

Intercultural Discourse in Dušan Šarotar's Travel Book "Panorama"

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The aim of this article is to present the novel "Panorama", by the Slovenian writer Dušan Šarotar, as a special form of intercultural literature. Esselborn (2009) described intercultural literature as literature that is born in the area of different cultures and literatures. He determined several criteria that can be useful when listing a literary work among intercultural literature; from linguistic interculturality to intercultural themes, which include meeting the 'other', the different, the outsider, and from the biographical interculturality of the author's personal story to collective interculturality as a common experience of a whole group. In Šarotar's novel, the narrator starts his journey at the extreme western edge of Europe, in Ireland, trying to find peace and quiet to finish a manuscript. Later, he finds himself in Belgium, and finally, the story ends in Bosnia, in Sarajevo and Mostar. Our first research question was how much this novel fits into the definition of a travel book on the one hand and, on the other, how much the narrator's story is a description of his own exile as the only place from which one can achieve peace or perspective. However, during his travels, the narrator has many possibilities for encountering the 'other' and for the construction of meanings through confrontation with differences. Therefore, we were mainly interested in the role this intercultural discourse has within the narrator's condition of exile, and how much it brings Šarotar's travel book into the framework of intercultural literature.

Key words: Evaluation, Language intensity, Intercultural discourse, Intercultural literature, Literary pragmatics, Travel book



INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics, with its interest in language in relationship to society, culture, and identity, brings us on the one hand to the connection between language and literature, which is an important part of culture (Mikolič 2014), while on the other hand it gives us a means of dealing with tourism, which represents an interesting area of cultures and languages in contact (Mikolič 2013; 2017; 2018). Travel writing somehow connects all of these interests, so in this paper an analysis of a modern Slovenian novel will be presented in terms of the elements which define it as a travel book and/or intercultural literature.

The first aim of the paper was to determine how much the novel "Panorama", by the Slovenian writer Dušan Šarotar, fits into the definition of a travel book, and how much the narrator's story is a description of his own exile as the only place from which one can achieve peace or perspective. Actually, during his journey the narrator of the novel has many possibilities for encountering the 'other' and constructing meanings through confrontation with differences. Therefore, the second research aim was to discover the role of this intercultural discourse, and how much it brings Šarotar's travel book into the framework of intercultural literature. Before the presentation of the analysis, we will discuss some theoretical insights.

SOME THEORETICAL INSIGHTS

A travel book is hard to precisely define, because it is a hybrid genre that contains elements of many categories and disciplines. In Borm's definition, the non-fiction dominant and the first person narrative is prevalent: "Any narrative characterized by a non-fiction dominant that relates, (almost always) in the first person, a journey or journeys that readers suppose to have taken place in reality, while assuming or presupposing that the author, narrator, and principal character are but one or identical," (Borm 2004, 17).

There are many more criteria to be determined when listing a literary work among intercultural literature, which is becoming an important literary concept in a globalized society (see Kovač



2016). In this regard we should mention Karl Esselborn, one of the founders of intercultural German studies. He described intercultural literature as literature that is born in the area of different cultures and literatures in contact with each other, which can vary from linguistic interculturality to intercultural topics which include meeting the 'other', the different, the outsider, and in the area from the biographical interculturality of the author's personal story to collective interculturality as a common experience of a whole group (Esselborn 2009).

In linguistic analysis of literary texts, the approach of literary pragmatics has been applied. This focuses on literature as a kind of communication between the author and the addressee. Van Dijk (1985) talks about the poetics of literary communication, while Levin (1976) sees the literary text as a performative speech act which contains the acts of imagining (I imagine myself in a world in which...) and inviting (I invite you to join me).

As with all human communication, literary discourse includes referential and evaluative meaning (Toporišič 2004, 491–533). Narrative, whether it is oral or written, fiction or non-fiction, novel or travel book, clearly contains the referential meaning necessary to understand the events being recounted, but only evaluative devices give the reader or listener the information that explains why the narrator is telling the story, why the events are so important to them and, therefore, why they are worth listening to; and, hence, invite the listener to share the set of values and attitudes the narrator is disclosing (Romano 2014, 367). Martin and White (2005, 5) claim that the linguistic and pragmatic devices chosen by narrators to share their emotions create a community of shared feelings. With regard to emotional narratives, the category in which both travel writing and literature can be listed, Redeker's functional-cognitive model of discourse markers (2006) is appropriate to explain the narratives' internal structure, which is also one of the evaluation tools. It shows how to distinguish the internal segmental structure of the narratives, and the most salient relationships between those segments. Redeker differentiates paratactic and hypotactic transitions, or linear structure and broken, non-linear structure.



Furthermore, the evaluation can be modified in terms of graduation or language intensity. In fact, Bowers claims that language intensity is a quality of language that "indicates the degree to which the speaker's attitude toward a concept deviates from neutrality," (Bowers 1963). The devices of language intensity (intensifiers and mitigators) not only express the writer's relationship towards the text content, they are also the expressive tools of strategies of politeness or impoliteness. Brown-Levinson's politeness theory highlights that mitigation means more possibilities for the listener to react and express his own opinion (Brown and Levinson 1987). The metatextual means of the evaluation in general help the addressee to appropriately adapt the proposition to the addressee (Pisanski Peterlin 2007, 7)

METHODOLOGY AND SOURCE DESCRIPTION

Semantic and discourse analyses of Šarotar's novel or travel book "Panorama" have been carried out according to the explained theoretical approaches. The language analysis of the novel and its translation was carried out in two phases. From the Word versions of both texts, we first created a working corpus, lemmatized and appropriately marked (using tools and methods developed by Erjavec et al. 2005 and Vičič et al. 2014). On this basis, an automatic word extraction was carried out and the frequency sheets for individual lexemes (lemma) were produced, thus establishing the diversity of vocabulary and the presence of intensity modifiers among the most commonly used words. In the second phase, we manually marked and analyzed examples of the most typical language tools with which Šarotar (and his translator) strengthened the power of individual words and the novel's message as a whole.

Who is the author of the novel? Dušan Šarotar is well-known Slovenian writer, poet, screenwriter and photographer. He has published many novels, short stories, poetry and essay collections; the novel "Panorama" (2014) is his first work to be translated into foreign languages. It was translated into English by Rawley Grau in 2016. The book and its translations have received many nominations and awards.

Dušan Šarotar comes from Prekmurje, the north-eastern region of Slovenia on the border with Hungary, where Hungarian and Roma minorities live. This was also the place where the Jewish community lived before the Second World War, but during the War they tragically disappeared. Šarotar, who has Jewish roots – in fact, his grandfather was a member of the disappeared community – was the first writer to describe the tragic destiny of this community in one of his previous novels, “Billiards at the Hotel Dobray”.

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The novel “Panorama” also deals with the Jewish question, but that is not its only focus; it includes representatives of various minority, migrant, and refugee communities. A writer, probably the author’s alter ego, looks for peace and inspiration as he travels slowly along the rainy, foggy coast of Ireland. From there he goes to Belgium and then, by way of Ljubljana, to Sarajevo. He travels using many different means of transport, including taxi, tram, speedboat, high speed train, bike, car, plane, and also on foot. He prefers to travel slowly, since for the most part his journey leads him ever deeper into the landscapes of his own inner world. The 1st person narrative takes the form of an associative stream of consciousness in which different times, places, and events overlap to create an unusual story with many narrative voices. Although the connections between them may not be immediately obvious, it is not entirely accidental that they find themselves sharing a common story. Standing out among these narrators without a country are: Gjini, an Albanian driver and occasional tour guide; Jane, an Irish-American woman, Gjini’s friend; a historical figure, Maura Ostry, a travelling Benedictine and founder of the Irish monastery of Kylemore Abbey; Spomenka, an immigrant professor of literature from former Yugoslavia; Caroline, a writer from Brussels with a migrant background, a random audience member at a literary event in Brussels; and a poet from Sarajevo, among others. Their diverse narratives create a panoramic view of the search for something they might call home.



Picture 1: Šarotar's novel "Panorama" and its translation (translated by Rawley Grau)



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Source: Mikolič (2018).

EVALUATIVE STRATEGIES AND DEVICES

Discursive Level

The inner structure observed at the discursive level is closely connected to the high level of spontaneity and emotionality of the spoken language of various narrative voices reported by the author. So the main structural features are:

- a. The narrative is highly fragmented. The main story and the sub-stories are continuously interrupted by the introduction of new stories and the resumption of other stories left behind earlier. The beginnings and closings of all these narratives are quite vague, since the sentences are very long, sometimes even more than a page, and the narrators may change several times even within one sentence. Yet, sometimes a new paragraph or sentence means a change in the narrative voice:

Slo.: "Po tem sporočilu se pred mojim odhodom ni več oglasil, tako da **nisem vedel** [narrator is speaking in the 1st person], kako se je odločil.

Nisem verjel [*Gjini is speaking in the 1st person*], da se bova z Jane spet videla, ne takrat, bil sem poln misli in skrbi, prvič sem za hip okleval in premišljal, ali bom vse skupaj zmožel, moral sem zaključiti ali opraviti še nekaj zamujenih obveznosti na fakulteti pred vpisom v zadnji letnik, zmanjkovalo mi je časa za vse, bil sem brez denarja, ki sem ga porabil za potovanje v Albanijo, preostale prihranke pa sem pustil doma, saj veš, je rekel Gjini, vedno imaš nekoga, ki te potrebuje” (Šarotar 2014, 111–112).

Eng.: “After this message he didn’t write to me again before I left, so **I didn’t know** [*narrator is speaking in the 1st person*] what he had decided.

I didn’t believe [*Gjini is speaking in the 1st person*] Jane and I would ever see each other again, not at that time; I was filled with doubt and worry, and at first, for a moment, I was hesitating, wondering if I’d be able to manage it all; I still had a few things overdue that I had to finish or pass at college before I could register for the final year, and I was running out of time; I had no money left – I had used it for my trip to Albania and left the remainder of my savings with my family at home; you know how it is, Gjini said, there’s always somebody who depends on you” (Šarotar 2016, 108).

Alternatively, the author sometimes puts a semicolon before introducing a new narrator, reported by another book character, as in the example below, where Gjini is speaking, reporting two of Jane’s narrations:

Slo.: “Zdela se **mi** je drugačna [*Gjini is speaking*], ne samo na videz spremenjena, sicer z daljšimi lasmi, se mi je zdelo, ko sem se v hipu skušal zbrati, da me ne bi ujela, da je ne bi prizadel; [*Jane’s narration in the 1st person is included*] sladkor, **je rekla**, kot bi mi brala misli, diabetes so **mi** odkrili, zdravnik mi je predpisal inzulin-sko terapijo, ne skrbi, to imamo v družini, že obvladam, **je rekla Jane, je rekel Gjini, želel sem** [*Jane’s narration is concluded, Gjini is speaking in the 1st person again*] samo prikriti svoje presenečenje, kajti minilo je nekaj burnih in dolgih mesecev, skoraj od pomladi, celo poletje je bilo med nama, kar sva se poslovila, pa tudi jaz sem moral biti v njenih očeh opazno spremenjen, saj sem bil še vedno poležan in pomečkan od ozke postelje v moji nekdanji domovini, vendar ji takrat še nisem zmožel pripovedovati, spet pravim, **je rekel Gjini**, tudi jaz sem izvedel veselo novico šele dobra dva meseca kasneje, pričakoval sem namreč otroka, **je rekel**, moral sem jih v kratkem nekako spraviti sem, a nisem še vedel, kako, kljub vsemu

sem bil samo emigrant, pa vendar; [*Jane's narration in the 1st person is included*] **občutek imam, da sem pripravljena**, da bi lahko naredila fotografijo, a čutim, da je zame morebiti že prepozno, **je rekla Jane**" (Šarotar 2014, 112).

Eng.: "She did seem different **to me** [*Gjini is speaking*], changed, and not only in appearance, although her hair was longer, I thought and right away tried to compose myself so she wouldn't catch me out, so I didn't hurt her feelings; [*Jane's narration in the 1st person is included*] it's the sugar, **she said**, as if reading my thoughts; they discovered I have diabetes, and the doctor put me on insulin; don't worry, it runs in the family, I've got it under control, **Jane said, Gjini said; I was only trying** [*Jane's narration is concluded, Gjini is speaking in the 1st person again*] to hide my surprise, since it had been a few long and turbulent months, almost since the spring – there was a whole summer between us since we'd said goodbye – and I must have looked different in her eyes, too, since I was still contorted and crumpled from the narrow bed in my former homeland, but, I'll say it again, at the time I still wasn't able to tell her, **Gjini said**; I myself only learned the happy news two months later, that I was expecting a child, **he said**; I was going to have to find a way to bring them here soon, but I still didn't know how – despite everything, I was just an immigrant, but even so; **I feel like I'm ready** to do photography now, but I think it might be too late for me, **Jane said**" (Šarotar 2016, 108–109).

In the English translation there is a semicolon where Gjini is beginning again to narrate his own story in the 1st person, while in the original there is only a comma there. The English translator generally used more semicolons within one sentence than the original, not only in the case of a change of narrator. However our analysis had no intention of analyzing the translation, so here we quote the translated text only to aid understanding.

The reporting verb *say* (past *said* – Slov. *je rekel*) is very frequent throughout the whole narration, both in the original and in the translation; it functions as a pragmatic marker which expresses the beginning or the end of the narrator's speech.

- b. There are many other pragmatic markers (*you know, you see, I mean* – Slov. *veš, saj veš; yes* – Slov. *ja; then* – *torej* etc.),

repetitions (*Pavel said* – Slov. *je rekel Pavel*; *I don't know* – Slov. *ne vem*) and interruptions (*the passengers, /.../, that is to say, all of us, /.../, were standing up* – Slov. *so se potniki, /.../, torej, vsi so, /.../, vstali*) which show the confusion and spontaneity of the narrators.

Slo.: “**Veš, je rekel Pavel, ko** se je hitri vlak že ustavljal, **ko** je vztrajno zaviral in **so se potniki**, predvsem uslužbenci z veliki poslovnimi torbami, ki so že odvrgli papirnate lončke s kavo in pomečkane časopise v koš, ter študenti z nahrbtniki in tablicami v rokah, **torej, vsi so**, še preden je vlak dokončno zavrl, **vstali** in se pognali proti vratom, takrat **je Pavel rekel, veš**, čutim, da tako ne bo več šlo, nekega jutra se bodo morali preprosto upreti, odločno vstati in zasesti ulice, trge in parke ter zahtevati spoštovanje dostojanstva, strah me je samo tega, da **ne vem**, kje in kdaj se bo to končalo, **ne vem**, kaj naj jim odgovorim, svojim študentom, saj vedo, da sem na njihovi strani, vendar tudi jaz nimam odgovora, vsi se še vedno vrtimo okoli vprašanja, kaj so dovoljena sredstva in kaj je pravzaprav cilj, zdaj nič in nihče nikogar več ne opravičuje, vsaka izbira je že vnaprej izbrana ali izsiljena, **je rekel Pavel**. Naj se branimo ali napademo, smo obsojenci ali bomo sodili, tudi o tem te bodo danes spraševali študenti, **saj veš**, vse bi radi vedeli, vsaj to me pomirja, **je rekel Pavel**, ko sva se prerinila med prvimi skozi gnečo in stekla po ozkem železniškem podhodu na svetlo in široko ulico” (Šarotar 2014, 96–97).

Eng.: “**You know, Pavel said**, when the express train was stopping, as it insistently put on its brakes and **the passengers**, especially the office workers with their big briefcases, who had already tossed their paper cups and crumpled newspapers into the wastepaper bins, and the students with their backpacks and tablets in their hands, **that is to say, all of us**, even before the train had fully stopped, **were standing up** and starting towards the doors – that was when **Pavel said, you know**, I feel that something is going to have to change, that one morning people will simply have to object, will once and for all have to stand up and occupy the streets and squares and parks and demand that their dignity be respected; my only fear is that **I don't know** when and where it will end; **I don't know** what to tell them, my students, **I mean**; they know that I'm on their side, but I don't have any answers either, we're all still dancing around questions like what means are permissible and what is really the goal; now nothing and no one can excuse anyone any more, and every choice has already been made in advance or

imposed on us, **Pavel said**. Should we defend ourselves, or should we attack? Are we the ones on trial, or the ones who pass judgement? – this, too, is something students are asking today, because, **you know**, they all want to know, and, if nothing else, that gives me comfort, **Pavel said** after we'd pushed our way to the front of the crowd and run through the train station's narrow underpass on to the bright, broad street" (Šarotar 2016, 94–95).

- c. A recurrent strategy particularly used by the main narrator, the writer's alter ego, is a profusion of imagery and details. The details perform different functions: setting the scene of the events, providing clarity and a sense of credibility, and involving the reader in the emotional images of foreign countries and places, as well as the appropriate self-image of the narrator.

Slo.: "Mesto se nenehoma širi, meščanska in delavska okrožja tako rekoč čez noč izginjajo v globokih gradbenih jamah, ki jih kopljejo finančni špekulanti in brezimni investitorji, vse to v navezi z lokalno politiko in pod pritiski multinacionalnk, kar nezadržno uničuje podobo krajine; tukaj, na ruševinah, v prahu in blatu, ki sta izbrisala nekdanje ulice, trge, dvorišča, ter predvsem na nepreglednih in brezimnih odlagališčih gradbenega materiala, kamor vozijo **dotrajano pohištvo, polomljena okna, zapuščene igrače, prežgano emajlirano posodo, dotrajan parket, prešite odeje in poležane vzglavnike, brezzobe glavnike in krtače za nezaposlene gospe, hišne pomočnice in njihove zdrave otroke, rožaste tapete, strgane platnice mehko vezanih knjig, poččkane šolske zvezke za matematiko in tuje jezike za nižje razrede državnih šol, kopije poročnih in rojstnih listov in cenene barvne reprodukcije platen starih holandskih mojstrov, ki visijo v zastraženih in klimatiziranih muzejih in galerijah, kamor verjetno nekdanji izseljeni stanovalci nikdar niso vstopili**; torej tukaj, je rekel Pavel, se rojeva nov jezik, narejen iz eksplozivne mešanice pozabljenih in prevedenih jezikov, iz snovi, kot so zapuščena smetišča in velike investicije" (Šarotar 2014, 91–92).

Eng.: "The city is constantly expanding; middle-class and working-class districts disappear overnight, so to speak, in deep construction pits excavated by financial speculators and anonymous investors, all of it in collusion with local politicians and under pressure

from the multinationals, and it's obliterating the image of the landscape, relentlessly, and here on the ruins, in the dust and mud that have blotted out the former streets and squares and courtyards, and especially in the endless, nameless construction dumps, where they haul **worn-out furniture, broken windows, abandoned toys, scorched enamel pots, shabby wooden flooring, quilted blankets and flattened pillows, toothless combs and hairbrushes for unemployed housewives and housekeepers and their healthy children, floral wallpaper, the torn-off covers of paperback books, scribbled-over maths and foreign-language workbooks for the lower levels of state schools, copies of marriage licences and birth certificates, and cheap colour reproductions of Dutch Old Master paintings, which hang in guarded, climatized museums and galleries where the evicted former residents probably never set foot** – here, then, Pavel said, a new language is being born, forged from an explosive mix of forgotten and translated tongues, from such material as abandoned rubbish heaps and big investments” (Šarotar 2016, 89).

Semantic Level

The word frequency analysis showed that the most frequently used words among the first 100 words of the novel in its original version relate to:

- a. Human senses, such as thinking and feeling verbs: *reči* (to say), *vedeti* (to know), *vieti* (to see), *pomisliti* (to think), *pisati* (to write), *slišati* (to hear),
- b. Nature or the urban environment, such as these nouns: *morje* (sea), *cesta* (street), *mesto* (town), *pot* (way), *postaja* (station),
- c. Temporal and spatial relationships, such as these adverbs: *tukaj* (here), *vedno* (always), *zdaj* (now), *daleč* (far), *spet* (again), *potem* (then), *počasi* (slowly), *takrat* (at that time), *tam* (there), *nikoli* (never), *pozno* (late), *kmalu* (soon), *nekoč* (once); adjectives: *dolg* (long), *velik* (big), *star* (old), *visok* (tall), *zadnji* (last); and nouns: *dan* (day), *leto* (year), *čas* (time), *hip* (moment).

Furthermore, the following function words are also among the first 100 words: numerous prepositions and conjunctions, and particles such as: *tudi* (also), *samo/le* (only), *kar* (quite), and the following content words:



- Pronouns: *jaz (I), on (he), svoj (myself), nekaj (something), that (tisti), moj (mine), drug (other), ti (you)*;
- An adverb: *več (more)*;
- Nouns: *morje (sea), roka (hand), jezik (language), gospa (lady)*;
- Adjectives: *ves (all), sam (alone), črn (black)*;
- Verbs and verbal expressions: *biti (be), lahko (may), morati (must), stati (stand), moči (can)*.

It can be concluded from the results of the word frequency analysis that there are some semantic fields which are highlighted in the novel, such as nature, the urban environment, time, travel, the sea, and language. A comparison of the vocabulary of this novel with the reference corpus of the Slovenian language, Fidaplust, shows that the frequency of occurrence of certain words from the semantic fields of the sea, rain, moisture, darkness and light is statistically much higher in Šarotar's novel than in other Slovenian texts. Thus, among the 100 words with the highest statistical relevance the following can be found: *vzvalovan (rugged), zastrt (stiffened), zarošen (worn), premočen (overhanging), jambornik (mast), obsijan (sunlit), kopališki (swimming), svetilnik (lighthouse), gliser (boat), klif (cliff), porumenel (yellowish), sinje (blue), temneč (dark), rumenkast (yellowish), svetilniški (lightening), poltema (half-lit)*.

The word frequency analysis shows that there are also many intensity modifiers, both intensifiers such as *vedno (always), nikoli (never), ves (all), tudi (also), več (more), samo/le (only)*, and mitigators such as *nekaj (something), kar (quite), lahko (may)*; the former appear when the narrator is very excited and would like to involve the reader in the emotional plot, while the latter represent a recurrent strategy to express insecurity and confusion, or openness and broadness. The whole inner structure at the discursive level, as described above, represents a similar kind of intensity modification. In particular, the reporting verb *je rekel (said)* functions not only as a pragmatic marker and an element of repetition, but also as a kind of intensity modifier, an intensifier and a mitigator at the same time: an intensifier for its referencing function, and a mitigator because it expresses only the subjective aspect of the person who is speaking. Using intensity

modifiers in such a way means that all the narrative voices are graduated in one or the other direction, so the whole narrative seems to be somehow special, very emotional and mysterious.

Metaphorical Level

In the novel there are many metaphorical uses of words and phrases, from metaphorical adjectives and comparisons to metaphorical expressions allocated to whole semantic fields, such as nature, rain, the sea, light, time, travel, tourism, bus and train stations, emigration, and language. Moreover, various semantic fields are often connected, such as in the case of tourism, where the author sees modern tourism as a form of the religious travels and festivities of the past, so the category of time does not exist, it is only the eternal travel that counts:

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Slo.: “/.../ okrog Grand Placea, ki sem ga ta dan nekajkrat prehodil, navdajal me je tesnoben občutek, vsakič ko sem s katerekoli strani stopil nanj, je bil poln turistov v pohodnih čevljih, oblečenih v dolge pelerine in pokritih s kapucami ali širokimi platnenimi klobučki, v rokah so nosili nakupovalne torbe, težke fotoaparate in plastenke z vodo, kot bi se ustavil čas, me je spreletelo, morebiti se je samo zavrtil nazaj v obdobje srednjeveških romarskih pohodov v svete kraje, karnevalov in prazničnih procesij; skozi prostočasno in vodeno dopoldansko turistično turo se v sprevrnjeni formi vrača duh izgubljene pobožnosti in iskanja smisla, sem pomislil, dolga samotna romanja ponižanih, lačnih, bolnih in pobožnih so na videz nadomestili popularni, atraktivni in cenovno dostopni turistični aranžmaji, ki v nas znova utelešajo vznemirjenje, hrepenenje in skrivnost, saj v varnem, lagodnem in hitrem potovanju sitih in brezskrbnih turistov, ki počasi in po malem že utrujeni in naveličani družbe, čevljev in jezikov hodimo skozi stara pitoreskna mestna jedra, veliko fotografiramo, si ogledujemo cerkvice in katedrale, muzeje in restavracije, saj v tem je tudi nekaj lepega in obljubljenega, tukaj iščem mir, pisal bom, sem pomislil; čas ne obstaja, to je zgolj miselna kategorija, s katero opisujemo in razmejujemo nespremenljivi prostor /.../” (Šarotar 2014, 133)

Eng.: “/.../ around Grand Place, the square I had passed through several times that day and which had made me feel anxious – each time, from whatever side I entered it, it had been full of tourists wearing hiking boots and long ponchos, their heads covered by



hoods or wide-brimmed linen hats, with shopping bags, heavy cameras and plastic water bottles in their hands; as if time has stopped, the thought came to me, or maybe it simply wound itself back to the age of medieval pilgrimages, carnivals and feast-day processions; in the morning guided sightseeing tour we see the spirit of our lost piety, our quest for meaning, returning in perverted form, I thought; the long and lonely pilgrimages of the lowly, the hungry, the sick and the devout are now, it appears, replaced by popular, attractive and affordable tourist packages, which embody within us once more a sense of excitement, longing and mystery; for even in the safe and comfortable, quick journey of tourists with full bellies and no worries, who, having slowly grown tired and bored, little by little, with their companions, their shoes and the different languages, now traipse through the picturesque historic centres of cities, taking photo after photo, looking at little churches and big cathedrals, museums and restaurants – even here there is something beautiful and promised; here I seek peace – that's what I will write, I thought; time does not exist, it is merely a cognitive category by which we describe and partition unchangeable space, /.../" (Šarotar 2016, 130)

Nature and cities pass into a persons' soul and people are constantly open towards nature; at the same time every individual recognizes themselves in contact with the 'other', with another person, with the other environment. For example, when Gjini thinks that he cannot feel such a connection to nature on a foreign sea, the narrator whispers that there he is maybe even more aware of himself:

Slo.: "/.../ to, kar gledava, vsa ta lepota v dežju, nevihta se je namreč spet razbesnela, to ni najino morje, tukaj ne gospoduje najina blažena, mila in opojna mediteranska trojica – morje, rožmarin in črno vino, kajti tukaj še nikoli nisem pomislil, je rekel, da smo pravzaprav iz takšne snovi kot poletje, ali pa morebiti toliko bolj, sem zašepetal, zamomljal pri sebi /.../" (Šarotar 2014, 64)

Eng.: "/.../ what we are looking at, all this beauty in the rain (the storm was raging again), this is not the sea that you and I know, this is not the domain of our blessed, sweet and intoxicating Mediterranean trinity of sea, rosemary and red wine – here I have never once imagined, he said, that we were truly made of the same stuff as the summer; maybe so much the better, I whispered, mumbled under my breath /.../" (Šarotar 2016, 61).

As throughout the novel, so also in this passage various narrative voices are intertwined and mixed with the story of the main narrator, the writer's alter ego. So, the whole world is connected, people recognize themselves in the face of others, everyone is striving for acceptance, security, home, even though everyone knows that they are always on the road, that everything is changing all the time, like at the bus station:

Slo.: "Saj veš, kako pravijo, saj veš, moj Gjini, da človeka najbolje spoznaš na postaji, ko odhaja ali se vrača, nikoli nisi enak, ko se vrneš, še manj ko odhajaš, za vsakega bi vedel, če je koga zapustil, ali ga bo kdo čakal, pogrešal, saj veš, tukaj smo ljudje narejeni iz take snovi, kot so slovesa: dokončne, trajne in trpke." (Šarotar 2014, 109)

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Eng.: "You know what they say, Gjini my friend: you really know a person when you see them at a bus station, when they're leaving or returning; they're never the same when they come back, even less so when they're leaving; you can always tell if a person is leaving someone behind, or if there's someone waiting for them, missing them, because you know, people are made out of things like goodbyes – final, permanent, painful goodbyes." (Šarotar 2016, 105–106)

It is not surprising that the last sentence of the novel is also connected to a station:

"I rode on to Antwerp station." (202). Indeed, if life is a journey, then the station is our real home.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis of evaluative strategies and devices at the discursive and semantic levels, we can now try to answer our research questions. Firstly, is "Panorama" a travel book or not? We can answer this question both affirmatively and negatively. We can classify the book as a travel book, due to following features: it talks about travelling, and the spatial and temporal relationships are one of the most important semantic fields in the novel. Moreover, it has non-fiction elements; it consists of first-person narratives and personal experience. Last but not least, there are many descriptions of the natural and urban environment, full of detail. Hence, the book cannot be



classified as a travel book due to its metaphorical style, which suggests that the whole journey described in the novel is only a symbol of our interior lives.

Here we come to the second question: in what relationship is the individual to the 'other' – the other cultures on this journey, on this path of life, and how much does the 'other' help us to construct our own sense of the world? So, is "Panorama" a special form of intercultural literature? We can say with certainty that it has all the characteristics of intercultural literature. Firstly, a biographical interculturality of the author's personal experience can be seen, as he lives in a multicultural environment with his own Jewish roots. Secondly, the novel is full of intercultural topics that include meeting the 'other', the different, outsiders. The evaluative strategies and devices used show that the novel has an open structure at the discursive and semantic level. The mood of people merges with the state of nature and vice versa, people cross borders and bump into each other, and all these intercultural encounters leave impressions on both sides. The intercultural discourse also constructs the sense of the narrator's condition of exile. Although the emphasis is on the individual, as is indicated by the frequency of singular personal pronouns, precisely because of the self-evidence and intensity of this interpersonal contact we can also speak of collective interculturality as a common experience. People feel also the importance of language for their own identity in these intercultural contacts.

Since this is a story about a journey, this is of course a travel book, but it is certainly not a typical travelogue. Travel is only an outward expression of the human interior, people's eternal search. That journey, that search, is also the only true and lasting source of the writer's inspiration. This is also another reason why language is also one of the important semantic fields of this special travelogue, which is provided by the language. Not only a verbal one; the story of the writer's alter ego is also accompanied by black and white photographs, and these pictures are not just informative, they are an additional means of expressing the mood. The writer, Dušan Šarotar, tries to open to the reader the depth behind the surface images of both language and photography.



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