die „Wahrheit" der Familie aufdeckt, und sie sich als solche auch zuzugeben traut, kommt es trotzdem zur Inszenierung von diesem Moment, das Harald Welzer mit seinen Kolleginnen in der Studie *„Opa war kein Nazi"* immer wieder betont: Das private Erinnern in Bezug auf den Zweiten Weltkrieg unterscheidet sich wesentlich von der öffentlichen Erinnerungskultur. Am Ende gibt sie zu, dass es trotz allem die eigene Familiengeschichte schwierig ist, als eine Geschichte der „Täter" zu begreifen, und dass die Bilder des Familiengedächtnisses eigentlich für immer ungreifbar bleiben:

> Mäxchen und Jo waren die letzten Jahre über so hinfällig und hilfsbedürftig gewesen, daß sich fast jede Vermutung oder Unterstellung von selbst zu verbieten schien. Mir fiel plötzlich auf, wie viele kleine grenzwertige Äußerungen ich doch von ihnen kannte, doch nie hatte ich sie bisher zu einem stimmigen Gesamtbild zusammengefügt, nie wäre mir früher auf den Sinn gekommen, Mäxchen und Jo als Nazis zu bezeichnen. Mein Großvater mit seiner Prothese und seinem wunden Stumpf hatte bei uns seit

jeher uneingeschränkte Liebe und Zuneigung erhalten, und wenn Jo von der „glücklichsten Zeit ihres Lebens“ berichtete, wirkte sie mädchenhaft naiv. (HK 263)

ZUM SCHLUSS

Wie der vorliegende Beitrag mit seiner kurzen Analyse des literarischen Darstellungsverfahrens vom Erinnerungsdiskurs am Beispiel einer der jüngsten deutschen Familiengeschichte zeigt, gibt es deutliche Parallelen zwischen den kulturwissenschaftlichen und literaturwissenschaftlichen Gedächtnistheorien. Es wurde die Annahme bestätigt, dass die kulturwissenschaftlichen theoretischen Ansätze für die Literaturwissenschaft brauchbar gemacht werden können. Noch mehr: Beachtet man das Privileg der Literatur, d. h., das Privileg der fiktionalen Texte, dass sie die Realität nicht nur abbilden, sondern auch kritisch reflektieren können, erscheinen literarische Texte nicht nur als ‚Medium des Gedächtnisses‘ und als ‚Mimesis[3] des Gedächtnisses‘ wichtig, sondern auch als ein Ort der Reflektion des Erinnerungsdiskurses und der Erinnerungsvorgänge. Am konkreten Beispiel des Erinnerungsdiskurses einer (fiktiven) Familiengeschichte bedeutet dies, dass das Erzählmodell Familie (mit seinen typischen Erzählstützen wie z. B. Familiengespräch) die Erinnerungen einerseits erzählbar macht (Inszenierung des Gedächtnisses, also Mimesis), andererseits stellt es aber durch metanarrative Kommentare dieselben Erinnerungen unter das Fragezeichen. Damit scheint das Genre der Familiengeschichte im Rahmen der Erinnerungsliteratur ihre eigene Theorie aufzuschreiben.

Berlin, Deutschland

PRIMÄRLITERATUR

Dückers, Tanja (2003): *Himmelskörper*. Berlin: Aufbau Taschenbuch Verlag.

SEKUNDÄRLITERATUR

Assmann, Aleida (1999): *Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses.* München: C.H. Beck.

Assmann, Aleida (2007a): *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit. Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik.* Bonn: Bpb.

Assmann, Jan (1992): *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen.* München: H.C. Beck.

[3] An der Stelle muss hervorgehoben werden, dass sich der Ausdruck Mimesis des Gedächtnisses immer ausschließlich auf die Inszenierung des Gedächtnisses in einem literarischen Text bezieht.

Erll, Astrid (2003a): *Gedächtnisromane. Literatur über den Ersten Weltkrieg als Medium englischer und deutscher Erinnerungskulturen in den 1920er Jahren.* Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier.

Erll, Astrid; Nünning, Ansgar (2003): *Gedächtniskonzepte der Literaturwissenschaft: Ein Überblick.* In: Astrid Erll, Marion Gymnich und Ansgar Nünning (Hg.): Literatur, Erinnerung, Identität. Theoriekonzeptionen und Fallstudien. Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, S. 3–27.

Erll, Astrid; Nünning, Ansgar (2005): *Literaturwissenschaftliche Konzepte von Gedächtnis*: Ein einführender Überblick. In: Astrid Erll und Ansgar Nünning (Hg.): Gedächtniskonzepte der Literaturwissenschaft. Theoretische Grundlegung und Anwendungsperspektiven. Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, S. 1–9.

Halbwachs, Maurice (1985): *Das Gedächtnis und seine sozialen Bedingungen*. Aus dem Französischen von Lutz Geldsetzer. [Nachdr.], Lizenzausg. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (Suhrkamp-Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, 538).

Halbwachs, Maurice (1991): *Das kollektive Gedächtnis*. Ungekürzte Ausg., 4. - 5. Tsd. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verl.

Keppler, Angela (1994): *Tischgespräche. Über Formen kommunikativer Vergemeinschaftung am Beispiel der Konversation in Familien.* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (Suhrkamp-Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, 1132).

Pethes, Nicolas (2008): *Kulturwissenschaftliche Gedächtnistheorien zur Einführung*. Hamburg: Junius.

Welzer, Harald; Moller, Sabine; Tschuggnall, Karoline (2002): *„Opa war kein Nazi“. Nationalsozialismus und Holocaust im Familiengedächtnis.* 7. Aufl. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch.

Welzer, Harald (2002): *Das kommunikative Gedächtnis. Eine Theorie der Erinnerung*. München: H.C. Beck.

Welzer, Harald (2005): *Krieg der Generationen - zur Tradierung von NS-Vergangenheit und Krieg in deutschen Familien.* In: Waltraud Wende (Hg.): Krieg und Gedächtnis. Ein Ausnahmezustand im Spannungsfeld kultureller Sinnkonstruktionen. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, S. 58–75.

UDK 821.133.1(493)–2.09Maeterlinck M.:27–23

L'HABITUS DE LA BIBLE DANS L' ŒUVRE DRAMATIQUE DE MAURICE MAETERLINCK

Boštjan Marko Turk

Synopsis :

L'étude présente se donne pour objectif d'établir le rapport entre l'univers de la *Bible* et l'œuvre dramatique de Maurice Maeterlinck. En fait, l'auteur belge vouait une prédilection aux sujets relatifs à l'*Ancien* et au *Nouveau Testament*. Ceux-ci mettent en relief l'intégralité de l'existence de l'homme, ce qui présente *ipso facto* un soubassement sans pareil pour l'exploatation dramatique, à tel point les histoires de la *Bible* sont imprégnées de dynamisme, reposant sur l'eschatologie du tragique et de l'inévitable. Maurice Maeterlinck en tant que dramaturge poursuit ces principes jusqu'aux moindres détails ce qui fait de lui un auteur important de l'inspiration biblique.

Mots clefs : Maurice Maeterlinck, Dieu, *Bible*, drame, existence, mort, résurrection, homme, tragique, miracle, mise en abyme

»*Au fond, la poésie suprême n'est que cela, elle n'a d'autre but que de tenir ouvertes les grandes routes qui mènent à ce qu'on ne voit pas*«.[1]

Maurice Maeterlinck reliait intimement les points de départs philosophiques avec les genres littéraires dans lesquels il écrivait. Son intérêt était tourné vers l'existence humaine, ou plus précisément, vers les possibilités spéculatives que les expériences ontologiques supérieures d'*homo sapiens sapiens,* ne soient pas reliées au support du cerveau, matière dans laquelle d'ailleurs ces expériences se produisent, et par conséquent sont indépendants de l'arrêt des fonctions organiques du corps appelé communément : la mort. Dans l'œuvre étendu et diversifié qu'il a laissé derrière lui, il est difficile de trouver un dénominateur commun autre que l'appréhension de la relation individualisée à l'extrême que chaque individu (de même que toute l'espèce en tant qu'entité globale) crée envers l'inévitable conclusion suivant chaque existence et par conséquent envers la question : qu'arrive-t-il après cela ? Le point de vue général de Maeterlinck serait alors que la vie est un phénomène universel se révélant aussi chez les autres êtres sous la forme qui est propre à l'homme. On ne peut comprendre les œuvres

[1] Claudia Chinatti. »Fausto Maria Martini, poète crépusculaire italien, disciple de Maeterlinck«. *Annales*, 11. Bruxelles : Maurice Maeterlinck Stichting, 1965 : 22.

comme : *L'Intelligence des Fleurs,*[2] *La Vie des Abeilles,*[3] *La Vie des Termites*[4] et *La Vie des Fourmis,*[5] que du point de vue de l'importance primordiale et de la présence, à chaque instant, d'innombrables types de formes qui peuplent l'univers du vivant. L'auteur se sert de toute une série d'affirmations pour justifier l'existence d'une civilisation également au niveau des insectes ou des communautés végétales : il prouve de façon déductive que la présence d'une structure hiérarchisée ainsi qu'une organisation ayant un sens, démontrent la nécessité de formes de raison primaires qui gère ce genre de structures.

Il étudie avec la même précision les questions de la raison, c'est à dire de l'esprit de raison dans le domaine où il possède l'exclusivité, *id est,* chez l'homme. C'est ici que la psychométrie[6] l'attire irrésistiblement : il l'exprime de façon concise dans la question : »*Ayant éloigné les dieux et les morts, que reste-t-il«?*[7] Cette citation qui doit être comprise comme un artifice rhétorique, pourrait être prise pour des prolégomènes dans les nombreux écrits où il traite de l'eschatologie de la raison humaine, si l'on considère comme telle toute activité de l'esprit concrète et spéculative n'étant plus liée au corps qui lui assurait jadis le cadre matériel de son activité. Ceci ne peut prendre fin sans que la question de la conscience générale cosmique ne soit posée. C'est pourquoi il dit : »*Nous voici donc devant le mystère de la conscience universelle. Bien que nous soyons incapables de comprendre l'acte d'un infini qui se replierait sur soi pour se sentir, par conséquent se définir et se séparer d'autre chose, ce n'est pas une raison suffisante pour le déclarer impossible: car si nous rejetions toutes les réalités et impossibilités que nous ne comprenons point, il ne nous resterait de quoi vivre*«. [8] Il tire une conclusion logique qu'il formule ainsi par la suite : »*S'il y a conscience et quelque lieu ou quelque chose qui remplace la conscience, nous serons dans cette chose, puisque nous ne pouvons être ailleurs. Et cette conscience ou cette chose ou nous nous trouverons, ne pouvant être malheureuse, puisqu'il est impossible que l'infini n'existe que pour son malheur, nous ne serons pas malheureux non plus*«.[9] Comme la mort reste la séparation permettant cela et rétablissant finalement tout, de même, la vie est impossible sans elle – »*La vie, c'est la mort*«, [10] et que l'espace de l'infini qui s'étend derrière elle s'annonce dans le domaine du bonheur ou de l'éternel accomplissement[11] et de ce fait, la pensée logique germant chez Maeterlinck est une pensée religieuse. En réalité, il a accordé une grande attention à la relation de l'Homme avec la transcendantalité des éléments essentiels de sa personnalité après la mort, comme en témoigne ses travaux : *Le Grand Secret*, [12] *La Sagesse et la Destinée*, [13] *La Grande Loi*

[2] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *L'Intelligence des Fleurs*. Paris : Charpentier, 1926.
[3] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Vie des Abeilles*. Paris : Charpentier, 1922.
[4] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Vie des Termites*. Paris : Charpentier, 1928.
[5] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Vie des Fourmis*. Paris : Charpentier, 1930.
[6] C'est l'expression que l'auteur utilise explicitement, même si elle a un sens différent dans la psychologie d'aujourd'hui.
[7] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *L'Hôte inconnu*. Paris : Charpentier, 1925 : 43.
[8] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Mort*, Paris : Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1929 : 267.
[9] *Ibidem.*
[10] Paul Chauchard. *La Mort*. Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1966 : 6.
[11] Comparez la dernière phrase de l'affirmation dans la note no. 9.
[12] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Le Grand Secret*. Paris : Charpentier-Fasquelle, 1925.
[13] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Sagesse et la Destinée*. Paris : Charpentier-Fasquelle, 1926.

[14] et *Avant le grand silence*, [15] si on ne s'arrête que sur les essentiels. Leur dénominateur commun pourrait encore être résumé en un traitement systématique du phénomène de l'homme (et de la conscience cosmique), dont la frontière ne se trouve pas sur la ligne reliant le berceau à la tombe, l'être avec le non-être, si l'on utilise l'une des images les plus courantes de l'auteur. [16]

C'est dans ce contexte que l'auteur croise la religion chrétienne. Pour commencer, il faut signaler que son rapport avec la grande religion révélée est contradictoire dans un sens aussi diachronique que synchronique. Ceci pourrait se rapporter notamment aux parties qui présentent une interprétation dogmatique des affirmations sans faire appel au mystère de l'initiation. Surtout si elles utilisent pour analogie directe la méthode reposant sur les descriptions anthropomorphiques. »Après *tant d'efforts, après tant d'épreuves, nous nous retrouvons exactement au point d'où étaient partis nos grands instructeurs. Ils nous ont légué une sagesse que nous commençons a peine a débarrasser des débris que les siècles y avaient déposés; et sous ces débris nous retrouvons intact le plus haut aveu d'ignorance que l'homme ose proférer. C'est peu si l'on aime l'illusion, c'est beaucoup si l'on préfère la vérité. Nous savons enfin qu'il n'y eut jamais de révélation ultra-humaine, de message direct et irrécusable de la divinité, de secret ineffable et que tout ce que l'homme croit connaître au sujet de Dieu, de don origine et de ses fins, c'est de sa propre raison qu'il l'a tiré*«.[17] Cela est encore plus flagrant dans le chapitre »Le Dieu d'Israël«,[18] qui fait partie des passages principaux du livre *La Grande Porte*. Il montre le bien fondé de la citation ci-dessus en demandant, avec une entière désillusion, pourquoi Jéhovah n'a pas agi lors de l'ultime blasphème que le roi Salomon lui avait préparé, quand ce dernier avait fait publiquement honorer le dieu Moabite tout en cédant à la polygamie.[19] La réponse que propose Maeterlinck aurait un lien universel avec l'esprit d'un total agnosticisme, à savoir : Le dieu des Israéliens ne pouvait pas faire cela même s'il le voulait car ceci dépasserait ses forces. Il était inséparablement intégré dans le peuple qui avait imaginé son existence de même que tous ses attributs nécessaires à ce type de phénomène. Il n'était en réalité qu'un produit de leur pensée et de leur histoire culturelle.[20] Donc, aucune révélation extrahumaine, venant vers un individu par un logos supérieur au monde, ne pouvait être possible. Grâce aux conclusions que l'on trouve dans d'autres passages parallèles du même chapitre, on peut logiquement en déduire que la seconde personne divine, qui est par nature égale au père, subit alors le même jugement.

Cependant Maurice Maeterlinck est un auteur chrétien. En plus du syllogisme qui montre par lui-même, qu'on ne peut pas éviter la question sur les religions monothéistes notamment sur la plus étendue parmi elles, au vu de l'œuvre dont les parties majoritaires sont consacrées à la réflexion sur les choses ultimes de la raison humaine

[14] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Grande Loi*. Paris : Charpentier-Fasquelle, 1930.

[15] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Avant le grand silence*. Paris : Charpentier-Fasquelle, 1934.

[16] Ainsi: *»Tout être étant inévitablement éternel, attend le non-être comme une délivrance impossible«*, Maeterlinck, Maurice, *La Grande Porte* : 82.

[17] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Le Grand Secret* : 316.

[18] Maurice Maeterlinck, *La Grande Porte* : 185 – 200.

[19] 1R XI, 3.

[20] Comparez : Boštjan Marko Turk, »Maurice Maeterlinck et le dédale inextricable de l'existence«, *Linguistica*, 53/1, Ljubljana : Filozofska fakulteta, 2013. 251-263.

et de sa conscience ; le nombre élevé de matériel cité par le poète et philosophe belge lors de ses travaux, plaide également en faveur de cette idée qui est liée à la *Bible*. Dans ce sens, une étude étendue est disponible,[21] montrant de façon définitive à quel point la création de Maeterlinck est liée à l'univers de l'écriture révélée. Son ensemble présente l'idée que sans une inspiration christique, les éléments importants dans toute l'œuvre ne seraient pas ce qu'ils sont. C'est lorsque l'on prend en compte la lecture la plus approfondie de la *Bible* et la réflexion concernant ce thème actuel qu'on peut comprendre l'articulation théologique de l'affirmation suivante que l'on avance en contrepoint à la citation utilisée ci-dessus : *Jésus répond aux docteurs: »En vérité, je Vous le dis, avant qu'Abraham ne fût, je suis«. Il ne dit pas j'étais. Il est depuis toujours, dans le passé comme dans le présent et dans l'avenir. Le Verbe n'a pas plus de temps puisqu'il est éternel. C'est l'un des rares moments où il parle comme parlerait notre Dieu. Il a ici le sens et le sentiment de son éternité*«.[22]

Maeterlinck parle non seulement de façon affirmative de Dieu avec le pronom possessif de la première personne du pluriel, (et non du singulier, lui donnant de cette façon une forte valeur généralisatrice), mais il présente aussi l'union hypostatique qui unit les deux personnes divines en une entité, de la même façon que l'Église encore uniforme, à l'époque, le déterminait lors des conflits entre l'arianisme et ses formulations les plus extrêmes. [23] Le présent éternel explique la divinisation humaine comme l'une des notions principales de la révélation, donnant ainsi à la littérature, s'alimentant de cette source, un sens particulier, qu'il est vain de chercher à la façon dont le traçait Maeterlinck en apparence dans ses premières citations, dans le domaine de l'agnosticisme intégral.

Par rapport à cela, on doit d'abord constater que l'existence intemporelle d'une union hypostatique n'est pas du tout en contradiction avec la condition humaine, qui tente de voir les créations spéculatives comme illusoires ou par conséquent, seulement comme un produit de sa propre imagination. Au contraire, le contenu du document de base de la chrétienté, c'est à dire de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament ne peut être compris si l'on ne consent pas à une telle contradiction à priori. Les textes du *Nouveau* et de *l'Ancien Testament* nous parlent d'ailleurs du drame de la vie humaine et de sa conscience qui pulse dans le temps, *quantum ad statum viae pertinet,* dans la multitude de formes qui sont déterminées par le scepticisme, la distance et le doute. Les auteurs inspirés des textes cités ont donné à l'humanité l'ambiguïté des concepts et des phénomènes avec lesquels l'homme est généralement confronté dans le domaine des sentiments, de la pensée et de l'existence en général. Ceci provoquait le tressaillement de la volonté créatrice sainte des auteurs entre reconnaissance et déni, où les œuvres dramatiques, surtout dans leur dimension tragique pénétraient dans chaque pore des textes inspirés par Dieu. Un exemple incomparable de cela reste les prophètes de l'Ancien Testament qui ont, avec un réalisme mimétique pour la condition humaine, placé en relation le chemin sur Terre avec lui-même et avec ses origines transcendantales.

[21] Lutaud, Christian. « Maeterlinck et la Bible«. *Annales, 16*. Bruxelles : Maurice Maeterlinck Stihting, 1971 : 39 – 127.

[22] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Grande Porte*, pp. 109-110.

[23] On trouve une excellente analyse de la citation ontologique chez : Kohlmann, Anthony. *Unitarism philosophically and theologically examined.* Washington : Guegan, 1821.

Mais au début et à la fin de tout sentiment tragique se trouve une rupture cathartique. Elle apparaît lorsque l'humain prend pleinement conscience de l'éloignement divin ainsi que de l'effrayant néant auquel il est remis déjà de son vivant ; il l'enveloppera totalement lors de la fin des temps, ce qui signifie pour chaque individu : le moment de sa mort. On trouve les textes les plus inspirants dans ce sens, dans la troisième partie de *Tanaka*, dans *Les Ketouvim.*[24] C'est ici que ressort le problème de la théodicée, c'est à dire comment accorder le mal avec lequel on est confronté quotidiennement avec la relation entre Dieu et l'homme. L'éternel exemple de cette nouvelle contradiction est bien sûr l'histoire de Job, homme riche, empli de toute intégrité morale.[25] La *Bible* raconte qu'il est confronté au pire type d'expérience, lorsque son mode de vie récent s'effond ne laissant que la question du sens de la souffrance, de la mort et du rôle éventuel de Dieu dans cette dévastation. Les gens de son entourage qui lui disent de maudire Dieu et de mourir, amplifient le dilemme à un point insupportable, surtout car la première personne parmi eux est sa propre compagne. Il s'agit là d'une des unités à l'intonation la plus dramatique de *la Bible*, se terminant en une totale catharsis. L'homme n'est donc pas maître de son destin et ne peut l'influencer.

Cette notion marque d'autant plus l'histoire de la révélation avec le livre l'*Ecclésiaste*,[26] dans lequel le fils de David et roi d'Israël parle à son peuple.[27] Son message disparaît progressivement dans un pessimisme concentré. Les exégètes et l'histoire biblique l'ont même désigné comme le passage de la révélation dans lequel Dieu est absent.[28] On n'y trouve pas la plus petite épiphanie, seulement un appel tragico-absurde à la jouissance avant que tout ne s'éteigne. Au dessus des théorèmes laconiques avec lesquels le prophète plante le destin humain, se lève l'horizon d'un destin vide de sens et de la mort en tant que dernière frontière de tout ce qui vit. La mort est aussi le sens de la vie puisqu'elle rend plus heureux que la vie. »*Et j'ai trouvé les morts qui sont déjà morts plus heureux que les vivants qui sont encore vivants*«.[29]

Mais on peut comprendre que la *Bible* possède également d'autres éléments dans sa substance : En fait, il faut avouer que ce sont ces éléments qui représentent l'intentionnalité ultime, en vue de laquelle elle fut écrite. Les gens de l'entourage de Job, peuvent d'ailleurs êtres compris aussi grâce à l'image des guides aveugles et avant tout de la cécité qui a un fond spirituel exactement dans le sens de la formulation : »*Laissez-les, ce sont des aveugles qui guident des aveugles! Or si un aveugle guide un aveugle, tous les deux tomberont dans un trou*«. [30] La *Bible* s'exprime de façon encore plus sévère dans le cas des « autorités » majeures, qui sont d'autant plus grandes qu'elles attirent le plus grand nombre de personnes avec leurs analyses aveugles et, mieux encore, les guident vers une voie erronée. Ainsi : »*Malheur* à *vous, guides aveugles, qui dites : «Si l'on jure par le sanctuaire, cela ne compte pas ; mais si l'on jure par l'or du sanctuaire, on est tenu. « Insensés et aveugles ! Quel est donc le plus digne, l'or*

[24] Nom original pour la dernière partie de la *Bible* hébraïque, *Tanakh*.
[25] *Les Ketouvim*, 16.
[26] *Les Ketouvim*, 20.
[27] Le sens étymologique du mot ecclésiaste est »celui qui parle à la foule«.
[28] Neher, André. *Notes sur Quhélét.* Paris : Les Éditions de Minuit, 1951.
[29] Ecc, 4, 2.
[30] Mt, 15, 14.

ou le sanctuaire qui a rendu cet or sacré«. [31]L'auteur des *Ecclésiastes,* pourrait alors être classifié dans cette catégorie sans pour autant remettre en question l'authenticité des livres canons. Si cela n'était pas ainsi, on inverserait alors complètement la multi dimensionnalité des expériences et pensées humaines. Dieu n'a pas éprouvé Job dans son dernier retranchement en lui enlevant encore sa vie, en plus de tout le reste. Mais ceci aurait pu également survenir et finit par arriver par un moyen naturel. Cependant, rien de tout cela n'ébranle en rien les notions essentielles de la foi qui sont centrés sur les miracles et notamment sur le plus grand d'entre-eux, c'est à dire, la résurrection. Les miracles sont la plus grande preuve de la puissance créatrice dans l'existence de l'homme, et ils ne peuvent briller que si on les place à côté de leur contrepoint, c'est à dire la mort, le néant, l'absence de sens et de Dieu. Ceci est l'intention dramatique et la fondation cathartique de la *Bible* ainsi, également, que de nos vies, dans la mesure où l'on se reconnaît dans ce domaine.

C'est aussi le contenu de la dramatique de Maeterlinck, dans laquelle il a établi la caractéristique principale de ce genre par le principe de la mise en abyme,[32] à savoir que les événements et les phénomènes, les pensées et les sentiments, la vie et la mort des protagonistes ainsi que toutes les intrigues avec leurs projets et leurs « non-projets », même si celles-ci demeurent inhabituelles pour la logique humaine, ne sont pas donnés de manière statique, de l'extérieur, à l'aide d'un narrateur omniscient, mais ils sont présentés en fonction de la dynamique interne de l'existence humaine et vus dans un moment synchrone d'un destin individuel et placés en tant que tels comme un exemple durable. La mise en abyme ou la mise en présence d'un événement en lui-même est le fondement sur lequel est organisée la logique des textes de *l'Ancien Testament* et du *Nouveau Testament*. C'est à la façon d'un cône infinitésimal où les couches analogiques de contenu et de concept se transposent des parties plus étendues vers le sommet – par rapport à la question du sens et de la certitude, et surtout de la compréhension de la sphère humaine dans la transposition métaphysique - et se perdent dans le non-doute qui est notre plus grande certitude, *quantum ad statum viae pertinet*.[33] Ceci est le dénominateur commun de la texture dramatique entre la *Bible* et Maeterlinck qui, en fonction du type, ne peut s'appliquer qu'à celle dont il est question ici.

Pour déterminer de façon plus précise l'orientation de la présente réflexion, on cite alors l'impulsion diachronique qui est un élément essentiel de la structure chrétienne du monde, un espoir basé sur la paix et la certitude dans la foi, même si toutes les coordonnées d'une telle activité ne sont pas claires. Elle aide à déterminer quand l'élan vers le christianisme est le plus intense chez Maurice Maeterlinck, ainsi *ipso facto*, en fonction de la coïncidence temporelle, de la formation des œuvres dramatiques les plus importantes, elles montrent comment le sentiment d'inquiétude cédait place à celui

[31] Mt, 23, 16-17.

[32] Maeterlinck connaissait bien ce procédé issu de la peinture flamande : *»Encore une fois, un immense problème se trouve effleuré en une phrase. Maeterlinck avait trop bien regardé les tableaux des maîtres flamands pour n'avoir pas observé cette présence du miroir »en abyme«. Et il dégage (…) la question de la symbolique du miroir, en faisant déboucher ce problème de technique, picturale ou littéraire, dans sa préoccupation personnelle, qui est celle de ses contemporain: comment présenter le mystère sans le trahir? Comment suggérer l'invisible?«* Pouillard, Raymond. »Un projet et quelques lectures«, Annales, 10, Bruxelles, Maurice Maeterlinck Stichting, 1964 :13.

[33] Voir *supra*.

de la paix et de la tranquillité. Il est un fait que les drames les plus importants chez Maeterlinck tombent juste à la période déterminée par la citation suivante : »*Comme toute l'œuvre d'avant 1895 est sous le signe de l'inquiétude, toute celle d'après 1889, d'après Sagesse et Destinée qui est un livre non de paix, mais d'apaisement et ou l'on enregistre les dernières vibrations de l'inquiétude maeterlinckienne – cette œuvre, dis-je, qu'inaugure La Vie des Abeilles, n'est elle pas sous le signe de la tranquillité? Partie du soupir, de l'exclamation, du monosyllabe, presque du hoquet avec la Princesse Maleine, la phrase maeterlinkcienne devient l'une des plus larges, des plus nombreuses, des plus majestueusement simples qui aient jamais été écrite dans notre langue. Cette phrase, en fait, devient si ample et si égale qu'elle cesse d'être une phrase dramatique, comme il apparaît dans Marie-Magdeleine, pièce superbe, qui devrait émouvoir, et qui n'émeut que médiocrement. Que de critiques ce Silanus n'a pas irrités, avec sa sérénité que ne trouble pas même la vue d'un mort qu'on ressuscite! Pourtant Silanus ressemble a Maeterlinck. C'est Maeterlinck tranquillisé, voila tout*«.[34]

Tous les drames principaux ayant pour thème la chrétienté, correspondent à cette période. Une légère exception serait *Les Aveugles*,[35] dont la première édition est sortie en 1890, mais son thème biblique est tellement évident qu'il se classe dans cette catégorie en fonction de l'inspiration générale. Indubitablement se trouve aussi dans cette catégorie et chronologiquement : *Sœur Beatrice* (1901),[36] *L'Oiseau bleu* (1909),[37] *Marie-Magdeleine* (1913)[38] ainsi que *Le Miracle de Saint Antoine* (1920).[39]Les plus intenses parmi eux déterminent même un phénomène de stationnarité transcendantale de la langue, qui perd ainsi sa fonction de message artistique pour se concentrer sur les secrets ontologiques du vivant. Comme le dit la phrase en exergue, la langue poétique se brise pour ouvrir une voie au signifié ineffable.

Observons l'œuvre qui puise ici, de la façon la plus large possible, *Marie-Magdeleine*.[40] Pour mieux le comprendre il faut à nouveau penser à l'affirmation qui sert de point de départ et dont on s'est servi pour expliquer l'orientation essentielle de la voie créative de l'artiste, ce qui est une relation entre l'existence intemporelle de la conscience humaine et sa mise en place dans l'infini. Ainsi : *»S'il y a conscience et quelque lieu ou quelque chose qui remplace la conscience, nous serons dans cette chose, puisque nous ne pouvons être ailleurs. Et cette conscience ou cette chose ou nous nous trouverons, ne pouvant être malheureuse, puisqu'il est impossible que l'infini n'existe que pour son malheur, nous ne serons pas malheureux non plus.*[41] On ne peut pas comprendre cette citation si l'on ne la relie pas avec les phrases dans lesquelles Maeterlinck s'est plongé dans la matrice évangélique avec tout ce dont son énergie hu-

[34] Doneck, Guy. *Maurice Maeterlinck – une poésie – une sagesse – un homme*, Bruxelles : Palais des Académies, 1961 : 237.

[35] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Les Aveugles*, Paris : Charpentier, 1925. (On cite les éditions selon lesquelles les citations sont résumées dans l'article, elle contiennent aussi l'année de la première parution de chaque œuvre dramatique en particulier).

[36] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Soeur Beatrice*. Paris : Charpentier, 1925.

[37] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *L'Oiseau bleu*. Paris : Fasquelle, 1956.

[38] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Marie-Magdeleine*. Paris : Charpentier, 1922.

[39] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Les Aveugles*. Paris : Charpentier, 1925.

[40] Voir *supra*.

[41] Voir *supra*.

maine et artistique était capable, tant il a enrichi le verset biblique.[42] Citons à nouveau : *Jésus répond aux docteurs: »En vérité, je Vous le dis, avant qu'Abraham ne fût, je suis«. Il ne dit pas j'étais. Il est depuis toujours, dans le passé comme dans le présent et dans l'avenir. Le Verbe n'a pas plus de temps puisqu'il est éternel. C'est l'un des rares moments où il parle comme parlerait notre Dieu. Il a ici le sens et le sentiment de son éternité*«.[43] Si, à la lumière, de ces mots, on se tourne vers le phénomène dans lequel on pourrait confronter en un dénominateur commun indispensable les textes cités, nous n'aurons qu'une solution à notre disposition. C'est le miracle, lorsque l'homme vainc la mort, lorsqu'il brise le malheur et le mal, et s'établit dans l'éternité de cet état que nous nommons de façon moins claire, bonheur, et en termes plus techniques on transmet son essence dans des approximations analogiques : « résurrection d'entre les morts », « le salut », « l'éternité » ou « l'infini ». Le bonheur intemporel de la conscience humaine dans l'éternité, présupposée par la résurrection, englobe l'intemporalité du Christ, comme il est écrit dans la *Bible* et l'on peut la résumer en une synthèse. Dans ce sens c'est aussi la seule réponse possible à la problématique complexe de la mort, comme on vient de la présenter en introduction et qui occupe intégralement la curiosité artistique et humaine du dramaturge belge.

L'œuvre prédominante dans ce sens est, comme constaté, *Marie-Magdeleine.* Son contenu peut être déverrouillé en utilisant la procédure qu'on a déjà définie chez Maeterlinck, la mise en abyme. L'œuvre contient deux points centraux. Le premier est la mort et la résurrection de Lazar, le second est quant à lui la mort du Christ et sa résurrection. Le premier se retrouve dans le second, c'est son image miroir. Tel Lazar qui mourut une fois et fut ramené à la vie, selon les termes de la *Bible* nous prendrons tous part à cela, aux derniers jours. à ce moment là, le Christ sera « tout en tous »[44] car la vie sera séparée de la mort – c'est cette vie qu'il a légué à l'espèce *homo sapiens sapiens*, avec l'événement par lequel se conclut Marie-Magdeleine. Dans la résurrection de Lazar on voit le secret caché de la résurrection du Christ et par conséquent celui de notre destin eschatologique, ce qui est l'essence de la technique de mise en abyme qui attirait Maurice Maeterlinck. Citons le paragraphe le plus caractéristique : »*Le cadavre était la, sous la lumière avide qui dévorait la grotte, couché comme une statue informe, rigide, étroite, serrée de bandelettes, le visage couvert d'un suaire. La foule, tassée en demi-cercle, irrésistiblement attiré et repoussée, se penchait, tendait ses mille cous, sans oser approcher. Le Nazaréen se tenait seul, en avant. Il leva la main, dit quelques*

[42] Ces réflexions coïncident avec les éléments relatifs à ce que donne la critique littéraire ou l'histoire. L'âme humaine devrait s'unir au Christ hors du temps dans une sorte de présent éternel. Ainsi : *»En revanche, chez certains qui sont les avertis, une liaison plus ou moins habituelle existerait entre la conscience claire et cette conscience profonde qui sait les choses de l'avenir puisque l'âme, principe permanent, est de demain comme d'hier. On voit se profiler a l'horizon d'une telle théorie le postulat de la préexistence de l'avenir que plus tard le philosophe cherchera a préciser dans le concept de l'éternel présent«*, Vivier, Robert. »Histoire d'une âme«. *Maurice Maeterlinck, 1862 – 1962*. Bruxelles : La Renaissance du livre, 1962 : 163. D'autres auteurs voient les choses de façon similaire. Ainsi : *»Materlinck considère (et peut être) faut il voir en ceci un réflexe de défense, (ou une consolation), il considère, dans ses essais, que le temps n'existe point de façon absolue, qu'il est réversible, que tout un événement futur existe déjà, aussi réel qu'un événement passé«*, Compère, Gaston. *Le Théâtre de Maurice Maeterlinck*. Bruxelles : Palais des Académies, 1955 : 249. Pour »l'éternel présent » comparez aussi Turk, Boštjan Marko. *Paul Claudel et l'actualité de l'être*. Paris : Téqui, 2011.

[43] Voir *supra*.

[44] Eph, 4, 6.

mots que je ne saisis point, puis d'une voix dont je n'oublierai jamais la puissance captive, s'adressant au cadavre, il s'écria: »Lazare, sors!«.[45] Lazar se lève et marche dans la vie. La rigidité de la langue qui se libère de sa fonction directe pour se refléter dans la réalité, hors du réel, de la vie en Dieu »par lui-même » ne doit pas leurrer pour empêcher de voir en ce texte un des témoignages les plus forts de la détermination eschatologique humaine. Sans tenir compte de l'affirmation de Gaston Compere,[46] où il critique le calme de Silanus lors de l'événement qui dépassait la connaissance et la compréhension de chacune des personnes présentes, on doit, dans la dignité stoïque de celui-ci, voir le plus grand témoignage de la véracité de l'événement, et surtout de sa signification, dans le sens générique de l'espèce de l'homme.

À la lumière de ceci, on peut aussi se tourner vers le nombre des détails particulièrement significatifs de la fin du drame. C'est là que Marie-Magdeleine rencontre le Christ qui part vers l'éternité. Cependant, cette rencontre est de nouveau présente à travers une nouvelle mise en abyme. On la voit notamment à travers le prisme du héros d'un des principaux drames chrétiens de l'auteur belge, c'est à dire par le prisme de l'homme aveugle. Citons :»*L'Aveugle de Jéricho, a la fenêtre: »Il tombe!... Il est tombé!... Il regarde la maison!.... (…) L'Aveugle de Jéricho,* à *la fenêtre Il se relève!... Ils l'entrainaient!... Le tumulte, les cris de mort reprennent et redoublent dans la rue. Verus sort lentement en regardant Marie-Magdeleine qui est demeurée immobile, comme en extase, et tout illuminée de la clarté des torches qui s'éloignent*«.[47]

L'homme aveugle qui est le fondement du drame chrétien, *Les Aveugles* dans les œuvres de Maurice Maeterlinck, témoigne en faveur de la lumière. La parabole de Job dans l'*Ancien Testament* qui – en absent – confirme Dieu, ne pourrait pas être mieux placée. Les aveugles voient et guident. à la lumière de cette maxime, on pourrait aussi se tourner vers les œuvres suivantes du cycle dramatique de Maeterlinck et notamment vers *Sœur Beatrice*[48] ainsi que *Le Miracle de saint Antoine*.[49] La même logique se confirme également ici. Le spectre dramatique de Maurice Maeterlinck, comme il s'est façonné dans sa période mûre,[50] ne pourrait être compris sans prendre en compte le contact intégral que l'auteur avait avec *la Bible* et l'héritage chrétien. Il n'est d'ailleurs possible de comprendre *Sœur Béatrice* également que dans ce contexte, puisqu'il est sous titré de façon formelle « Le miracle ». Le miracle est entièrement en rapport avec l'image du Job de l'Ancien Testament et de son histoire: quand il pense qu'il est le plus loin de Dieu, c'est alors qu'il en est le plus près. L'histoire parle de l'échange d'identité entre la vierge Marie et la religieuse éponyme de l'Abbaye de Gand au 15ème siècle. Bien que sœur Béatrice se juge comme la dernière parmi les adoratrices de la Sainte Mère à cause des pêchés de désirs corporel et de non chasteté, cette dernière la place alors en premier : elle prend son identité et est prête à supporter la punition qui lui est dévolue. L'histoire littéraire s'est déjà prononcée la-dessus: »*The Abbesse enters, followed by two nuns. They notice the missing statue and accuse »Sister Beatrice« of allowing its theft. She does not deny the charge and she is condemned by the Abess to*

[45] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Marie-Magdeleine* : 86-87.
[46] Voir *supra*.
[47] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Marie-Magdeleine* : 180.
[48] Maeterlinck, Maurice., *Théâtre*, 3. Paris : Charpentier, 1925.
[49] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Théâtre, 2*. Paris : Charpentier, 1925.
[50] Voir *supra*, la citation de Gaston Compère.

be whipped. Even so, she will not affirm or deny how the image disappeared«.[51] Le fait que ces deux personnes, celle qui a donné au monde un sauveur et la nonne flamande anonyme, soient égalisées aux yeux des sciences littéraires, est énoncé par les guillemets entourant le prénom de l'une d'elles, dans la citation littérale ci-dessus.[52] Ainsi, la conclusion présente est placée sur un fondement objectif. Il est nécessaire seulement de conclure que la réalisation dramatique de Maeterlinck s'appuie ici aussi sur un miroir caché, une mise en abyme, qui nous permet de voir les relations interpersonnelles dans la perspective de transcendance du destin de l'homme.

Il existe aussi une autre conversion de l'histoire de Job, se déroulant dans le sens contraire de celles citées jusque là, en somme, que l'homme est très loin de Dieu lorsqu'il croit en être le plus près. Sur ce point, on ne peut repousser l'analogie qui est rétablie par les extraits citées de *L'Ecclesiaste* et du *Miracle de Saint Antoine*.[53] Dans le monde petit bourgeois qui se caractérise par sa suffisance, arrive Saint Antoine. Son but est universel. Selon le modèle biblique, il veut ressusciter Mademoiselle Hortense, morte à la 77ème année de sa vie, après un repos de trois à quatre jours dans la tombe. Il dit : »*Je veux ressusciter Mademoiselle Votre Tante*«[54] et il ajoute: »*Il faut que je la ressuscite maintenant*«.[55] Mais il se confronte alors à une totale incompréhension : il est finalement même chassé des lieux en tant que dément et ivrogne. Il ramène néanmoins Mademoiselle la tante à la vie, mais elle retombe bien vite à nouveau dans le sommeil éternel : sans comprendre l'action du saint, et encore moins de pouvoir l'apprécier. Étroit est le chemin qui mène vers la vie, nombreux sont ceux qui y marchent mais ils ne le voient pas : Mais souvent le voient justement que ceux qui, aveugles, détectent la lumière de la vie de l'au-delà, comme le disent les exemples décrits, de fait ou par analogie. Mais que cela reste un travail à exécuter une prochaine fois : »*Sunt autem et alia multa quae fecit Iesus: quae si scribantur per singula, nec ipusm arbitror mundum capere eos qui scribendi sunt libros*«. [56] On trouve beaucoup de ce genre de choses, sous cette forme ou sous une autre, justement dans l'œuvre de l'auteur flamand auquel nous avons consacré le document présent ; le mot poétique, surtout dans les drames, se base sur ce qui ouvre le chemin menant à la réalité qui se cache encore dans le pénombre, comme dit *in exergo*.

Université de Ljubljana, Slovénie

[51] Mahony, Patrick. *Maurice Maeterlinck, mystic and dramatist.* Washington: The Institute for the study of man, 1984: 95.

[52] *Id est: »Sister Beatrice«.*

[53] Cité *supra*.

[54] Maeterlinck, Maurice. *œuvres II*. Bruxelles : Éditions Complexes, 1999 : 414.

[55] *Ibidem*.

[56] Jn, 25.

BIBLIOGRAPHIE :

Chauchard, Paul. *La Mort*. Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1966.

Chinatti, Claudia. »Fausto Maria Martini, poète crépusculaire italien, disciple de MaeteMaurice«. Maurice Maeterlinck Stichting, 1965. 7-31.

Compère, Gaston. *Le Théâtre de Maurice Maeterlinck*. Bruxelles: Palais des Académies, 1955.

Doneck, Guy. *Maurice Maeterlinck – une poésie – une sagesse – un homme*. Bruxelles: Palais des Académies, 1961.

Kohlmann, Anthony. *Unitarism philosophically and theologically examined*, Washington: Guegan, 1821.

Lutaud, Christian. »Maeterlinck et la Bible«. *Annales, 14.* Bruxelles*:* Maurice Maeterlinck Stihting, 1971. 39-127.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Avant le grand silence*. Paris: Charpentier, 1934.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Les Aveugles*. Paris : Charpentier, 1925.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Le Grand Secret*. Paris : Charpentier, 1925.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Grande Loi*. Paris: Charpentier, 1930.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Grande Porte*. Paris : Charpentier, 1939.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *L'Hôte inconnu*. Paris : Charpentier, 1925.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *L'Intelligence des Fleurs*. Paris : Charpentier, 1926.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Marie Magdeleine.* Paris : Charpentier, 1922.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Mort*. Paris : Charpentier, 1929.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *œuvres II*. Bruxelles : Éditions Complexes, 1999.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *L'Oiseau bleu*. Paris : Fasquelle, 1956.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Sagesse et la Destinée*. Paris : Charpentier, 1926.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Théâtre II*. Paris : Charpentie, 1923.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *Théâtre III*. Paris : Charpentier, 1925.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Vie des Abeilles*. Paris : Charpentier, 1922.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Vie des Fourmis*. Paris: Charpentier, 1930.

Maeterlinck, Maurice. *La Vie des Termites*. Paris : Charpentier, 1928.

Mahony, Patrick. *Maurice Maeterlinck, mystic and dramatist*. Washington, D.C.: The Institute for the study of man, 1984.

Neher, André. *Notes sur Quhélét.* Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1951.

Pouillard, Raymond. »Un projet et quelques lectures«. *Annales, 10*, Bruxelles: Maurice Maeterlinck Stichting, 1964. 7-20.

Turk, Boštjan Marko. »Maurice Maeterlinck et le dédale inextricable de l'existence«. *Linguistica, 53/1*. Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta, 2013. 251-263.

Vivier, Robert. »Histoire d'une ame«. *Maurice Maeterlinck, 1862 – 1962*. Bruxelles: La Renaissance du livre, 1962.

SUMMARIES IN SLOVENE – POVZETKI V SLOVENŠČINI

UDK 821.111(73=669)–31.09Cole T.

Igor Maver

TEJU COLOVA NIGERIJA TER ODPRTI MESTI NEW YORK IN BRUSELJ

Roman *Open City* (2011) pisatelja Teju Cola, ki je bil rojen in je odrasel v Nigeriji, je postavljen v New York City, kjer živi od leta 1992. Pripovedovalec in protagonist knjige, mladi nigerijski zdravnik Julius je pravcati *flâneur* v Velikem jabolku. Opazuje hitro spreminjajoči se multietnični značaj mesta in meditira o (svoji) zgodovini, kulturi, identiteti in samoti ter o svetu izven Združenih držav, s katerim je mesto povezano preko globalne zgodovine nasilja in bolečine. Vseskozi sopostavlja preteklost in sedanjost, navidezno brezmejno odprto mesto New York, Nigerijo in različne evropske lokalitete, posebej Bruselj. Roman je, čeprav se odvija v Združenih državah, konstantno prepleten s protagonistovimi spomini na pretekle izkušnje, ki so pogojene z njegovo kompleksno hibridno nigerijsko-evropsko-ameriško identiteto.

UDK 316.75:929Vode A.:929Šentjurc I.
UDK 821.112.2(=163.6)–31.09Šentjurc I.

Mira Miladinović Zalaznik

NASTANEK IN POSLEDICE DRŽAVNE OBLASTI: PRIMER ANGELE VODE IN IGORJA ŠENTJURCA

Povzetek

Avtorica se v svojem prispevku, ne da bi se pri tem sklicevala na zadevno teorijo, ukvarja z vprašanjem, kam vodijo dejanja zlorabljene državne oblasti. Pri tem sta ji v oporo konkretni študiji primerov ene prvih bork za žensko enakopravnost ter socialno enakost

na Slovenskem Angele Vode, ki so jo vodilni slovenski partijci izključili iz komunistične stranke, ker je kritizirala pakt Ribbentrop-Molotov (Hitler-Stalin) ter slovenskega pisatelja ter urednika Igorja Šentjurca, ki je zaradi zanj neugodnih domačih okoliščin emigriral ter postal nemški avtor uspešnic. Avtorja in publicista, ki ju ločita spol in stoletje njunega rojstva, povezuje življenjska izkušnja. Integralni del njunega življenja je bila praktično vse do smrti matična država s svojimi represivnimi, legalnimi službami: komunistično partijo, tajno policijo ter sodstvom.

UDK 929Radics P.:94(436–89:497.4)

Tanja Žigon

KRANJSKI POLIHISTOR PETER PL. RADICS MED DVEMA JEZIKOMA IN KULTURAMA

Prispevek se osredotoča na življenje in ustvarjalno pot kranjskega polihistorja, vsestranskega raziskovalca, zgodovinarja, germanista in teatrologa Petra pl. Radicsa (1836–1912), ki je bil rojen v Postojni, a po rodu ni bil Kranjec. Na osnovi študije primera avtorica obravnava vprašanja, kaj v 19. stoletju zaznamuje intelektualca, ki deluje na Kranjskem, kje je njegovo mesto v družbi ter kakšno je njegovo razumevanje lastne identitete. Nadalje preverja hipotezo, da lahko na Slovenskem v 19. stoletju govorimo o vsaj treh pripadnostih, regionalni, nacionalni in dinastično habsburški, osvetljuje ozadja, ki so zaznamovala Radicsevo življenje in delo, ter poskuša pojasniti, zakaj je raje izbral življenje v kranjskem mikrokozmosu, kot da bi svojo srečo kot publicist, raziskovalec in avtor poskusil v centru monarhije, na Dunaju.

UDK 821.111(73)–31.09Mahmoody B.:316.722(55:73)

Maja Mugerle

ORIENTALIZEM V *NE DAM SVOJEGA OTROKA* BETTY MAHMOODY

Članek obravnava vlogo orientalizma pri predstavljanju ‘drugega’ v literarnih delih, predvsem v delu Betty Mahmoody *Ne dam svojega otroka*. Pojem orientalizem zaznamuje konstrukte o vzhodu, ki jih ustvarjajo zahodnjaki. V minulih petdesetih letih so subjekt stereotipov predvsem Arabci in muslimani, ki so se znašli v kontinuiranem sporu z ZDA. Namen članka je prikazati, da pri nastanku podobe ‘drugega’ pomembno vlogo igrajo tudi literarna dela in zgodovinski trenutek, v katerem nastanejo. Podrobna obravnava dela *Ne dam svojega otroka pokaže*, da je bila zgodba, polna stereotipov o Irancih in muslimanih, predstavljena v ključnem trenutku. Mediji

so bili preplavljeni z novicami o Zalivski vojni in krizi s talci v Teheranu, to obdobje pa je zaznamovalo tudi formiranje nove arabske in/ali muslimanske identitete med priseljenci v ZDA, zaradi česar so le-ti postali bolj 'vidni'. Zgodba o ameriški materi, ki s hčerjo beži pred svojim fanatičnim iranskim možem, je v danem obdobju vzbudila pozornost. Kljub dejstvu, da med kritiki ni bila dobro sprejeta, je med občinstvom uspešno širila stereotipe o 'drugem'.

UDK 821.111–31.09Bridge A.:94(560)«1900/1922«

Isil Bas

DEJSTVA IN FIKCIJA: SUBVERTIRANJE ORIENTALIZMA V *THE DARK MOMENT*

Postkolonialna kritika je obširno analizirala zapise zahodnih žensk o Orientu, medtem ko je prispevek Ann Bridge k temu žanru ostal neznan. V knjigi *The Dark Moment* pripoveduje zgodbo o ustanovitvi turške republike po boju proti zahodnemu imperializmu, ki je bila zelo kontroverzna tema za ženo britanskega diplomata. Še več, pisateljica se poigrava s konvencijami in predstavitvenimi strategijami tradicionalnih orientalističnih pripovedi, s tem, da jih zasuka tako, da ustvari pri bralcih zavest brez predsodkov o zgodovinskem kontekstu ter družbenih in kulturnih specifičnostih Turčije in Turkov, s tem pa vzpostavi temelje za transkulturnost namesto medkulturne penetracije.

UDK 821.111–313.2.09Morris W.:929Hudson W. H.

Caterina Novák

SANJAČ V DIALOGU: EVOLUCIJSKI SEKS IN SPOL V UTOPIČNI VIZIJI WILLIAMA MORRISA IN WILLIAMA HENRYJA HUDSONA

Članek raziskuje paralele med dvema utopijama iz poznega 19. stoletja, *A Crystal Age* (1882) Williama Henryja Hudsona in *News from Nowhere* (1891) Williama Morrisa. Ugotavlja kako ti dve deli odgovarjata na prehod iz kinetičnega v statičen koncept utopije, pod vplivom evolucionističnih in feminističnih diskurzov, ki se je začel v tistem času. Poseben poudarek je na načinu v katerem se to odvija preko prikaza evolucije, seksualnosti in spolnih vlog v posameznem delu. Prikaz teh 'disruptivnih' elementov lahko učinkuje kot način za zagotovitev bralčeve aktivne vpletenosti v političnem, intelektualnem in emocionalnem smislu.

UDK 821.111(73)–311.6.09Mailer N.

Jasna Potočnik Topler

NORMAN MAILER - NAJVPLIVNEJŠI KRITIK SODOBNE RESNIČNOSTI V DRUGI POLOVICI DVAJSETEGA STOLETJA

Norman Mailer, eden najvplivnejših avtorjev druge polovice dvajsetega stoletja, je vestno sledil načelu, da mora biti pisatelj tudi kritik aktualnega družbenega dogajanja. Tako se podoba sočasne Amerike odkriva v dobršnem delu njegovega opusa. Opisoval je utripanje svojega časa – od vojnih grozot do številnih dinamičnih socialnih in političnih procesov ter poleta na Luno leta 1969. Pogosto je v središče postavljal konflikte, odnos med posameznikom in družbo, moč – še posebej politično, ki se večkrat izrodi, nevarno moč kapitala ter poskuse posameznikov, da se uprejo porajajočim se silam totalitarizma. Vso pisateljsko kariero je vztrajal pri temah, kot so nasilje, moč, sprevržena spolnost, fenomen Hitlerja, terorizem, vera, neenakost in korupcija ter opozarjal na dejstvo, da je sodobni posameznik v veliki nevarnosti, da izgubi svobodo in dostojanstvo.

UDK 821.112.2–94.09Dückers T.:316.772.4

Tina Štrancar

DRUŽINSKI SPOMIN V ROMANU *HIMMELSKÖRPER*

Prispevek uvodoma na kratko predstavi sodobne spominske teorije, njihovo povezavo z literarno vedo (literatura kot medij kolektivnega spomina) in se v nadaljevanju osredotoči na analizo družinskega spomina v romanu *Himmelskörper* nemške pisateljice Tanje Dückers. Posebna pozornost je posvečena strategijam literarizacije in refleksije komunikativnega spomina, ki se v romanu kaže v obliki družinskih pogovorov, ter prehajanju komunikativnega spomina v kulturni oz. kolektivni spomin.

UDK 821.133.1(493)–2.09Maeterlinck M.:27–23

Boštjan Marko Turk

BIBLIČNI *HABITUS* V DRAMATSKEM DELU MAURICA MAETERLINCKA

Maurice Maeterlinck se je veliko ukvarjal z branjem *Biblije* in s premišljevanjem o njej. *Biblija* je delo, ki je izrazito dramatsko intonirano, saj prikazuje človeka v odnosu do Boga v seriji najrazličnejših položajev, ki gredo od popolnega priznavanja

do odločnega zanikanja, od veselja in radosti, do najglobljega obupa. Če bi *Biblija* prinašala zgolj pozitivno podobo človeka, bi zgrešila bistvo življenja, na ta način pa svojo posredovalno vlogo postavila pod vprašaj. Dramatika Maurica Maeterlincka v svoji zreli periodi sledi natančno tej logiki. V najboljših momentih pa se odpira v presežnost, tako kot to počne človek, v tistem, kar ga kot takega sploh vzpostavlja: v občutku lastne minljivosti in v eksistencialnem vprašanju, kaj pride po koncu oz. kaj sledi, ko ničesar več ni.