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Address / Naslov uredništva:

Filozofska fakulteta Univerze v Ljubljani (Department of English)

Aškrcjeva 2, SI- 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Phone / Tel.: + 386 1 241 1334

E-mail: igor.maver@guest.arnes.si



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Unsettling the Binarisms of Dominant Discourse in Hanay Geiogamah's Plays *Body Indian* and *Foghorn*

Danica Čerče

Abstract

This essay deals with two plays by the contemporary Native American author Hanay Geiogamah, *Body Indian* and *Foghorn*. Based on the premise that literature plays an important role in disrupting the exercise of power and written against the backdrop of critical whiteness studies, it investigates how the playwright intervenes in the assumptions about whiteness as a static privilege-granting category and system of dominance.

Keywords: Native American playwriting, Hanay Geiogamah, *Body Indian*, *Foghorn*, destabilising whiteness

There is no shortage of evidence that writing has played an important role in both establishing whites as authoritative in relation to non-white subjects and in the processes of decolonisation. The latter have involved “a radical dismantling of European codes and a postcolonial subversion and appropriation of the dominant European discourses,” claims Helen Tiffin (95). Interrogating these discourses and the social context in which healthy social interactions between white and indigenous people are impeded because of the presupposed foundation of apparently undislocatable binary oppositions upon which the logic of coloniality stands, literary engagement of indigenous population can be seen as an integral part of an organised protest against colonialist authority. In a Canadian context, Armand Garnet Ruffo (1997) argues that Native literature parallels and mirrors the political resurgence of indigenous people. In a US context, several theorists and artists have made similar claims, seeing literary activism as a way of contesting prevailing power structures. For example, an activist and playwright Monique Mojica has stated that Native American artists offer “an alternative view, the possibility of another interpretation of ‘historical facts’ and the validation of Native American experiences and images” (1).

Constituting an intercultural encounter for the white reader and intervening in the institutional and historical processes that have enabled and maintained the dominant position of those identified as white on the one hand, and the concomitant political, economic, and cultural subordination of indigenous population on the other, Native American literature articulates discourses of “conscious antagonists,” as Edward Said refers to those who, “compelled by the system to play subordinate roles within it,” react by disrupting it (335). Performing this function, it has earned the label “literature with a purpose,” which – according to the Cherokee scholar Jace Weaver – can be applied to all postcolonial literatures (44). Here it is relevant to mention that, despite sharing affinities with other postcolonial literatures in that it has also “emerged out of the experience of colonization” and asserted itself by “foregrounding the tension with the imperial power” and by “emphasising the differences from the assumptions of the imperial Centre” (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2), the status of Native American literature remains unclear in the postcolonial scholarship.¹

In this study, I focus on the plays *Body Indian* and *Foghorn* by Hanay Geigomah, a Kiowa-Delaware political activist and one of the most prominent contemporary Native American playwrights. My reading is not concerned with the ‘literariness’ as a principal object of study and appreciation; rather, it is framed by

1 Several non-Native scholars have expressed scepticism towards the applicability of the term ‘post-colonial’ to both Native Americans’ life and literature (Krupat 73). In Arnold Krupat’s view, this is for the simple reason that “there is not yet a ‘post-’ to the colonial status of Native Americans (Ibid.).

an interest in how the two plays function as “a form of public good” (Gonzales and Agostini xvi) or what David Carter and Kay Ferres define as “the public life of literature” (140). Drawing on some of the issues taken up by critical whiteness theory, the study aims to show how the playwright intervenes in the controlling discourses of colonialism that have retained the American indigenous population in the web of hegemonic power. I argue that one of the main textual devices that Geiogamah employs to do what he sees as “the challenging task of the new Native American theatre” (Geiogamah 2000, 163) is humour.

For Native Americans, the essential theatrical impulse has a long history. Performance was integrated into many aspects of Native cultural life long before the invasion of Europeans. Ceremonies performed for well-being and protection and to celebrate or mourn life-cycles included the theatrical elements of storytelling, song, dance and costume to create the emotional and spiritual impact. Today, many Native American playwrights draw upon traditional tribal performance practices and characters to inform their work. First plays by a Native American were published between the late 1920s and early 1950s by the Cherokee playwright Lynn Riggs.² Dealing with the various forms of extreme racism inflicted upon the Cherokee during the transformation of Indian Territory to Oklahoma's statehood, Riggs's plays foreshadow the concerns explored by Native American playwrights a few decades later, such as representation, authenticity, and cultural and political empowerment of indigenous population.

The contemporary era of Native American playwriting is connected with the rise of Native Americans' activism in the late 1960s and the 1970s, manifested in the form of various movements demanding increased civil rights, tribal sovereignty, and self-determination. Among them, the American Indian Movement (AIM) rapidly became a militant force for indigenous Americans' rights throughout the country (Darby 156). During that period of political unrest and cultural rebirth, Geiogamah recognized the political potential of theatrical performance. He claimed that the role of Native American artists was to “establish a strong identity base in their work to help confront and clarify the endless confusions resulting from non-Indians' beliefs and misperceptions of Indian life, [...] to help untangle the mass of confusions that stereotyping, assimilation, and acculturation have created in the minds of Indians themselves” (Geiogamah 2000, 163).

Geiogamah's plays are included in two anthologies of Native American drama: *Seventh Generation: An Anthology of Native American Plays* (1999) and *Stories of Our Way: An Anthology of American Indian Plays* (1999). The two plays discussed

2 Riggs is the author of several notable Broadway plays, including the 1931 *Green Grows the Lilacs*, upon which the composer Richard Rodgers and the librettist Oscar Hammerstein based their famous musical *Oklahoma!*.

in this article, *Body Indian* and *Foghorn*, first staged in 1972 and 1973, respectively, were published in 1980, together with the play *49* and under the title *New Native American Drama: Three Plays by Hanay Geiogamah*. Generally regarded as Geiogamah's major plays, they were first performed by the Native American Theatre Ensemble, founded by Geiogamah himself. As Jaye Darby has noted, they display a "distinctive Native American aesthetic of theatre," fusing the inheritance of tribal cultures in Native American communities with current issues, while recognizing western theatrical traditions (157). In particular, they show the influence of Bertolt Brecht, visible in Geiogamah's non-traditional theatrical techniques in portraying the contradictions, struggles and conflicts of contemporary social life in the United States.

GEIOGAMAH'S THEATRICAL RHETHORIC

Some critics compare Geiogamah's theatrical rhetoric to the radical black theatre of the 1960s. Among the opposing voices, Jeffrey Huntsman argues that Geiogamah is more interested in survival and self-knowledge of his people than in "reproach and confrontation," urging them "to note their condition, whether it arises from external prejudice or from their own mistreatment of one other" (xi). Huntsman justifies his opinion by pointing to Geiogamah's statement that the most important role of Native American authors is to communicate with their own people (Geiogamah 2000, 163). Weaver positions Geiogamah's work within what he calls the "communitist tradition" in the Native American playwriting, that is, combining community and activism (43). In communities that have been rendered dysfunctional by the effects of settler colonialism, to promote communitist values means "to participate in the healing of the grief and sense of exile felt by Native communities and the pained individuals in them," claims Weaver. In his view, Native American authors prepare the ground for the recovery and even recreation of Native American identity and culture, or – as the scholar contends in the title of one of his studies – they write "[t]hat the people might live" (43-44).

Indeed, Geiogamah sees the stage as a means of Native Americans' self-realization and of presenting their cultural authenticity. To perform this educative function, Geiogamah places the realities of contemporary Native American life in the context of a long history of his peoples' oppression and struggle. It is probably safe to claim that the most consistent theme in his plays is "the past bearing down upon the present," as Katharine Brisbane observes for contemporary dramatic activity in Australia (xv). Although this theme has various realizations in Geiogamah's plays, taken as a whole, his dramatic output constitutes a reinterpretation of American social history from a Native American point of view, inviting the

audience to reconsider the relationships formed on the basis of dominating discourses. Understanding the need for Native Americans to free themselves from a “massive psycho-existential complex,” as Frantz Fanon (1986, 216) calls the psychological internalization of colonizer’s values about the colonized, marked by a sense of inferiority, Geiogamah challenges the reproduction of discriminatory identities and empowers his people. To do this, he employs several theatrical devices, such as language, humour, structure, and dialogue.

Beginning with the language, it is generally regarded as the most important vehicle through which the colonizers effected the “spiritual subjugation” (Nguni 287). Embracing the view about language as “inseparable from ourselves as a community of human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history and relationship to the world” and thus “crucially related to the need for a secure cultural identity and to the achievement of self-esteem and self-determination,” expressed by the Kenyan writer and theorist Ngugi wa Thiong’o (290),³ several postcolonial theorists claim that decolonization can be achieved only with the full independence of culture, language, and political organization. Several others tend to concur with Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, who see “cultural syncreticity” as a valuable and unavoidable feature of all formerly colonized societies and argue that the colonizer’s language is capable of accounting for postcolonial experience if it develops an appropriate usage (30). In their view, the language of the centre needs to be re-placed by a discourse which is “fully adapted to the colonized place” (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 37). Like a number of other Indigenous authors, Geiogamah has liberated himself from the linguistic and cultural chains, and reformed the colonizer’s language to become an expression of his peoples’ experience. In the “Author’s Note” to *Body Indian*, for example, he writes several suggestions for the actors in order to imitate the real speech of the protagonists and establish an authentic-sounding Native American dialect, such as dropping the final ‘g’ (goin’), jamming words together (lotta), adding a grammatically superfluous final ‘s’ (mens), leaving a hiatus between a final and an initial vowel (a old one), and others (17). Clearly, Geiogamah’s appropriation of English to the local needs and requirements demonstrates his refusal to accede to the kind of world and reality the use of the imperial language implies.

Referring to black American authors, Lorraine Hansberry observes that, since they must also write for the market that is the object of their protest, it is important

3 Ngugi wa Thiong’o writes exclusively in the Gikuyu language, one of the Kenyan languages. In Ngugi’s view, writing in their peoples’ mother tongues, associated with backwardness, underdevelopment and other negative qualities, will contribute to the restoration of the harmony between all aspects of language. He also claims that this alone will not cause the renaissance of Kenyan and African cultures unless that literature carries “the content of their peoples’ anti-imperialist struggles to liberate their productive forces from foreign control” (2003, 290).

for them to write so that the audience is constrained to applaud the very protest directed towards it (Davis iii). This is also how Geiogamah writes. “Theatre, to me, is probably the most peaceful form of resistance against a colonial government. There’s no bloodshed. That’s the reason I do theatre, to bring about change. To bring about the healing process. But also, to enrich human beings,” Geiogamah reveals in his interview with Charlotte Stoudt (Stoudt 60). Influenced by Brecht’s theatrical innovations and in accord with the Native Americans’ wisdom that “in laughter is truth” (Huntsman xvi-xvii), Geiogamah relies on humour and parody as important textual vehicles not only for defamiliarizing whiteness, but also for restoring dignity and social hope among his people.⁴

BODY INDIAN

Set in present-day western Oklahoma, the play *Body Indian* addresses the personal and social costs of alcohol abuse among Native Americans. It depicts a two-day drinking gathering of Bobby Lee and his Kiowa relatives and friends. The play begins with Bobby struggling on crutches into his one-room apartment, where the party is held. Handicapped by the loss of a leg in a train accident during one of his previous drinking sprees, he is carrying groceries and wine he bought with the money obtained from leasing his allotment of reservation land.⁵ As Bobby reveals to his companions, he intends to use the rest of his lease money to enter a six-week alcohol rehabilitation programme. However, by the end of the play, in the process of the progressive erosion of kinship ties delineated in the opening scene, he is either asked for money or had it all stolen. Finally, the drunks take Bobby’s artificial leg and pawn it to buy more wine.

Citing Geiogamah’s comment that *Body Indian* “is a play of the past and the present, but hopefully not of the future,” depicting “how Indians abuse and mistreat one another in a dangerously crippling way,” Darby describes the play as staging a “poignant appeal” for the restoration of traditional tribal values of respect and responsibility, disrupted by the forced displacement (160–161). The play’s intense and shocking realism also suggests other interpretive possibilities. Despite presenting a situation of “near hopelessness,” the play’s theme is survival, claims

4 The Australian sociologist Ghassan Hage has observed that dignity and social hope, access to which seems to be exclusively a white entitlement, allows people to imagine a future for themselves, whereas the withholding of it from minority constituencies in effect denies them a participatory role in imagining the future of the nation (22).

5 Because of the U.S. federal allotment policies in Indian Territory in the late 1880s and early 1900s, each Native household received 160 acres of land as replacement for millions of acres taken from the tribes. Under the control of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, many Native Americans leased out this land (Darby 160–161).

Jack Marken (376). Seeing the main character's suffering as "redemptive," Huntsman also describes it as "a play of optimism and triumph" (xvii). Norma Wilson, on the other hand, views the play as "a bleak dramatization of the effects of alcoholism" (85). There is truth on both sides: the play brings a social problem into the light of community attention and underscores that Native Americans can survive the most hopeless of situations on condition that they regain their lost sense of community. The audience is reminded of this imperative with the sound of an approaching train mixed with the sound of drums and dance rattles at the end of each scene.

The recurring sound of a train can also be viewed as a reminder to European Americans of their brutal displacement of Native Americans from their homelands and of their systemic racialized oppression. Although, in Geiogamah's words, his plays are primarily intended for Native Americans, *Body Indian* also addresses a white audience and challenges their assumptions about the superiority and entitlement of their race. The third scene, in particular, abounds in critique of a discourse that relegates and confines the non-Europeans to a secondary status. Geiogamah's exposure of the harsh reality of unemployment and poverty, materialized in bad housing conditions, poor diet, limited educational possibilities and dependence on government support, is imbued with sadness and sometimes even despair as in the following dialogue:

Alice: I can't even get on state welfare. They say my husband is able to work. He's able, but there's no work.

Betty: All those white people think Indians have it good because they think the government takes care of us. They don't even know. It's rougher than they know. I'd like to trade my house for a white lady's house on Mission Street. I'd like for a white lady to have my roaches. You see them at the store, and they look at you like your purse is full of government checks. I wish my purse could be full of government checks.

Alice: I wish I had a check from anywhere. (Geiogamah 1980, 23–24)

Clearly, Geiogamah uses the stage to affirm his people's cultural substance in the face of ongoing cultural, economic and political subjugation, and to expose the forces that still prevent liberation, whether these be the oppressions of the whites or the illusions of white superiority ingrained within the oppressed themselves. In these circumstances, Geiogamah's characters seek refuge in excessive drinking. Obviously aware of the controversial nature of the play's content, Geiogamah writes in the "Author's Note" that the acting should nowhere give the false impression of the play being primarily a study of the problem of alcoholism among Native Americans (8). Given that performance may function as "an act of transfer,"

conveying social knowledge, values and memories from one group to another and from one generation to the next (Taylor 2), Geiogamah is counting upon the repertoire and embodiment to challenge white audience members' stereotyped expectations of contemporary Native American life, notes Julie Pearson (122). According to Pearson, the play exposes “the colonialist discourse of alcoholism,” that is, a historical awareness of the political causes of alcoholism, systematically utilized by the colonizer to disempower the colonized and reinforce its own power (Ibid.). Another pernicious effect of this discourse is its internalization by Native Americans demonstrated in the tendency to express their rebellion against what are perceived as white social norms with alcohol addiction (Ibid.).⁶ Showing the host of the party broke and alone at the end, the play allows no doubt that this kind of resistance is destructive – alcohol addiction causes new problems, rather than solving any.

Vine Deloria Jr. has observed that “Indians can find a humorous side to nearly every problem [...]. The more desperate the problem, the more humour is directed to describe it” (635–636). Throughout the play, regarded by Geiogamah as “his toughest” (Pearson 122), humour tempers the truth. For example, when women complain about their chronic lack of money, Bobby says:

Every Indian needs to have a government check for twenty-five thousand. They could give you womens fifty thousand. Then you could buy all your kids shoes, clothes, bicycles, pay rent, pay fines, buy shawls and earrings, and put the money you have left in the bank to live on. That's the only way you'd ever have the money you need. (Geiogamah 1980, 22)

Although the play provokes laughter, it critically portrays the underbelly of a country that has supported what George Lipsitz calls the “racialized nature of social policy” (5). Echoing with a call for justice, inclusion and equality, *Body Indian* passionately engages both Native American and white spectators. Whereas some of the former identify with the irony of the characters' lives and the discrepancy between their desires and behaviour, and react to the play with strong laughter, others denounce it as “a disservice to the Indian community,” claiming that it merely perpetuates stereotypes and adds to distorted representations of Native Americans (Pearson 124). For white spectators, *Body Indian*'s “act of transfer” is a better understanding of contemporary Native American political and socio-economic condition. Faced with the effects of the American government's failure and the larger American society's complicity in addressing the Native Americans'

⁶ Eduardo and Bonnie Duran have observed that, during the 1970s, the perception of alcoholism as a mode of rebellion was so strong among Native Americans that one popular prevention poster bore the slogan, “Drinking won't make you more Indian” (1995, 28).

poverty with all its attendant ills, many of them are imbued with strong feelings of moral indignation and forced to rethink the concept of whiteness as manifested in their past and present attitudes to Native Americans. Reinstating knowledge, dignity and hope for Native communities, *Body Indian* can probably be seen to contribute to the “undo[ing of] the racist structure of the colonial matrix of power” and a “genealogy of de-colonial thought” (Mignolo 391). A similar intervention in the country’s racist structure of power⁷ and colonialist representations is also performed in Geiogamah’s play *Foghorn*.

FOGHORN

For decades, Native American characters, like other minority characters in American literature and entertainment media, were highly stereotyped and never fully developed or given any agency. This was particularly true in film, given that until very recently, creative control was almost exclusively in the hands of white producers (Haugo 190–191). However, the distorted images constructed by white Americans during the expansion and domination of the “Frontier” are not yet a thing of the past. On the contrary, they are still present throughout American culture, claims Jodi Van Der Horn-Gibson, among others, pointing to the figure of the Native American in the twenty-first century theatre, film and story adaptations of *Peter Pan* (126). Various popular images from the past, including those of the ‘noble savage,’ ‘bloodthirsty redskin,’ or ‘drunken Indian,’ disseminated through Karl May’s “colonial fairy tales” (Weaver 18), for example, continue to reinforce the mainstream understanding of European identity as superior in relation to all ‘others.’ With dominant cultures typically acting in an ethnocentric way, it is thus important for Native authors to mobilize strategies of indictment, argumentation, persuasion and advocacy in the service of a central agenda, that is, the destabilization of the means by which Europe imposed and maintained its dominant discourse (Tiffin 95).

Technically a modern multimedia satire, with elements such as lights, graphics and electronic music juxtaposed with traditional elements of the tribal past, *Foghorn* is a penetrating confrontation with enduring racist stereotypes and cultural hegemony. Premiered in Berlin in 1973, when conflicts between the United States government and the indigenous communities over treaty disputes and land rights issues were particularly intense, the play includes two crucial events from that period, the Native Americans’ occupation of Alcatraz Island from 1969 to 1971

7 In his 2000 article “Race and the Social Contract Tradition,” Charles Mills argues that, in the United States, “race is not anomalous to the American democracy but fundamental to it” (450). Similar views are also expressed in his 2015 article, “Breaking the Racial Contract.”

and the 1973 Wounded Knee incident.⁸ The opening scene, presenting Native Americans on a forced journey, alludes to the march of the nineteenth-century victims of the Trail of Tears.⁹

Despite its setting in tragic episodes from the Native Americans' struggles with the whites, beginning with the landing of Columbus in 1492, *Foghorn* proceeds "by playful mockery rather than bitter denunciation," as Geiogamah explains in the "Author's Note" (1980, 49). The author further suggests that "the production should aim at a light, almost frivolous effect," claiming that the serious topic of the play will emerge more effectively if the "heavy hand is avoided" (*Ibid.*). In Huntsman's words, the play appears as a set of loosely connected mocking remarks, much like a minstrel show (xviii). However, funny in isolation, the scenes are tellingly connected, expressing protest against the Native peoples' assigned position of inferiority and the strategies of homogenization and assimilation, which had served the American melting-pot ideology since the late 19th century. It has to be remembered that, by the end of the 1960s, the dominant ideology of assimilation had created specific institutional practices, described by David Theo Goldberg as: "[t]hose who could not be assimilated were wiped away, representationally, symbolically and, in many instances, physically" (5–6). Scene 4, for example, with a school teacher's hysterical praise of white civilization and the English language, is well illustrative of what Weaver describes as: "The night of the sword and the bullet was followed by the morning of the chalk and blackboard. The physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom" (13):

You Indians are going to be educated. [...] You are going to learn how to be Christians, how to worship God and live a clean, wholesome, decent life. You are going to learn how to be civilized people, civilized Indians. [...] You are going to forget all your Indian ways, all of them. You can start erasing them from your minds right now, right here, right this instant. No more of your disgusting sign language. No more of your savage tongue. No more greasy, lousy hair. No more blankets. You are going to learn English language. [...]

8 In accordance with the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 and the Treaty of Fort Laramie (1868) that all abandoned or out-of-use federal land was to be returned to Native people, a group of American Indian Movement (AIM) supporters occupied Alcatraz Island after Alcatraz federal prison was closed in spring 1963. The occupation lasted for nineteen months before it was forcibly ended by U.S. government in 1969.

The 1973 siege of the town Wounded Knee (the place of 1890 massacre) in South Dakota by members of the Sioux Nation led by supporters of AIM lasted 71 days. This Native Americans' response to the U. S. government's failure to honour the treaties, triggered by a brutal murder, is regarded as one of the biggest successes of AIM, drawing attention to Native Americans' unsafe living conditions and mistreatment by both federal and local agencies.

9 The term refers to a series of forced relocations following the Indian Removal Act of 1830.

The English language. The most beautiful language in all the world. The language that has brought hope and civilization to people everywhere. The one true language. OUR language! [...] I am going to teach you your first word of English. Listen carefully, for it is the word, the one word, you must know first to become civilized. [...] The American way begins with Hell-O.” (Geiogamah 1980, 61)

The above passage, which describes the cruelty of assimilation strategies used by the dominant culture, contrasts ironically with that from the 1969 Alcatraz Proclamation in scene 2:

We will further guide the majority inhabitants in the proper way of living. We will offer them our religion, our education, our way of life—in order to help them achieve our level of civilization and thus raise them and all white brothers from their savage and unhappy state. (Geiogamah 1980, 55–56)

Similarly, the United States senator’s speech after the landing of Columbus appears ludicrous if compared with the 1969 Alcatraz Proclamation. The senator says, “[w]e’ve been victorious over them [Native Americans] on the battlefield, now they must settle on the reservations we [the white settlers] have generously set aside for them” (Geiogamah 1980, 52–53), whereas the Alcatraz Proclamation reads:

We wish to be fair and honorable with the Caucasian inhabitants of this land, who as a majority wrongfully claim it as their, and hereby pledge that we shall give to the majority inhabitants of this country a portion of the land for their own, to be held in trust by the American Indian people—for as long as the sun shall rise and the rivers go down to the sea! (Geiogamah 1980, 55)

Throughout the play, Geiogamah relies on joking and mockery, which adds to the effectiveness of the basic seriousness of the content. Although Geiogamah claims in Kenneth Lincoln’s *MELUS* interview that he deployed humour because “it removes the power from insults” (71), this strategy often results as sharp and biting. While the object of the humour varies from scene to scene, its function does not. The scintillating satirical strain, which runs throughout the play, allows the author to playfully expose the most traumatic events since European arrival and destabilize their power through mockery. Humour is then the prime vehicle in the play for elaborating dignity and hope for Native Americans. Although it provokes laughter, *Foghorn* is not only a source of inspiration for Indigenous viewers. It is also a serious drama about the United States’ history of exile, dispossession, and indifference to sustained suffering, constituting a penetrating indictment of white American racism and genocidal horror. As the Assiniboine Sioux

playwright William S. Robe says, “when people of color do it, playwriting (or any other art form) is political, because we empower ourselves, we take control of our past, present and future” (Pulitano 19).

Homi Bhabha, among others, has noted that stereotypes are a major strategy of colonial discourse, premised on the ambivalence of that which is always already known, and that which must be anxiously repeated. In his words, problematising stereotypes and acknowledging their status as an ambivalent mode of power and knowledge “demands a theoretical and political response that questions dogmatic and moralistic positions on the meaning of oppression and discrimination” (1997, 293). This is particularly important because of what critics call the “colonized mentality” or “internalized inferiority complex” (Pyke 551). George Tinker notes that Native Americans have internalized the illusion of white superiority just as deeply as white Americans have; as a result, they “participate in [their] own oppression” (118). Geiogamah seems to be aware of the dangers that stereotypes pose. In addressing some of the most painful social wounds, he therefore juxtaposes white and Native American cultures and philosophies to challenge not only the whites’ false, myth-laden perception of Native Americans, but also the whites’ images of themselves. In most cases, and following the oral tradition of storytelling by tribal elders, Geiogamah does that in a bawdy, boisterous way, piling on fact after fact about the moral vices or physical shortcomings of the latter and proceeding slowly to the climax. In scene 5, for example, Pocahontas tells her handmaidens about Captain Smith’s impotence in a string of similarly exaggerated descriptions of the man as the one that follows:

He had such big legs. Such big, uh, arms, such big, uh, uh, chest. Such big, big head. Such big, big hands. Such big, big feet. Such big eyes. Such big mouth. Such big ears. Ooooooh, aaahaaa. (Geiogamah 1980, 63)

Delaying the unraveling of the story to gauge and/or intensify the interest of her audience, Pocahontas finally concludes her account, which culminates in the following disclosure:

“And the big captain was standing above me, looking down at me, breathing like a boy after a footrace, and I saw that his ...

He said to me, I love you, dear Pocahontas. I promise you it won’t happen the next time, I promise, I promise, I promise” (Geiogamah 1980, 64).

Presenting whites as impotent (Captain Smith), corrupted (Watergate spy), incapable, wicked and villainous (Lone Ranger), narrow-minded and ignorant (First Lady), to mention a few portrayals of white Americans, Geiogamah undermines the illusion of white superiority as a rendered and unquestionable

normative. Given that, according to Fanon, self-consciousness exists only by being acknowledged or recognized by the other (1986, 216), this misconception about the superiority of the white race has caused the lack of “reciprocal recognition” (1986, 225). Deprived of the acknowledgement of the other in historical relations between the colonizer and the colonized, crucial for winning “the certainty of oneself” (Ibid.), the colonized have become self-colonizing, that is, they take part in their own oppression. Using the stage to bring to light some episodes in American history of which white America would prefer to remain conveniently silent and to expose the contradictions between the perception and the social reality, Geiogamah creates a productive disordering of the established system of dominance and confronts racist stereotypes. In other words, as Weaver has noted using the phrase from the title of Dennis McPherson and Douglas Rabb’s volume, Geiogamah helps Native readers to see and define themselves as “Indian from the inside” (5), rather than as defined by the dominant society. By subverting the pervasive negative stereotypes promoted by whites to justify their oppression and superiority, Geiogamah elaborates a sense of dignity and social hope for Native Americans.

CONCLUSION

Gerald Vizenor has noted that “the post-Indian warriors,” as he calls Native American authors, “encounter their enemies with the same courage in literature as their ancestors once evinced on horses, and they create their stories with a new sense of survival” (1994, 4). Indeed, by documenting the violence of colonial imposition and scrutinizing the means by which Europe imposed and maintained its dominant discourse, Geiogamah performs an important role in “the fantastic and terrible story of survival” of those “who were never meant to survive,” as Joy Harjo writes in one of her poems. Engaged in the critique of the reproduction of whiteness and in the struggle for the assertion of Native Americans’ authentic rather than an imposed cultural personality, Geiogamah continues to perform both personal and collective empowerment of his peoples, thus preparing the grounds for the society that, in Bhabha’s words, “entertains differences without an assumed or imposed hierarchy” (1994, 4). Given the present social and political situation in the world, particularly in the ‘new’ Europe, characterized by a critical lack of productive cultural interaction, Geiogamah’s effort to question the foundations of white supremacy in the United States can be read from a much wider perspective.

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Danica Čerče
University of Ljubljana
danica.cerce@ff.uni-lj.si



Destabilizacija dominantnega diskurza v dramskih delih *Body Indian* in *Foghorn* Hanaya Geiogamaha

Prispevek obravnava drami *Body Indian* in *Foghorn* sodobnega ameriškega staroselskega avtorja Hanaya Geiogamaha. Z izhodiščem v kritiški misli o pomembni družbeni vlogi književnih besedil in opirajoč se na postkolonialno kritiko, raziskuje, kako dramatik posega v domneve o beli rasi kot trajno privilegirani kategoriji in neukinljivi dominanci.

Ključne besede: ameriška staroselska dramatika, Hanay Geiogamah, *Body Indian*, *Foghorn*, destabilizacija evropocentrizma

Submerged Layers of Slovenian Identity in Krissy Kneen's Writing¹

Igor Maver

Abstract

The article for the first time ever explores the recent non-fiction and poetry by the contemporary Australian writer Krissy Kneen, who has Slovenian roots through her maternal grandmother. Kneen's writing, a literary tribute to her late grandmother Dragitca (Dragitca Marušič), shows a desire to come to terms with her partly 'Slovenian' gut microbiome and DNA, as she herself claims. They, in her view, along with the other elements in the process of identity formation, interestingly importantly help to constitute an ethnic identity and, for that matter, any personal identity. This makes her writing very original within the extant diasporic literary production.

Keywords: Krissy Kneen, Slovenian-Australian diaspora, Australian literature

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A LITERARY HOMAGE TO KNEEN'S MATERNAL SLOVENIAN GRANDMOTHER DRAGITCA

Krissy Kneen (born in 1968) is a Brisbane-based Australian bookseller and writer. Her first book of poems was in 2014 awarded the Thomas Shapcott Poetry Prize and will be discussed in a separate study in the next issue of this journal. It is entitled *Eating My Grandmother: A Grief Cycle* (Kneen, 2015) and is dedicated to her deceased grandmother Dragi(t)ca Marušič, known in Australia as Lotty Kneen (1916-2014), as a fine poetic and very personal homage. The first poem "Prelude" symbolically sums up the speaker's grief at the loss of her deceased grandmother. It is interesting that most of the poems deal with a very physical, bodily way of coming to terms with the loss, which also shows how she remembers certain episodes from their life and experiences together.

Kneen is the author of short stories, her first novel, a *Steeplechase*, was published in 2013, and more recently the novels *An Uncertain Grace* and *Wintering*. In *Griffith Review* 58 (Storyed Lives/The Novella Project V series), published by Griffith University in Brisbane in 2017, there were some of the most prestigious Australian contemporary authors of various generations featured, for example Frank Moorhouse, Cassandra Pybus, Kristina Olsson, and Krissy Kneen. In Kneen's non-fiction published there, "How to preserve a turnip / And other whispers in my genes" (Kneen 2017), she gives a fascinating and decidedly new take on the mostly painful search for her ethnic background. In her case, a Slovenian diasporic heritage has been for several generations submerged in the deepest layers of her personality and, as she hastens to point out, particularly her body and microbiome (cf. also Maver 1994; 2006). She traces back the birth of her great-great grandmother Anastasia nearby Trbinc Hill in the South-Eastern part of Slovenia, near the village Mirna on the Mirna river in the Dolenjska region, where her maternal stock originally comes from.

Right from the beginning she uses expressions taken from the military language to somehow shock the reader and introduces a concept which is new and original in diaspora studies. To indicate ethnic belonging she contends that invasion, colonization of armies, bacterial soldiers characterizes the birth of every new person, describing how the baby, her great-great grandmother, for example, was invaded by the microorganisms and bacteria, which gave the new-born baby, somewhere outdoors in the snow in Slovenia, a sense of identity. It is an invasion that starts with birth and that one cannot escape until one's death, a fascinating view on identity and ethnic belonging, which is inscribed in one's intestinal flora and literally in the DNA of a person as well. Identity that asserts itself also through the food preparation and processing using the typically Slovenian technique and tradition of "preserving turnip in the pickle" and making a delicious dish *bujta repa* with it, as we learn later in the text:

The life teeming inside. A colonization, armies of tiny creatures trudging along the complexities of a digestive tract, pausing only to battle with each other. Tiny genocides, whole families ambushed and murdered. The cultural mix of micro-organisms changing and shifting in the time it took to stretch out a tiny perfect spine and shiver little fingers into fists. The bacteria that melted onto that fresh skin with the snow was ancient life with a history as old as the mountain itself; tiny soldiers that had multiplied on each new blade of grass; immigrant armies dropped by the shit of a bird or carried on cat scat. By the time this baby opened her teeming lungs and uttered a shrill vibrating note there were more bacterial soldiers than there were baby cells inside the tiny form. She was already outnumbered before her life had properly begun. (Kneen 2017, 169)

The baby born, Anastasia, was Kneen's grandmother's grandmother. She in turn later bore Perina (a well-known Dalmatian Croatian name derived from the male form for Petar /Peter):

Anastazija, my grandmother's grandmother. Anastazija, who bore Perina, who bore Dragitca who bore Wendy, who bore me, Krissy. Krissy Kneen. (170)

There follows a passage on how the supposed magic quality is handed down on the matrilinear line, Kneen's great-great-mother was "a witch", so was her grandmother Dragitca Marusic (Dragitca Marušič, known in Australia as Lotty Kneen that lived during 1916-2014) and so is she: "Not your mother. But you. Your white streak. You will have the magic too" (171). We get to see Kneen as being downright obsessed with her grandmother, in the positive sense of the word, who had left her the magic powers and the woman's strength in the family. She is the strongest one, rather than feeling weak and gentle, as she has been considered so far, she survives her real-life serious sickness: "In the midst of pain and in this mythic remaking of myself through her, I am reborn. I become myself" (172).

The author introduces the reader to her grandmother Dragitca, who was, we learn, obsessed with the fairytales in general and Slovenian folklore, particularly the Krivopeta (Krivopete in the plural form): "One particular creature of lore is the Krivopeta. This creature is one of the wild women of Slovenia. There are several wild women (and wild men) characters, but the Krivopete can be identified by their feet, which are turned backwards, facing the place they have just come from" (172). Dragitca would read the fairytales to her granddaughter Krissy, about the Slovenian faeries Rojenice, Sojenice, Podmének (a changeling child), and those by Perrault, Brothers Grimm, Andersen, even *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, since Dragitca was very much influenced by Egypt and her long stay there, as well as her Egyptian husband. Kneen was immersed into the fairytales through this strong female bond and her grandmother created many *papier-mâché* life-size

figures of individual characters, which are still preserved in a storage somewhere in Australia, in the so-called Dragonhall that no one saw and were never used for people to visit (some of these reminiscences are also to be found in Kneen's work *Affection* from 2009). Kneen is the one who was chosen by her to carry on this fascination and she does have her grandmother's literary magic streak, since she has become herself an accomplished writer, an artificer of life: "The stories were passed down from swaddled girl-child to swaddled girl-child along with the bacteria passed from skin to skin" (173). She teaches her granddaughter various recipes, making cheese, *gnocchi*, but she never taught her to preserve the whey, as a Krivopeta, something left for her still to figure out.

The author indulges in the scientific description of her identity and indebtedness to her matrilinear stock. Her microbiome which ultimately defines her body, not just the culture or language, former experiences of her ancestors, she believes, are inscribed in her DNA, as part of her genetic material which lay inactive some of the time, "I am more other than I am myself. I am driven by forces that are so small that they are out of sight and out of mind" (176). The description of her microbiome, in real life, which cannot be seen but definitely defines her as a person, surprises the reader and adds to her search for the ethnic roots, it becomes belonging, which is longing, too: "The biological stuff that is inside me at its tiniest level is my DNA, but that cluster of DNA is in the minority. The stuff that is me and of my ancestors is spliced together with pieces of viral invaders that have been co-opted into my genetic cohort, and even with these foreign building blocks, the bricks that are mine are outnumbered by the stuff that is bacterial" (176).

She further describes her grandmother Dragitca's travel to Egypt all alone as a child, then how she had to flee Alexandria in 1956, after Naser's coming into power, the exodus of the foreign Egyptianized community there, including her grandparents, and how she arrived to England with two small children. She had earlier married an Egyptian man of mixed parentage, wearing a wedding dress from Paris, which she often pointed out to her as it was really important to her, as a sign of prestige, for nationalities were important in Alexandria, then a truly multicultural and thriving city, where especially British and French were the highest rated ones. Kneen's grandfather, a mystery man and not much spoken about, had a British passport, worked at the British embassy, and had a dark olive skin. Over a thousand Jews were also arrested and forced into exodus in 1956-7 and Kneen desperately tries to scientifically determine, in her text, whether or not she may actually be Jewish, a "Jewessa", like one of their maids. There were long silences in the family and she wants to come to the bottom of her true origin. Of course, the result of the scientific DNA test is inconclusive and she can just see her grandmother Dragitca snickering somewhere, like a Krivopeta, leaving her family roots and origin deliberately somewhat secretive and inconclusive. Then, she wonders,

if Dragitca was perhaps a member of the *Kindertransport*, known as an attempt to rescue Jewish children out of Nazi Germany and some other countries just before the outbreak of the Second World War, but she had actually never been in these countries and always insisted she had been born in a no man's land, Slovenia, the Western part being under the Italian rule until 1943: "Slovenia', she would say when pushed. 'No man's land, Slovenia', as if it were a city within a country within her imagination" (182).

The author in her non-fictional memoir reminiscing about Dragitca then describes the Krivopeta Slovenian folk legend in more detail, "the wild women of Slovenia" (184), also known in the border region of Resia, today on Italian ground in the Alps, where the Slovenian minority lives. Especially complex is Krivopeta's attitude to men: "The Krivopeta tolerates the man, is sometimes affectionate towards him, but there is always a distance. Her feet are always facing backwards towards her life in the mountains when she was happily alone" (185). Kneen describes herself as a woman of science and firmly believes that the microbiome has a very important effect on the whole of our bodies. In this regard her grandmother talked about her own experience of learning a typical Slovenian dish from her own grandmother Anastasia, the preparation of *bujta repa* (literally in Slovenian translation "slaughtered turnips", complemented by the meat of slaughtered pigs during the pork-slaughter time in the fall): "The fermented pickled root vegetables would be grated and added to a big pot of bones and meat with some millet and whole black pepper and roux" (187). This dish is best known in the Slovenian Prekmurje region near the border with Hungary and it is traditionally prepared during the time of pig-slaughter in the fall. For Kneen the preparation of this dish requires some magic and she was chosen by her grandmother to carry on the 'secret' of the preparation of an excellent *bujta repa*: "The magic skips a generation. Your mother doesn't have it but I see it in you. It lights up your skin when you sleep. You need to be trained just as my grandmother trained me when I was your age. I need to pass the secret on to you" (187).

WHO AM I?

Kneen in her text skips over to the definition of herself in scientific terms. She claims that we people are 43 per cent human and 57 per cent other, consequently, she concludes, her body's cells are outnumbered by non-human organisms. And these organisms must be fed. In prepared various foods and especially *bujta repa* there is one phrase that is being repeated over and over in her head, like in much of foodie literature: "*the magic is in the hands of the cook. The magic is in the hands*" (188). The scientific result that she might be partly an Ashkenazi Jewish person is

inconclusive and she admits to having kept secret the fact that Dragitca was from Slovenia, because she might be Jewish and even 'a witch'. Even after her death, the stormy weather, which Krivopete are known to be able to control, reminded her of her grandmother's presence. Is she really free of her now that she is gone for ever. We are never completely free of our ancestry and the past experiences and genetic code inscribed in us. Not really, the secrets of her origin, her obstinate search and inconclusive scientific answers testify to the opposite, despite her claim:

I am no longer a captive of my grandmother's steely will. She is dead and I am free. I am free to find out who I am. I am free to find out who she was.

Anastazija; Dragitca; me. (190)

The author is at the end of the text preparing pickled cabbage, sauerkraut. She feels there is something meditative about this, a rhythm to it. She knows she is doing this because of her gut feeling, one could say, gut bacteria, the vagus nerve, but despite the insistence on science she insists that "the magic is in the hands"; it is what you can do with yourself here and know, differently, even if repeating the patterns of your ancestors, in her case those of her grandmother Dragitca. Her search for Slovenian roots is not ended, it is an ongoing process in the making, in the magic of discovering who she is, an Australian, a Slovenian, an Ashkenazi Jewess, a woman, a writer.

SLOVENIAN WOMEN OF ALEXANDRIA/ALEKSANDRINKE

Already in *Griffith Review* 58 in 2017 Krissy Kneen, in her creative non-fiction long piece, mentions in passing the phenomenon of the Aleksandrinke, the Slovenian women of Alexandria in Egypt, where they had migrated from Slovenia for economic reasons, to work as nannies, often leaving behind their families and their own small children, their husbands, who were not able to provide for them. However, in *Griffith Review* 66 published in 2020, however, Kneen published her memoir "Aleksandrinke, Mapping a movement of women", *Griffith Review* 66 memoir (<https://www.griffithreview.com/articles/aleksandrinke/>), based on her visit to Slovenia just over a year ago. Her grandmother had that experience as a child of an Aleksandrinke (in singular form) and Kneen tries to relive and re-experience her submerged Slovenian identity, where the phenomenon of the Slovenian women of Alexandria is the central focus of her memoir. She begins the narrative of her grandmother Dragitca's life story by presenting the old Slovenian originally folk tale and legend about the Beautiful Vida (Lepa Vida), later on also dealt with individually by major Slovenian writers, which is used as an appropriate

parallel to the fate of the Aleksandrinke between the two world wars until 1956 in the Primorska region on today's border with Italy, the area then, after the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian empire, under the Italian rule. The old folk song of the Beautiful Vida is a song of yearning, sorrow and regret and is also often considered a symbol of Slovenian diaspora *in abstracto*. Vida leaves for Spain, beyond the seas, where the dark-skinned man brings her to be the nanny of the little prince, the very son of the Queen of Spain, but she had to leave her old husband and sickly child behind, who eventually die: she too slowly languishes away full of sorrow on foreign ground, although we do not get informed about her death. This myth from the time of the Moorish invasions of Adriatic cities during the 9th and 11th centuries is deeply rooted in Slovenian literary tradition in several versions. The author of the memoir remembers her grandmother Dragitca's adamant pleas not to the search for the submerged layers of ethnic identity, for the other "homeland" as well, not only Australia:

Throughout her life she was tight-lipped about her background. I could glean only fragments of her history. She was born in Slovenia. When she was just a child, she was put on a train. She was travelling alone. Somehow, she ended up in Egypt.

No. We had no relatives outside the small cluster of immediate family.

No. We had no history.

Look forward, she told me. Never look back.

Now I gaze into the plastic container of ashes.

I look back. I am trying to catch a glimpse of my grandmother sitting on the train that took her away from her home in Slovenia. A stuttering light and shade of tantalising scraps.

She had forbidden me from asking for stories about her past. She had forbidden me from setting out on my own quest to find a homeland.

Now that she is dead I feel like a caged bird, waking one day to find the cage door open as I stand safely inside, looking out, afraid to spread my wings and fly. (GR 66)

In the small Ljubljana bookstore on a beautiful Baroque square, which Kneen liked so much during her stay in Slovenia in 2018, and near where we used to meet in one of the famous and pleasant Ljubljana cafés, she got hold of an English translation of the book on Aleksandrinke, the Slovenian women of Alexandria: she imagines being part of something greater that she had ever imagined, something in her genes and guts, her deep, submerged layer of (Slovenian/Jewish) identity.

If you wanted a strict nanny who would be feared by your children, you hired a British nanny. If you wanted a nanny your children would grow to love, you chose a Slovene.

In Egypt, having a Slovene nanny became a symbol of a certain elevated social status. Rich women from all cultures in Alexandria began to seek them out. Word was carried home by aunts and cousins coming back to visit their families for feast days: there was work for young Slovene women in Egypt, and it was good, profitable work. All you had to do was leave your family, your community, your culture behind. All you had to do was take a leap of faith across the ocean and your family would be saved from the hardship of extreme poverty.

The Slovene women of Alexandria were attaining the reputation of being uncommonly good nannies. They spoke several languages, including perfect Italian, and were quick to learn others. They were Catholics, which was important to the rich Italian mothers. They were hardworking, and they were known to be kind. If you wanted a strict nanny who would be feared by your children, you hired a British nanny. If you wanted one your children would grow to love, you chose a Slovene.

And thus the Slovene nanny came to symbolise a certain elevated social status, and rich women from all cultures in Alexandria began to seek them out. Word was carried home by aunts and cousins returning for feast days to visit their families. There was work for young Slovene women in Egypt; good, profitable, well-respected work. All you had to do was leave your family, community and culture behind. All you had to do was take a leap of faith that would carry you across the ocean, and your family would be rescued from hardship.

In my grandmother's village, Miren, there is the bora, the strong wind that sweeps across the karst, ripping the roof tiles off houses and scouring the dry mountain passes. But with every hardship comes a blessing, and the bora brings the perfect weather for drying *prosciut*. The sausages and *prosciut* from my grandmother's village are prized for their wind-dried sweetness. Every father has a cellar hung with the finest meats in the land.

Along with the *prosciut* [Slovenian *pršut*], language became a luxury that the villagers under Italian rule could no longer afford. Slovene was whispered in the privacy of the home, but Italian was the language spoken in schools, in businesses, on farms. Speaking Slovene in public could lead to torture or death. (GR 66)

While in Ljubljana, I talked with Krissy about Dragitca's departure for Egypt, which took place from Trieste, the then major port and Mediterranean hub. I suggested she visits Trieste and the famous Molo San Carlo/Audace, which is where the diaspora was leaving from into the wide world, earlier during the Austro-Hungarian empire and later during the Kingdom of Yugoslavia:

It is a relief to be free of the car in the narrow one-way streets of Trst, which is now called by the Italian name, Trieste. We walk down towards the water. Everything here leads downwards to the bay, as if the whole landscape is poised to leave. The sweep of Trst is just one long farewell.

I walk towards the pier. It juts a long way out into water that is steely grey and as calm as if it is sleeping. We walk along its old, marked surface, my feet in my grandmother's footprints, lock step.

This is where the boats pulled in, the huge ships, bound for Egypt. My grandmother was a child, maybe ten, maybe younger. She had been put onto a train, heading for the coast, alone.

I feel my eyes begin to prick with tears. How would it feel to say farewell like this? Farewell to all you have known.

She would never return. (GR 66)

There was some sort of shame present about the women of Alexandria. Some have indeed left at home their children, some, however, have not, as is evidenced by the stories of children belonging to Aleksandrinke that grew up in Egypt. Some of them and their mothers of course ended up even further away from home, in Canada or Australia, as is the case with Kneen's grandmother Dragitca. She was put on a train from Slovenia as a child and ended up in Egypt where she rejoined her mother, an Aleksandrinka, and she was never to see home again and ended up in Australia:

I'M NOT SURE what I can do to fill the gaping hole that her death has opened up in my world.

Throughout her life she was tight-lipped about her background. I could glean only fragments of her history. She was born in Slovenia. When she was just a child, she was put on a train. She was travelling alone. Somehow, she ended up in Egypt.

No. We had no relatives outside the small cluster of immediate family.

No. We had no history.

Look forward, she told me. Never look back.

Now I gaze into the plastic container of ashes.

I look back. I am trying to catch a glimpse of my grandmother sitting on the train that took her away from her home in Slovenia. A stuttering light and shade of tantalising scraps.

She had forbidden me from asking for stories about her past. She had forbidden me from setting out on my own quest to find a homeland. (GR 66)

Of course, it is absurd to feel shame about the Aleksandrinke, which is how the village milieus would sometimes see them. The phenomenon only shows in what a plight the people and especially the women from the Primorska Littoral region were in at the time, economically, as they had little else left to do other than leave for Alexandria and even abandon their loved ones, becoming breadwinners instead of their men.

CONCLUSION

The concept of Australia has been a work in progress for quite some time, from the Eurocentric point of view at least from 1788 onwards. Its culture has recently been redefined through the narratives and art in general. Krissy Kneen, the author, too, has been questioning and (re)defining herself as a person, writer, woman, a Slovenian-Australian, through her literary work, often shortlisted for prizes and awarded an important prize for a poetry collection written in a completely new diasporic literature fashion. Creating narratives is a way of mythopoesis and forging myths, which we all need to identify with (since we know that they more than just myths but flickers of reality as well), about Australia and its identity, Australia as an imagined community (Anderson 2016), a felicitous composite of various ethnic groups, including Slovenians (Maver 2010), cultures, historical events and social movements in the past, and much more. Kneen's literary contribution in her search for the roots in the edifying literary monuments to her Slovenian grandmother, is an original and successful step in this direction.

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Igor Maver
University of Ljubljana
igor.maver@guest.arnes.si



Slovenske identitetne plasti v pisanju Krissy Kneen

Članek prvokrat obravnava pisanje sodobne avstralske pisateljice Krissy Kneen, ki ima slovenske korenine. Tovrstno pisanje, književni poklon njeni pokojni babici Dragici Marušič (znani kot Lotty Kneen), kaže, da se želi sprijazniti s svojim slovenskim mikrobiomom in DNK. Ta po njenem mnenju predstavljata pomembno plast etnične identitete oziroma vsakršne identitete posameznika.

Ključne besede: Krissy Kneen, slovensko-avstralska diaspora, avstralska književnost

Margaret Atwood, World-Famous but Yet to Be Discovered by Many Slovene Readers

Tomaž Onič, Michelle Gadpaille, Jason Blake, Tjaša Mohar

Abstract

Margaret Atwood is the only Canadian author whose 80th birthday in 2019 was celebrated by the global academic community. This is not surprising, as she is the most famous Canadian writer, popular also outside literary circles. On this occasion, Slovene Canadianists organized a literary event at the Maribor University Library, which presented an outline of Atwood's oeuvre and a selection of translated poems and excerpts of prose texts; some of these were translated especially for the event. Of Atwood's rich and varied oeuvre, only eight novels, a few short fiction pieces and some thirty poems have been translated into Slovene. This article thus aims at presenting those aspects of Atwood's work which are less known to Slovene readers. It is no secret that Atwood is often labelled a feminist writer, mostly on account of *The Handmaid's Tale* and the TV series based on the novel. However, many Slovene readers may not know that she also writes poetry, short fiction, non-fiction and children's literature, that she is a committed environmentalist, and that she discussed the problem of "Debt and the Shadow Side of Wealth" in a prestigious lecture series. There are not many authors who master as many genres as Atwood and who are so well-received by readers and critics alike. The latter is true of Atwood also in Slovenia, and we can only hope that Slovene publishers will make more of Atwood's work available to Slovene readers. All the more so since Atwood has no plans to end her career: just before her 80th birthday she was on a tour in Europe promoting her latest novel, *The Testaments*, and she would have continued touring in 2020 were it not for the COVID pandemic.

Keywords: Margaret Atwood, Canadian Literature, Literary Translation, Genres

INTRODUCTION

Margaret Atwood's 80th birthday on November 18 in 2019 was celebrated globally. The academic community responded with a plethora of activities: from conferences and symposia, to thematic publications, as well as more-Atwood-than-usual in the lectures and seminars. Among the events taking place at the Maribor University Library was *Fourscore and More: Margaret Atwood at Eighty*, which presented a critical outline of Atwood's oeuvre, mediated by translations of excerpts from her work – not enough of which has been available to Slovene readers. The event was collaborative, operating as a dialogue between the organizing scholars and the student translators and readers, and reflecting the interaction between experts and beginners, between translators and literary scholars, between departments, and between Faculties.

Inspired by the Maribor Library event, this paper offers a selective overview of Atwood's writing, focusing on those works likely to be of most interest to readers and students in the Slovene cultural space. This contribution also addresses the question of how much – or how little – of her work is available in Slovene.

The *Fourscore and More: Margaret Atwood at Eighty* event opened on a personal note. Jason Blake, a Canadian transplanted to Slovenia and one of the authors of this article, shared with the audience several fragments that – directly or indirectly – relate his life to Atwood's life, colouring it little ways that also serve to connect the two countries. Since this account offers an engaging overview of Atwood's oeuvre from the Slovene perspective, we give here a selection of Blake's remarks:

In literary circles, Canada, until recently, was tiny indeed. All the authors knew each other, and even today it seems that every author has an anecdote about Captain Canada, Margaret Atwood – the woman who, it sometimes seems, single-handedly put Canadian literature on the world map.

I've never met Margaret Atwood, but she has affected my life in small ways. Years ago, we shared a moment. I was strolling down Admiral Road, a leafy, windy, fancy street in the middle of Toronto, and I saw someone struggling in the small garden in front of her house – spoiler alert: it was Margaret Atwood. She yanked, grunted, yanked some more, and turned around to see me seeing her having won against a bit of quackgrass, or chickweed, or perhaps knotweed. She looked proud of herself. She had defeated and uprooted that weed. So, Margaret and I shared a weed moment.

A few years later, I was working as a teaching assistant at the University of Toronto. We were on strike and *the* Margaret Atwood wrote an open letter in support of us. I found that classy because there was nothing in it for her – yet she wrote bluntly and clearly about supporting future academics from the alma mater that gave her a “dandy education,” about preferring to see alumni

“contributions going towards quality education” rather “than towards some chunk of rock with our name on it.”¹

Atwood was once a guest on the BBC’s weekly interview show *Desert Island Discs* and the conversation started with her years at Leaside High School, which I also attended, and which my two nieces now attend. She describes the school more fully in her novel *Cat’s Eye*, but it also features in various ways in some of Atwood’s books, so I get a touch of nostalgia when I read her. In a story called the “Age of Lead,” Vincent takes Jane to “the graduation formal” (*Wilderness Tips*, 126), where high school kids would dress up in finery, give each other boutonnieres and corsages, and act silly. But, most famously, Atwood turned Leaside High into the prison for the dystopian *The Handmaid’s Tale*, including the space described in the opening scene – with that “balcony [that] ran around the room, for the spectators...” (3).

Obviously, I no longer live in Canada, but sometimes I forget where I am and am whisked back to the Toronto in which Atwood and I grew up, not least when I read Atwood’s work and try to spot the veiled and overt (and non-existent) references to streets and environs I know.

ATWOOD’S FICTION, SHORT FICTION AND MINI FICTION

Novels

Atwood’s early novels *The Edible Woman* (1969), *Surfacing* (1972), *Lady Oracle* (1976), *Life Before Man* (1979) and *Bodily Harm* (1981) all ground themselves in Canadian themes and locations, although each was adopted by the international literary community, especially by feminist critics. After *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985), Atwood’s fiction began to darken and move towards complex narrative and historical modes, with *The Robber Bride* (1993), *Alias Grace* (1996) and *The Blind Assassin* (2000). *Cat’s Eye* (1988) turned to the Ontario of the author’s childhood, and *The Handmaid’s Tale* was a projection into the future of North America. To describe her fiction in one thematic or formal arc is impossible, but some unifying generalizations can be made. First, Atwood’s own critical paradigm set out in *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (1972), her major work of criticism, has some utility in interpreting her fiction. Victim positions and their resolution recur in early works such as *Surfacing* and *The Edible Woman*, where female protagonists explore their own complicity in accepting social

1 Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3902 deserves thanks for tracking down this 2000 letter for us.

and personal subordination. More recently, *The Testaments* (2019), a sequel to *The Handmaid's Tale*, extends the dystopian exploration of gendered political victimhood to show female protagonists of varied ages rejecting victimhood to triumph over patriarchal power. The sisterhood of *The Testaments* proves more powerful than the oppressive system in the end. Simultaneously, *The Testaments* embodies two further trends in Atwood's fiction: first, towards narratives of older women, and second, towards increasing engagement with audience feedback and new media. For *The Testaments* is partly a response to the success of *The Handmaid's Tale* as a TV series and the public demand for information about Offred and her sisters in the reproductive slavery of Gilead. The narrative of aging has featured in Atwood's shorter fiction, as well, where Atwood experiments with a long view of women's lives, staging a life as an autobiographical memory constructed and de-constructed, before being offered as a testament to future readers (e.g., in the miniature tale "Life Stories"). Another unifying feature of this major oeuvre is its increasing engagement with the Internet and the new genres it has spawned, as Atwood embraces collaborative fiction, digital platforms and even post-human publication. This accompanies another trend in Atwood's fiction over fifty years: the flexible use of popular and high genres, a distinction that began to erode with *Lady Oracle* and continued with her playful use of comics, musicals (*The Penelopiad*, 2005) and B-movie scripts. With her trademark deadpan irony, Atwood ensures that the reader almost never knows when the joke is on them and on their petty amusements. Nevertheless, this fiction commands attention from any reader interested in the controllable outcome for our planet, since the later Atwood seems to be looking back at Earth from a privileged, infinitely distanced, but intimate position that combines age, experience and testamentary narration into a form of wisdom literature.

Various ranking lists place *The Handmaid's Tale* at the top of the Atwood popularity chart, as her finest novel (riding no doubt on the back of the successful television series). After that, it gets complicated. Indeed, if you were to ask ten Atwood fans which book should be translated next into Slovene, you would get ten different answers. This disagreement is a sign of Atwood's literary greatness and versatility. The COBISS library search system gives us a more quantifiable example of Atwood's versatility. Type Atwood's name into the search bar and you will be reminded that she dabbles in "social" novels, science fiction, crime, adventure, historical, and the somewhat opaque "other" novels.

Cat's Eye, her 1988 Künstlerroman or "artist's novel" about a successful painter returning to the Toronto where she grew up, would be our candidate for a work that deserves to be made available in Slovene. For Elaine Risley, the protagonist, returning from Vancouver on Canada's west coast to Toronto means remembrances of childhood friendships, growing pains, and bullying. "Little girls are cute and

small only to adults,” the artist narrator reminds us. “To one another they are not cute. They are life-sized” (*CE* 124).

Speculative Fiction

The turn towards speculative fiction first appeared in Atwood’s short stories, before exploding in a futurist trilogy that began spectacularly with *Oryx and Crake* in 2003 and continuing with *The Year of the Flood* (2009). In *Maddaddam* (2013), the surviving, post-apocalyptic community lives with humanoids genetically engineered by the scientist Crake, who is a Dr. Frankenstein-like character. These Crakers are gentle vegetarians, who mate enthusiastically when pheromones are emitted and their backsides turn blue. However, they have no cultural heritage – no stories of their own. So, Toby, one of the survivors of the man-made epidemic, begins to create this heritage for the Children of Crake by storytelling. Painstakingly, she gives them their Genesis, their Exodus and their fables, enduring many interruptions for their innocent questions. Here Atwood engages in a world-making exercise, akin to Tolkien’s, and transforming her trilogy into the unusual genre of metafictional post-human speculative fiction.

Margaret Atwood denies that she writes science fiction despite her futurist trilogy. She does admit to speculative fiction, a genre to which many of her short prose pieces belong, for example “Three Novels I Won’t Write Soon” (*The Tent*, 2006), in which various B-movie scenarios are proposed and discarded. Her speculation often concerns the corporatization of western culture, the devaluation of human capital when monetary capital takes precedence over both the natural environment and the human animals who inhabit it.

Atwood has no fear of technology, nor of the online world. Her futuristic novel *The Heart Goes Last* (2015) originated as a serial e-book and enjoyed an online comic spin-off. Its protagonist, Charmaine has bought the sales pitch of the great corporation, Consilience, and has entered their compound, where residents spend half their time in prison and half their time “free.” The sales pitch sells this option as providing safety and predictability, where people down on their luck can escape poverty, precarity and the streets. It is, however, a concentration camp in all but name – and even its name provides a strong anagrammatic link: *Positron* = *to prison*.

Short Stories

Canadian novelist Hugh MacLennan once titled an article “Boy Meets Girl in Winnipeg, and Who Cares?” The point is (or was): a boy-meets-girl love story

may be universal, but if you want Americans to read and buy your novel – that is, if you want to actually make a living as a writer – set your tale in New York, not Winnipeg. Atwood never took the road to New York. Her work almost always remains rooted in Canadian settings – and in *The Handmaid's Tale*, Canada is a sort of Shangri la, a place to escape to. When asked to deliver a series of lectures at Oxford University back in 1991, she opted for “terra incognita,” that is, Canadian literature (*ST* 2). The lectures became the 1995 book *Strange Things: The Malevolent North in Canadian Literature*, which explored the concept of wilderness Gothic.

What makes Atwood tolerable as a voice of Canada is her ability to serve up quips, her outright humour, and her genius at interweaving the past and the present, even as she explores modern Canadian myths. “The Age of Lead” is a short story that delves into the mystery of the Franklin Expedition – a search for the Northwest Passage from West to East that left many robust men dead, including one John Torrington. “They took the lid off the coffin,” writes Atwood, “and it was like those maraschino cherries you used to freeze in ice-cube trays for fancy tropical drinks: a vague shape, looming through a solid cloud” (*Wilderness Tips*, 120). It also prompted this Atwoodesque line from a Ljubljana student: “Well, you lick a cherry, but you should never lick a dead man.”

Atwood begins her gem of short story “Gertrude Talks Back” like this: “I always thought it was a mistake, calling you Hamlet. I mean, what kind of name is that for a young boy? [...] The other kids at school used to tease the life out of you. The nicknames! And those terrible jokes about pork” (*Good Bones*, 16). The story is witty and insightful, as Gertrude finally gets a chance to speak. At the same time, however, Atwood, a colonial author raised on English literature and British imperialism, is taking playful aim at *the* most canonical and important work in the English language. Gertrude and Canada are talking back to Shakespeare.

Slipstream

Not all of Atwood’s prose fits happily within the boundaries of the essay, the short story or the novel. Many of her shorter pieces defy classification, refuse to be mainstream and could belong in the new category called “slipstream.” Where on the bookstore shelf does one put writing that is measured in lines and paragraphs rather than in pages? The short works in collections such as *Murder in the Dark* (from 1983), *Good Bones* (from 1992), or *The Tent* (from 2006) are often over before the bottom of the page. Are these prose poems? Parables? Short, short stories? Updated fairy tales? Or just witty jottings that would not have found a publisher had they not been by Atwood?

Among these, “Life Stories” (*The Tent*, 2006) “Horror Comics” and “Simmering” (*Murder in the Dark*, 1983) defy genre classification, retaining the density of poetry, the thoughtfulness of the essay and the readability of fiction. “Life Stories” evokes the human hunger for autobiography, photograph albums, all the verbiage of lives both lived and witnessed. Then the ending cannibalizes itself, trailing away in a whisper:

I was born.
I was.
(*Tent*, 14)

These miniature prose creations are experimental, revelatory and horrifying, each in its own way.

CHILDREN’S LITERATURE AND COMIC BOOKS

Margaret Atwood has dabbled in many genres, including those for children. A few years ago, it came out that she would be writing the words for a comic book series. It was assumed this would be *serious literature*, graphic novels perhaps in the style of Art Spiegelman’s *Maus*. Nothing of the sort! In the introduction to *Angel Catbird*, first published in 2016, Atwood writes, “Some find it strange that a person known for her novels and poetry would take to writing comic books... Why is a nice literary old lady like me ... messing around with flying cat-owl superheroes and nightclubs for cat people?” (np). Well, because it is fun and because comics are what she grew up on. Some of them “had an educational bent.” The second and more recent graphic novel by Atwood is *War Bears*, which is set in WW II Canada and features a comic book writer. J. Caleb Mozzocco nominated it as “the sort of comic book story that will at least be of interest to almost anyone interested in the medium” (2019).

Some of Atwood’s early books for children are didactic. This is true of *For the Birds*, a 1990 children’s story beautifully illustrated by John Bianchi, about a young girl who meets a strange old lady who cares greatly about birds, and about the specific environmental dangers that harm them: the tall buildings they fly into, the monoculture forests, the air pollution, and... cats and kids that are out to get individual cardinals and blue jays in backyard gardens. Atwood educates, entertains and teaches us how to make birdfeeders. Her more recent children’s books, however, are playful and feature outstanding book-long alliterations that can already be seen in the titles: *Princess Prunella and the Purple Peanut*, *Rude Ramsay and the Roaring Radishes*, *Bashful Bob and Doleful Dorinda* and *Wandering Wenda and Widow Wallop’s Wunderground Washery*.

POETRY

Atwood began publishing poetry in the mid-1960s. Her early collections – *The Circle Game* 1964; *The Animals in That Country* (1969); *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* and *Procedures for Underground* (1970) – gave Canadians elliptical, riddling short poems, with dream-like imagery, but a secure link to the founding writers of the past. *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* thus constructed a literary heritage for a country short on literary ancestors – particularly foremothers.

Atwood's main concern in her poetry is "to enter the wilderness of the self," as critic Rosemary Sullivan says in *The Concise Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature* (22). Across 17 volumes of poetry, including collected works, Atwood has kept her poems often deceptively simple, a clear voice leading the reader through imagery to a place of discovery, and then, just as calmly, snatching the discovery away.

Marriage is not
a house or even a tent
it is before that, and colder [...]. ("Habitation," *Procedures for Underground*, 60)

As a poet, she is often sly and tricky, shifting semantic ground between one line and the next: "I need wolf's eyes to see / the truth. ("Further Arrivals," *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*, 13).

These poems begin in the orderly world we take for granted, but the words soon lead us to a quicksand of language: we find ourselves facing the chaos and barbarism that lies beneath the surface of human culture, with "apocalypse coiled in [our] tongue" ("Spring Poem," *You Are Happy*, 22).

Her poetic journeys are sometimes topographical (into the northern wilderness), sometimes historical or psychological, and often mythological. In the 1990s, her poetry collections *Morning in the Burned House* (1995) and *Eating Fire* (1998) retreated from overt mythologizing to deceptively domestic scenes, as in the burned house of the collection's title: "In the burned house I am eating breakfast, / You understand: there is no house, there is no breakfast, / yet here I am" ("Morning in the Burned House," *Morning in the Burned House*, 126). Her analogies still surprise, as in her Helen of Troy, the countertop dancer who is "naked as a meat sandwich" ("Helen of Troy," *Morning in the Burned House*, 33).

The house imagery recurs in the collection *The Door* (2007), where one poem "Resurrecting the dolls' house," opens with the safe, nostalgic image of an abandoned toy, but progressively erodes the protected home space of the western family. Atwood's gothic imagery can also be found in other poems: "Heart" begins from everyday linguistic idioms like "to lose one's heart" but takes idiom literally

and ends in a scenario of bodily horror. Metaphorical literalization often underpins Atwood's poetic effects, as in "Your Children Cut Their Hands," which uses the metaphor of the mirror to express parental anguish at the life ordeals of the next generation.

From the same volume, "War Photo" and "War Photo 2" show Atwood's continuing engagement with victims of organized violence – those who come from places far removed from the relatively safe cocoon of Canada. Finally, the closing poem of the book, "The Door," calls on everything we know about rituals of passage to another world, to give us a new mythology of passing from old age to whatever lies beyond. Above all, Atwood's poetry treats language as a particularly subtle conspiracy theory; her readers should approach with due suspicion.

ATWOOD'S ACTIVISM

Atwood could afford to turn her back on the real world, but she does not. Every time the real world comes calling, this author opens the door. She opened it to care for fellow-writers in Canada and around the world, being a co-founder of both the Writer's Trust of Canada and of PEN Canada, the latter the organization that seeks justice for persecuted writers all around the world.

Atwood has long resided in Toronto and she keeps an eye on local affairs and concerns. She fought proposed cuts to Toronto's public library budget in 2011, and in 2013 she tweeted against the installation of artificial turf in the fields of the University of Toronto's back campus. Interventions such as these show that she tries to help keep the city green, literate and accessible for her fellow citizens.

To tackle the vital, real-world subject of money in 2008, Atwood published a collection of lectures called *Payback: Debt and the Shadow Side of Wealth*.² It is about personal, national and cultural indebtedness. Atwood goes beyond mere numbers; she traces our notions of indebtedness back to ancient myth, and follows these concepts in our storytelling, through Dr. Faustus and his fatal bargain with the devil. Finally, Dickens's Scrooge becomes her template for exploring what people really owe, to whom and what it means to pay it truly back.

Atwood is a committed environmentalist. Her publishing house named O. W. Toad (an anagram of Atwood) was publishing on acid-free paper long before an environmental conscience became fashionable.

2 This prestigious Canadian Broadcasting Corporation series of lectures, named the *Massey Lectures* after Governor General of Canada Vincent Massey, started in 1961. Apart from Atwood in 2008, it has hosted such famous speakers as Martin Luther King, George Steiner, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Doris Lessing and Noam Chomsky.

In her writing, Atwood's environmental awareness is reflected especially in the *Maddaddam* trilogy, which is sometimes categorized as an ecological apocalypse, or an environmental dystopia. However, Atwood's ecological concerns are already noticeable in her novel *Surfacing* (1972). The novel about a young woman investigating her father's disappearance is set in the bush of Northern Quebec, a place where Atwood herself spent part of her childhood. In the novel, the unnamed protagonist, accompanied by three friends, returns to the place where she spent her childhood. The four friends drive to Northern Quebec all the way from Toronto and stay at the cabin by the lake where the protagonist's father lived. It pains the protagonist to find the landscape changed where there used to be intact nature, and the signs of progress and tourism setting in. She is appalled by the sight of a dead heron, which was obviously slaughtered by tourists for mere pleasure. And when her friends ask her to take them fishing, she suddenly realizes that the killing of fish is an act of violation, for they do not need it for food. She is becoming increasingly aware that the tourists as well her own nation present a threat to nature and to the future of the humankind.

Atwood has often been labelled a feminist writer. *The Handmaid's Tale* and the TV series based on the novel have had a great influence on supporters of women's causes around the world; there have even been protests organized by women dressed like handmaid. Atwood, however, does not have a straight answer to the question whether she herself is a feminist: "I never say I'm an 'ist' of any kind unless I know how the other person is defining it" ("Do you consider...?"). And this is what she thinks about gender equality: "I believe women are full human beings (radical, I realize). And that laws should reflect this. However, men and women are not 'equal' if 'equal' means 'exactly the same.' Our many puzzlements and indeed unhappinesses come from trying to figure out what the differences really mean, or should mean, or should not mean. Last I looked, people were still trying. And yes, it has something to do with standard of living and available food supply. When times are better and women have jobs, their status goes up" ("Do you consider...?").

When Atwood's first novel *The Edible Woman* was published in 1969, it became a great success with the feminist movement that was on the rise at the time (Sullivan 1998, 247). Atwood, however, preferred it to be called "protofeminist" rather than feminist, for, as she explained in the 1980 preface, she was writing it in 1965, when there was no women's movement in sight (in Staines 2006, 17). She still believes that "the feminist label can only be given to writers who willfully and consciously work within the context of the movement" (qtd. in Oppenheim). The novel with this catchy and meaningful title features Marian, a young employee in a market research company, who develops an eating disorder after becoming engaged to a handsome and prosperous lawyer named Peter. Marian's body starts rejecting one kind of food after another, until she realizes that she herself has in

a way become a consumable. She escapes Peter's party and the life that has been oppressing her. The day after the party, when Peter demands an explanation, she invites him to her place and offers him a cake in the form of a woman: "You've been trying to destroy me, haven't you," she said. "You've been trying to assimilate me. But I've made you a substitute, something you'll like much better. This is what you really wanted all along, isn't it? I'll get you a fork..." (EW 281). Peter flees.

ATWOOD IN SLOVENE

The body of Margaret Atwood's works accessible to Slovene reader cannot be claimed as minimal in absolute numbers – to date, the translations of eight longer texts, eight shorter pieces of fiction, as well as 30 individual poems have been published, which is more than for many writers from the English speaking world. Yet, considering Atwood's opus and influence, Blake's claim that "Slovenes have been cheated of many of Atwood's finest works" can be extended beyond the novel, to which it originally referred.

Atwood has published eighteen novels.³ Eight of these have found their way into Slovene, some with a considerable delay: *Surfacing* (1972), *Lady Oracle* (1976), *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), *The Blind Assassin* (2000), *Oryx and Crake* (2003), *The Penelopiad* (2005),⁴ *The Year of the Flood* (2009), and *The Testaments* (2019).⁵ Soon after their publication in Slovene, *Na površje* (2004) and *Leto potopa* (2015) acquired braille versions. Some of the Slovene translations, particularly those published after 1990, including the critical response to them, were discussed by Onič, Mohar and Gadpaille (2019) in a paper within the *Canada Consumed* project that made an attempt to catalogue translations of Canadian literature into eight Central European languages, including Slovene.

None of Atwood's story or essay collections or poetry collections have been translated into Slovene, although individual shorter pieces and poems have appeared in various literary journals. The former include "Isis in Darkness," "Wilderness Tips," "The Sin Eater," "When It Happens," "Murder in the Dark," "Horror Comics," "The Page," and "The Eternal Triangle," while the 30 translated poems come from several collections.

3 Only seventeen, however, are accessible; *Scribbler Moon*, Atwood's 2014 contribution for the Future Library project by the artist Katie Patterson, remains sealed until 2114. See more at www.futurelibrary.no.

4 As a part of the international Canongate Myth Series, *The Penelopiad* was published in several countries simultaneously (including in Slovenia, by Mladinska knjiga). In this context, it is often considered a novella, while many scholars dealing with Atwood's opus count it among the novels.

5 Their Slovene titles are *Na površje* (2003), *Preročišče* (1987), *Deklina zgodba* (1990), *Slepi morilec* (2010), *Zadnji človek* (2004), *Penelopina preja* (2005), *Leto potopa* (2012), *Testamenti* (2019).

Some of Atwood's poems and prose fragments were translated by the students of the Maribor Faculty of Arts translation program in preparation for the *Fourscore and More* event. Mentored by the literature and literary translation teachers, these were read at the University Library literary evening by the student translators themselves. The experience proved to be highly beneficial for all participants as the challenges, delights and depths of Atwood's writing came to the fore.

CONCLUSION

In her 1972 *Survival* overview of Canadian literature, Atwood made a case for why the Canadians should read Canadian literature: because it is "ours." Atwood does, however, remind readers of *Survival* not to "fall into the trap of praising something just because it's Canadian" (216) – she may be accused of nationalism, but not jingoism. Considering Atwood's global popularity, she undoubtedly takes the credit for putting Canadian literature on the map, while serving as a kind of ambassador of Canadian culture to many places, including Slovenia. She is also one of the few authors who are not only popular, but also well-received by high-brow critics. Although Atwood is certainly the most famous Canadian writer in Slovenia,⁶ much of her work remains to be discovered by Slovene readers, particularly her short fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and children's books. And she has no plans to end her career, for just before her 80th birthday, she was on a UK and Irish tour promoting her latest novel, *The Testaments*, and she would have continued touring in 2020 were it not for the unforeseen developments in these times of COVID.

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6 This despite the fact that her compatriot, the short story writer Alice Munro won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2013. For more information on the popularity of the two authors in Slovenia, see the article "Alice Munro and Leonard Cohen: Ambassadors of Canadian Culture in Slovenia."

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Tomaž Onič

University of Maribor
tomaz.onic@um.si

Michelle Gadpaille

University of Maribor
michelle.gadpaille@um.si

Jason Blake

University of Ljubljana
JasonFrederick.Blake@ff.uni-lj.si

Tjaša Mohar

University of Maribor
tjasa.mohar@um.si



Margaret Atwood – pisateljica svetovnega slovesa, a mnogim slovenskim bralcem še neznana

Margaret Atwood je edina kanadska avtorica, katere 80-letnico so jeseni 2019 obeležile akademske skupnosti po vsem svetu. To ne preseneča, saj je najpopularnejša kanadska pisateljica, cenjena tudi zunaj literarnih krogov. Slovenski kanadianisti smo njen visoki jubilej obeležili z literarnim dogodkom v Univerzitetni knjižnici Maribor, na katerem smo predstavili avtoričin opus ter izbor njenih pesmi in odlomkov iz njenih del, pri čemer smo nekatera besedila prevedli posebej za to prireditvev. Od njenega bogatega in raznolikega opusa je bilo doslej poslovenjenih le osem romanov, nekaj krajših proznih besedil in nekaj deset pesmi. Pričujoči članek želi bralstvu približati predvsem tiste vidike avtoričinega

opusa, ki so v slovenskem prostoru manj znani oz. še neznani. Tudi pri nas ni skrivnost, da Margaret Atwood – predvsem zaradi *Dekline zgodbe* oz. televizijske nadaljevanke, posnete po literarni predlogi – pogosto označujejo za feministično pisateljico, manj znano pa je, da piše tudi poezijo, kratko prozo, knjige za otroke ter esejska in kritiška besedila, da je izjemno okoljsko osveščena ter da je posnela niz predavanj na temo zadolževanja in senčne plati bogastva. Le malokateri literat se tako uspešno kot ona preskuša v vseh žanrih in je hkrati ljubljeneц kritikov in občinstva. Slednje zanjo velja tudi v slovenskem prostoru, zato lahko brez zadržkov upamo, da bodo slovenski založniki domačemu bralstvu približali še več njenih del. Margaret Atwood kljub častitljivi starosti še ne namerava zaključiti svoje kariere: tik pred okroglo obletnico je na turneji po Evropi predstavljala svoj zadnji roman *Testamenti*, s čimer bi nadaljevala v letu 2020, če ji tega ne bi preprečila pandemija.

Ključne besede: Margaret Atwood, kanadska književnost, književni prevod, žanri

The Banality of Violence in A. L. Kennedy's Early Short Stories

Ema Jelínková

Abstract

The present paper adapts Hannah Arendt's concept of the banality of evil to illustrate the banality of a specific manifestation of evil, which is violence, as it is presented in the early short stories of A. L. Kennedy. Selected stories from Kennedy's first two collections, *Night Geometry and the Garscadden Trains* (1990) and *Now that You're Back* (1994), are analysed to show that, like Arendt, Kennedy does not dismiss the perpetrators of violent acts as sadistic monsters but rather perceives them in their complexity as human beings who may commit inhuman crimes, yet cannot be explained away easily as less than human. Kennedy's point about the banality of violence – banality in the sense of commonness or ordinariness, not in the sense of triviality – is reinforced by her preoccupation with ordinary characters leading mundane lives, whose humdrum existence is disrupted by unexpected, though typically unexceptional, circumstances. Lacking the capacity or skill to cope by non-violent means, Kennedy's characters resort to violence in a perverted attempt to come to terms with the uncertainty of life and to express in a physical manner what they cannot express in language.

Keywords: A. L. Kennedy; Scottish literature; women's writing; banality of evil; violence

CONTEXTUALISING A. L. KENNEDY: A SCOTTISH WOMAN WRITER?

We have small lives, easily lost in foreign droughts, or famines; the occasional incendiary incident, or a wall of pale faces, crushed against grillwork, one Saturday afternoon in Spring. This is not enough.

—A. L. Kennedy, “Night Geometry and the Garscadden Trains”
(Kennedy, *Night* 34)

A. L. Kennedy (b. 1965) embarked on her literary career at the height of what is retrospectively known as the second Scottish literary renaissance, which was initiated by the 1981 publication of *Lanark: A Life in Four Books*, a monumental novel from the pen and pencil of Alasdair Gray (b. 1934), the doyen of Scottish letters as well as an illustrator, painter and muralist. In his seminal novel, accompanied by his own black-and-white illustrations, Gray bemoans the absence of a continuous Scottish cultural tradition worth the name in creative writing and otherwise:

Think of Florence, Paris, London, New York. Nobody visiting them for the first time is a stranger because he’s already visited them in paintings, novels, history books and films. But if a city hasn’t been used by an artist not even the inhabitants live there imaginatively. What is Glasgow to most of us? A house, the place we work, a football park or golf course, some pubs and connecting streets. . . . Imaginatively Glasgow exists as a music-hall song and a few bad novels. That’s all we’ve given to the world outside. It’s all we’ve given to ourselves. (Gray 243)

While Gray’s complaint bore some relevance at the time of its writing, when the Scottish literary heritage rested on the fame of several individuals considered in isolation – notably Robert Burns, Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson, and a few others – and appeared to lack in continuity as much as contemporaneity, originality and memorability, now the tables have turned and it is also owing to the significant contribution of Alasdair Gray that Scottish writing started to find its own unique direction(s) at the end of the twentieth century.

By their own admission, the Scots have struggled to define a national identity on which to build an artistic tradition as a consequence of Scotland’s historical development as a stateless nation since the 1707 Act of Union, which merged the formerly separate kingdoms of Scotland and England into what is now the United Kingdom. More than three hundred years, two major Jacobite uprisings, two devolution referenda and one independence referendum later – with a second independence referendum currently under consideration – the year 1707 is by

no means a long-forgotten history. That is, not for Scotland, which has experienced from the beginning of its difficult relationship with England the feeling that the wealthier, more powerful, and more influential south of Britain perceives and treats the Scottish as inferior, inconsequential and impoverished in terms of not only economic but also social and cultural development.

How the national identity issue inevitably impacts on both the production and reception of Scottish literature is illustrated in A. L. Kennedy's characteristically evasive response in an interview when the obligatory question about the Scottish character of her work comes up:

I use the language that I use, which has Scottish-isms, Scottish rhythms in it, but that's not me making a point, that's where I come from. That's the frustrating thing, people down here will say: "What's it like being a Scottish writer?" and I'll say: "I don't know, I've never been anything else." I'm not being awkward, but it's a question you don't get asked if you're from London. (Kennedy qtd. in Merritt 13)

Kennedy notoriously eschews the limitations imposed by labels and the confines enforced by neat definitions but no matter how she rejects the idea of "making a point" out of the fact that she happens to be Scottish, she cannot avoid the peculiarities of the Scottish language, character and experience seeping in throughout her work. Despite the sheer precariousness of any attempts to capture the common characteristics of the continuously living, organically evolving and spontaneously transmuting body of a nation's literature, it may be helpful to tentatively offer a snapshot of the most prominent features that A. L. Kennedy shares with many of her contemporaries as well as with some of her predecessors. What appears to be a distinctly Scottish strain in Kennedy's writing involves her frequent focus on troubled identities and the tension between one's private personality versus one's public persona—which is the quintessential Scottish theme reaching back to Robert Louis Stevenson's foundational novella *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) – and, furthermore, her explorations of the intricate interdependence of the individual and the nation, her preference for dark, disturbing, even perverse subject matter and her penchant for balancing out even the grimmest subject with a paradoxically life-affirming gallows humour. Ultimately, as Kaye Mitchell puts it, Kennedy's texts "all contribute to and disseminate some idea of 'Scotland' and 'Scottishness', regardless of her desire for her writing to be judged independent of considerations of national identity" (Mitchell 45).

Scottish women writers arguably create under the pressure of the historical double bind as representatives of a dispossessed nation and members of the oppressed second sex, in Simone de Beauvoir's terms:

For man represents both the positive and the neutral, as indicated by the common use of *man* to designate human beings in general; whereas woman represents only the negative. . . . She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute – she is the Other. (de Beauvoir 15–16)

The marginalisation, dismissal or outright omission of women's experience as inconsequential has been particularly prevalent in Scotland's culture, which tends to present itself deliberately as hypermasculine – epitomised in the popular imagination by the face-painted, dishevelled and bloodied Mel Gibson defiantly yelling "Freedom!" with his last breath as he plays the historical Scottish warrior William Wallace in the blockbuster *Braveheart* (1995). A. L. Kennedy's fellow-Scottish woman writer, Janice Galloway (b. 1955), pays tribute to the inspiring, energising and even mobilising influence of Alasdair Gray's *Lanark*, where she discovered, in her own words, "a voice that offered me something freeing" (Galloway 195), which was the much-needed impetus that galvanised not only Galloway but arguably a whole generation of emergent writers of either sex in a world where the "so-called women's issues are still regarded as deviant, add-on, extra. Not the Big Picture," Galloway contends (Galloway qtd. in March, "Galloway" 85).

Kennedy firmly rejects the restrictive "woman writer" label as well as the even more definitive "feminist" label, along with any other neat categories that would reduce her work into an exercise in promoting a particular preset agenda. "I've certainly had feminists come to my readings and walk out," she recounts. "I think they came expecting me to be someone who conforms to their agenda. No guy ever does a reading and has a whole load of guys at the back standing up and saying, 'why aren't you redefining maleness?'" Kennedy argues against the stereotypical assumption that "to be a female writer you must be something else too" (Kennedy qtd. in March, "Kennedy" 107). While it certainly holds true that Kennedy does not pursue any immediately identifiable ideological purpose or didactic goal, especially her early writings manifest unmistakably female sensibilities – even without assuming any apparent moral stance – which are not paralleled in any other works by her "default" male fellow-writers.

When pressed to comment on the often harsh plights of the disempowered, dispossessed, and disaffected female characters in her writing, Kennedy clarifies her point, claiming: "I'm always drawn to the border between what you want and what you want to say and what you need to say and what's actually possible – the interior life and the exterior life. . . . So if I've got any kind of agenda at all it's this: the people who come to me tend to be people who can't say what they want to say, so I say that they can't say what they want to say" (Kennedy qtd. in March,

"Kennedy" 117). In other words, Kennedy does not presume to appoint her characters, whether female or male, to represent any larger social, economic, or other group and speak on its behalf; she cannot give voice to the voiceless, as the critical cliché goes, because she knows as little as her conflicted characters what it is that they are trying to express.

"There are no monsters": The Motif of Violence in Kennedy's Stories

If I could be the first pensioner film director, I would make films about us. I wouldn't choose anyone special, like a spy, or a general, who might be remembered, or famous for anything else. I would film an ordinary person, their story, because they have good stories, too.

—A. L. Kennedy, "Star Dust" (Kennedy, *Geometry* 88)

Kaye Mitchell aptly characterises Kennedy's early work, noticing the author's self-admitted preoccupation with the clash of the interior and the exterior, the private and the public, the particular and the general, pointing out that in Kennedy's imagination "these are not lives or people defined by their membership of groups but rather defined by their very lack of such membership. . . . Her focus is on specificity, particularity and the ways in which such lives are subsumed by some greater whole or system. Kennedy demonstrates an awareness of the potential violence of this subsuming" (Mitchell 58). The short story proves to be a medium particularly well suited to resonating with the procession of small people whose small lives Kennedy depicts with sharp observational skills, a keen sense for detail – a peculiar gesture, an idiosyncratic word or a silence pregnant with meanings – and, above all, with unflinching honesty and quiet sympathy untainted by any demonstrative display of sentiment or excessive melodrama. Kennedy brings to the fore the raw experience of those who rarely attract serious attention in literary fiction, unless as curiosities, aberrations or even perversions: she devotes her stories to the overlooked uncomfortable struggles of disintegrated marriages, single mothers, alcoholic fathers, neglected children, the mentally ill, the elderly, sick and dying. In doing so with earnestness, grace and sensitivity, she respects and accepts any person without doubting their status as a human being, however inhuman they may appear.

"It's about humanity," Kennedy insists when speaking about her preferred choice of seemingly monstrous characters. "Looking out of someone else's eyes, and planning them as human, whoever they are. So you understand that there are no monsters" (Kennedy qtd. in March, "Kennedy" 108). Kennedy painstakingly refrains from as much as implying any moral judgement and treads carefully to avoid dehumanising her characters, so that in her chillingly understated stories, as Cristie March observes, "we see everyday people committing monstrous acts, illustrating

both their humanity and their fallibility” (March, *Rewriting* 139). The bulk of Kennedy’s work, but especially her early short story collections, manifests her preoccupation with various forms of violence, though the domestic kind appears most frequently, including both psychological and physical abuse, specifically the recurrent motifs of rape and molestation. Considering the noisily masculine nature of the Scottish cultural tradition, it does not come as a surprise that artistic explorations of violence have formed a large part of the tradition—in fact, a characteristically dark strain of hardboiled crime fiction marketed as “tartan noir” has been Scotland’s chief literary export product since the 1980s. The founder of the genre, William McIlvanney, in his pioneering tartan noir novel, *Laidlaw* (1977), interestingly voices the same premise as A. L. Kennedy when it comes to dismissing the perpetrators of monstrous acts as monsters: “Monstrosity’s made by false gentility. You don’t get one without the other. No fairies, no monsters. Just people” (McIlvanney 85).

Kennedy’s oeuvre suggests the possibility of drawing another parallel with her argument against explaining away monstrous deeds as the actions of creatures that are less than human: her unorthodox line of thinking brings to mind the controversial concept of “the banality of evil” introduced and developed by Hannah Arendt in her observations on the trial of the Nazi criminal Adolf Eichmann, published in book form as *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1963). Arendt (in the same way as, later, Kennedy in her fiction) does not in any thinkable way trivialise or even dare to excuse the atrocities committed by Eichmann and others; rather, she seeks to refute the simplistic popular notion of Eichmann and his like as monsters, as anomalies existing outside the ordinary course of humankind. Quite the contrary, Arendt stresses “that it would have been very comforting indeed to believe that Eichmann was a monster” (Arendt 372); however, “the trouble with Eichmann was precisely that so many were like him, and that the many were neither perverted nor sadistic, that they were, and still are, terribly and terrifyingly normal” (Arendt 373). While “normal” may not be the best choice of word – alternatively, it might be more accurate to describe them as *appearing* normal rather than *being* normal – the point is that nothing sets the Little Eichmanns among us apart from the general population and that, by extension, we may each discover all the prerequisites for perpetrating evil in our very own selves.

The discomfiting idea of the banality of evil in general and violence in particular – “banality” in the above-defined sense as commonness, ordinariness, unexceptionality, as opposed to monstrosity, perversity, exceptionality – accordingly permeates much of Kennedy’s writing, where she sets out “to highlight the presence of the perverse within the normal”, as Mitchell formulates it, “thus deconstructing that apparent dichotomy” (80). In arguably one of her most powerful and chilling stories, “The Boy’s Fat Dog” (1994), Kennedy seems to echo some of

Arendt's concerns in fictionalised terms in choosing the backdrop of a major war conflict to present the disjointed (dis)contents of the mind of a voluntarily enlisted soldier. The story dispenses with particulars regarding the setting, belligerents or nature of the conflict, which reinforces the universal resonance of its message. Here and again in many other stories, Kennedy presents perfectly ordinary characters with dull everyday lives, whose routines are disrupted by unexpected but more or less unexceptional circumstances, which typically trigger inexplicably extreme responses, so that, as March remarks, she ultimately "allows us to see the thought processes of rational people who commit unthinkable acts, recognising that 'there are no monsters'" (March, *Rewriting* 154).

In "The Boy's Fat Dog", the narrator-protagonist is shown surveying a peasant village on the eve of its obliteration, a village which he himself spotted, duly reported and hence consigned to destruction. As his thoughts flow and freely associate, it transpires that he is actively and deliberately complicit in war crimes, including genocide, but also that he is deeply dissociated from the surrounding reality as well as from himself. It is as though he suddenly found himself in the midst of an escalated situation by an inexplicable accident which he cannot fathom, although his rational reasoning faculties remain perfectly intact:

We were being asked to go out and kill these people before they could kill any more of us. There can be none of them left, because they have crossed a kind of line and become animal, machine, something unhuman and only concerned with killing people like me who have homes and rows of winter greens, two little girls, a red-haired wife and jobs that don't quite suit them. (Kennedy, *Now* 148)

These are not the words of a deranged sadist who gets a kick out of raping women and slashing children across the face, and Kennedy takes great care not to present her protagonist as dehumanised: he has flashbacks of the little boy whose face he cut, "which was not what I intended", as he plainly observes (Kennedy, *Now* 149); he feels bad about the pigs on which he practised killing and most of all, he pities the fat old dog which he watches moving around the village, hoping that the dog makes it out of the condemned village alive. It is worth noting that the dehumanisation cuts both ways, as the above-quoted passage illustrates, since it is not only we who deny the perpetrators of terrible crimes their humanity, it is also the rapists and murderers who depersonalise and objectify their victims, perceiving them as "animal, machine, something unhuman", as the protagonist of the story puts it (Kennedy, *Now* 148).

"The Boy's Fat Dog" illustrates Kennedy's typical take on the banality of violence, and yet it is atypical in its focus on a grand-scale narrative of violence, for Kennedy characteristically deals with deceptively unremarkable domestic stories. Evaluating Kennedy's work, Ali Smith argues that "the impetus for her writing

is the giving of voice and articulacy to ordinary people who have been silenced by their ordinariness, the calling for due recognition of the complexities of their lives” (Smith 180). To what extent Kennedy actually does the job of “giving the voice and articulacy” to the silenced is debatable, since her characters are nearly always inarticulate and as often as not quiet, whether by choice, necessity or coercion. What Kennedy indisputably does is to give these troubled character types presence, illuminating the invisible and centralising the marginal. Her characters yearn for connection and communication but their solipsistic inclinations, among other factors, prevent them from forging balanced relationships and functioning in them, leading to what David Borthwick terms “the loss of any spiritually fruitful or intellectually rewarding intersubjective communication” (Borthwick 267).

In Kennedy’s fictional world, communication eventually becomes replaced by silence and violence, as is the case of the marital fight in the story “Sweet Memory Will Die” (1990), whose protagonist replicates her father’s habitual abusive behaviour when her marriage starts disintegrating after the birth of her son Sandy and she hits her husband, who retaliates:

It’s funny, all the time it happened I thought of Sandy. I didn’t want him to hear us. I didn’t want him to know. He would have heard me falling, he would have heard the body, the feet, the head, but he didn’t hear my voice. I never made a sound that might worry him. Paul was quiet, too. There was only the noise inside when he hit me and the sound it made outside, in the room. The sound he would listen to. (Kennedy, *Geometry* 59–60)

Domestic violence is a recurrent motif not only in A. L. Kennedy but in a whole stream of Scottish working-class fiction, established by the infamous *No Mean City* (1935), a crudely naturalistic novel produced by H. Kingsley Long and Alexander McArthur, which, despite its dubious literary merit, is significant in that it created the stock character of the wee hard man, a razor-slashing, heavy-drinking and wife-beating Scottish slum dweller. The very existence of a perpetrator of domestic abuse as a stock character type in Scottish literature evidences that violence is a major theme and a prevalent phenomenon, certainly in the fictional worlds of Scottish writers.

Apart from Kennedy’s preoccupation with domestic abuse, Mitchell notices “the proximity of sex and violence” underlying much of her writing (Mitchell 80), where the blurred boundaries between seemingly irreconcilable opposites evolve into a series of other unlikely combinations, including not only the commonplace confusion of sex and love but, even more alarmingly, the conflation of parental love and child abuse. In the deeply disturbing story “A Perfect Possession” (1994), a married couple who are orthodox believers set out on the godly mission

of exorcising their young son of supposed sin, substituting literal pain for love, convinced that "it hurts when we love somebody, because loving is a painful thing, that is its nature" (Kennedy, *Now* 1). Another uneasy story, "Friday Payday" (1994), featuring an underage Scottish prostitute who fled from her abusive father to London, illustrates the all-too-common rationalisation of fathers sexually abusing their daughters: "Father called it having a cuddle and said it was her mother's fault. He'd used to do this with her mother but then she'd gone to somewhere else and he still needed someone because he was a normal man" (Kennedy, *Now* 133). This train of thought is reminiscent of a scene along the same lines in a much-beloved classic Scottish novel, Lewis Grassie Gibbon's *Sunset Song* (1932), which Kennedy seems to echo in her story, also in terms of paying a tribute to fierce women survivors far surpassing their weak men as well as in terms of a passionate love for the land, though translated in Kennedy's story into an updated language: "Sometimes she just got dead homesick – adverts on the underground for Scotland, they lied like fuck, but they still made you think" (Kennedy, *Now* 142).

Kennedy emphasises the banality of violence in her stories by presenting violence typically as a character's primitive, unskilled first response to circumstances beyond their control which they do not have the knowledge, experience or ability to handle in a constructive rather than destructive manner. Many of her characters feel vaguely anxious, insecure and threatened by the commonplace but no less acutely experienced uncertainties of everyday life, and their heightened neuroticism makes them easily susceptible to even seemingly minor stress factors, which triggers the fight-or-flight reflex in them. When they choose to fight, they follow their biological survival instinct to the fullest and opt for physical violence instead of taking the extra step that is needed for impulse control and a rational consideration of other than violent options. This process is well illustrated in the story "Night Geometry and the Garscadden Trains" (1990), whose protagonist makes what looks like an inconsequential small adjustment in her daily routine, which, however, leads to her arriving home early and finding her husband Duncan with his mistress. She unthinkingly picks up a carving knife, only to realise that she has no idea what she intends to do with it:

I was going to run back to the bedroom and do what you would do with a carving knife, maybe to one of them, maybe to both, or perhaps just cut off his prick. . . In the end I tried to stab the knife into the worksurface, so that he would see it there, sticking up, and know that he'd had a near miss. The point slid across the formica and my hand went down on the blade, so that all of the fingers began to bleed. When Duncan came in, there was blood everywhere and my hand was under the tap and I'm sure he believed I'd tried to kill myself. (Kennedy, *Geometry* 33–34)

Apart from Kennedy's trademark sense of understated dark humour, this scene shows an ordinary character's failure to cope when her accustomed internal mundanity is disrupted by an external threat. Here Kennedy does not depict a brutal monster but a mere human being who resorts to violence – though gone grotesquely awry in this case – because of a lack of insight into other options.

Here and elsewhere, violence acts as a substitute for communication, which is the missing piece in much of Kennedy's writing, as Eluned Summers-Bremner observes:

Kennedy's characters frequently suffer from incommunicable feelings that have an intimate relation to language while not being expressible within it. The feelings themselves are often of impotence and lack, which increases relative to attempts to use words to convey them, or of a promissory fullness whose comforts cannot be reached. It is as though language, through which the body gains a useful, if ill-fitting, means of communication, fails to silence the body's inarticulate response to this arrangement in the flesh. (Summers-Bremner 124)

Kennedy's characters "communicate" through violence, which is, in their case, as banal a means of expression as language is to those more articulate; the intention in both cases being not primarily to cause harm but to establish a connection with another person, with the world at large but also with oneself. Kennedy's work reaches a universal human resonance with its concentration on the small lives of ordinary people, and yet it also stands out as a unique take on and, simultaneously, an embodiment of the peculiarities of Scottish experience, the slight differences and little details that make each of us individual while at the same time always belonging to one human race. Even if Kennedy can be disconcerting, even disturbing, as Sarah Dunnigan points out, she equally "creates an almost fabled beauty at the heart of her most tender fictions about lovers, and daughters and fathers. While her work as a whole is about the emotionally and politically disenfranchised and dispossessed, it also aims to discover the means of (re)enchantment" (Dunnigan 154).

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Emá Jelínková
 Palacky University Olomouc
 Ema.jelinkova@upol.cz



Banalnost nasilja v zgodnjih zgodbah A. L. Kennedyja

Članek uporabi concept Hannah Arendt o banalnosti nasilja za ilustracijo banalnost specifične manifestacije zla, ki je nasilje, kot ga najdemo v zgodnjih kratkih zgodbah A.L. Kennedyja.

Ključne besede: škotska književnost, žensko pisanje, banalnost zla, nasilje

Pursuing the Zionist Dream on the Palestinian Frontier: A Critical Approach to Herzl's *Altneuland*

Saddik Mohamed Gohar

Abstract

This paper critically examines Theodore Herzl's canonical Zionist novel, *Altneuland* / *Old New Land* as a frontier narrative which depicts the process of Jewish immigration to Palestine as an inevitable historical process aiming to rescue European Jews from persecution and establish a multi-national Utopia on the land of Palestine. Unlike radical Zionist narratives which underlie the necessity of founding a purely Jewish state in the holy land, *Altneuland* depicts an egalitarian and cosmopolitan community shared by Jews, Arabs and other races. The paper emphasizes that Herzl's Zionist project in *Altneuland* is not an extension of western colonialism par excellence. Herzl's narrative is a pragmatic appropriation of frontier literature depicting Palestine as a new frontier and promoting a construct of mythology about enthusiastic individuals who thrived in the desert while serving the needs of an enterprising and progressive society. Unlike western colonial narratives which necessitate the elimination of the colonized natives, Herzl's novel assimilates the indigenious population in the emerging frontier community.

Keywords: Zionism, Frontier, Immigration, Palestine, Narrative, History, Jews, Colonization

INTRODUCTION

The story of the Zionist immigration to Palestine continues to live; Zionist literature reflects and recreates this experience in a heroic mode, re-enacting again and again the first moments of the colonization and settlement of the Palestinian landscape. The historical reality of pre-Zionist Palestine as a wasteland provided the spark to the growth and development of a well-known Zionist fiction tradition delineating a country without a people disfigured by the sight of swamps and empty desert. Nevertheless, Theodore Herzl, the founder of political Zionism, and a prolific writer of fiction on this topic, in his early work depicts Palestine as a land with a native population which will be the future homeland of the Jews. Herzl's *Altneuland*¹ (1902) not only refers to Palestine as "the land of the Jews" but also as a new frontier territory which will be invaded by European Jews who will establish a democratic and multi-cultural state on the European model.

In this context, the novel promotes and popularizes a construct of mythology about enthusiastic individuals who thrived in the desert while serving the needs of an enterprising and progressive society. Problems between immigrants and locals will be terminated- the Arabs and the Jews will live in harmony and tolerance. The re-settlement of the Ottoman province and later British mandate Palestine is viewed in a different way in Herzl's fiction. As a Zionist pioneer, Herzl propagated the return to Jewish soil, liberation through labor and the creation of an egalitarian and free society before the founding of the state. In *Altneuland*, the Palestinian frontier is not merely a splendid historical period or a symbol of the triumph of good over evil as militant Zionists claim but it offers the ideal of personal self-determination and responsible freedom. For Herzl, the reconciliation between Arabs and Jews is inevitable, therefore the relation between both sides is romantically delineated in *Altneuland*. Conflicts that are usually triggered by religious differences and political hostilities are invisible in the text.

In *Altneuland*, Herzl indicates that "Zion is only Zion" when tolerance reigns. The novel depicts the future of Palestine in the 1920's, though the text was written in 1902. The emerging state or what Herzl calls "the New Society" is cosmopolitan, and the Arabs have their place in Herzl's Old New Land: "Our motto must be now and forever: You are my brother". Herzl's narrative reveals that the

1 According to the *New York Review of Books*, *Altneuland (Old New Land)* is a utopian novel by Theodor Herzl (1860 – 1904), the founder of political Zionism. Outlining Herzl's vision for a Jewish state in the Land of Israel, this book became one of Zionism's establishing texts. It was translated into Hebrew as Tel Aviv, which directly influenced the choice of the same name for the Jewish-Zionist Jaffa suburb founded in 1909, which was to become a major Israeli city. This book was originally published in 1902 in German as *Altneuland*. This edition has updated translations of location-places, to conform better with modern usage. *Old New Land* is a nineteenth century utopian blueprint for a modern state of Israel.

return of the Jews to Palestine will not create any kind of conflict with the Arabs. The New Society is expected to stretch to include Beirut, Damascus, and other parts of the Arab world. The Arabs will be part of the emerging state in which God may be worshipped in “a temple, mosque, art museum or in a concert by the philharmonic”.

For example, the Jews who emigrated from Russia to Palestine built a modern colony [*Kibbutz*] in a spot which used to be a swamp. In the Zionist settlement of Neudorf, Rabbi Shmuel played a heroic role in the process of modernization. He was also “the comforter of the people of Neudorf, most of whom had come from Russia to take up the struggle with the ancient soil”. When the Russian immigrants came to the village, this fertile plain was still wasteland; the plain of Asochis over there—behind the mountain range to the north—was covered with swamps and the broad Valley of Jezreel to the south still showed the effects of age-long neglect” (124)².

Herzl’s narrative is packed with numerous references to many Zionists pioneers who participated in the establishment of the New Society, particularly Joseph Levy. He is a key Zionist character in the novel, and one of the Zionists who contributed to the implementation of Herzl’s project in Palestine: “Representatives of all kinds of industries call on him. He has contacts with England, Germany, France, and particularly with America.” (133). Levy was the first Jew “who thought of negotiating with large firms in England, France, and Germany before the beginning of our immigration” (148). Mr. Levy played a central role in the pre-immigration period: I established general headquarters in London at once, and appointed as department heads men whom either I knew personally, or who came highly recommended. There was Smith for passenger traffic, Steineck for construction, Rubenz for freight, Warszawski for purchasing machinery, Alladino for land purchase, Kohn and Brownstone for the commissariat, Harburger for seeds and saplings, Leonkin for the accounting department. Wellner was my general secretary. I name them as they occur to me. (142).

In addition to his assistance in transferring European civilization to Palestine, Levy paved the way for the settlement of the holy land. He describes the dynamics of the immigration plan: »The first thing I did was to send Alladino to Palestine to buy up all the available land. He was a Sephardic Jew who traced his pedigree from a family whose ancestors had been among those expelled from Spain. I knew that the inscrutable Alladino could not be outwitted even by the shrewdest of real estate agents” (142). Levy sheds more light on the mechanism

2 All subsequent citations from the novel will be taken from the following edition: Herzl, Theodore. *Altneuland (Old New Land)*. Trans. Lotta Levensohn. Bloch Publishing Co. and Herzl Press: New York, 1941.

which brought about the construction of the Zionist project in Palestine: »I divided a map of Palestine into small squares, which I numbered. It was kept in my office, and an exact copy given to Alladino. He was simply to wire me the numbers of the parcels he had bought, and so I knew from hour to hour just how much land we already owned, and what kind of land it was” (143). In a related context, Levy proudly affirms that he was cooperating with “the Zionist district groups in Russia, Roumania, Galicia, and Algiers. All we needed was a record of the local Zionist groups arranged by districts and countries.” (145). He adds that “while the local Zionist groups were selecting their best human material for Palestine”, English, French, and German firms established “branches in Haifa, Jaffa, Jericho, and before the gates of Jerusalem” (149).

In his comments on the reaction of the native Palestinians to the Zionist immigration, Levy states: “These Palestinian Orientals were puzzled: Grave camels stopped stock still, and shook their heads” (149). He proceeds: “The native Arabs were taken by surprise at the advent of the Zionist immigration. The natives were astonished at the sudden appearance of Occidental goods in the country, and at first could find no explanation for the marvel” (150). Apparently, the Arabs of Palestine who were not marginalized during the process of colonization were thankful to the Zionists who brought civilization and European products to this part of the world: “The natives began to buy at once, and word of the new bazaars spread quickly to Damascus and Aleppo, to Bagdad and the Persian Gulf. The customers streamed in on all sides” (150).

In *Altneuland*, Herzl states that by the end of the nineteenth century humanity had already achieved a high degree of technical skill. The Jewish immigrants had to transplant existing inventions to the Palestinian frontier. The person who plays a significant role in bringing technology to the holy land is a Jewish engineer named, Steineck. Even in »Old-New-Land« it had been no more possible to change the laws of Nature than the nature of man. But, with the progress of civilization, men had come to understand natural forces better, and had learned how to utilize them. »The real founders of 'Old-New-Land,'« according to David Littwak, »were the hydraulic engineers. There was everything in having the swamps drained, the arid tracts irrigated, and a system of power supply installed” (175). In a related context, David highly appreciates the efforts of the Zionist pioneers who participated in the economic development of the New Society by bringing European products to the holy land and renewed the Hebrew currency, the shekel which is equal to a French franc: “When the Jewish immigration to Palestine began on a large scale, there was a sudden and enormous demand for merchandise. We had not yet produced anything, and needed everything. This was known to the whole world, because the Jewish immigration took place in the full light of day.” (94).

In Herzl's novel, the frontier is not meant to describe a border region, the outermost boundary or fringe of civilized settlement or the area where Zionist colonizers thrived to modernize the neglected land of Palestine but it refers to the entire land of Palestine. The frontier in Herzl's narrative has become a metaphor for an ever-receding illusive boundary line that was sometimes imagination and sometimes territorial reality. Metaphorically, the frontier is associated with sacrifice, idealism, individualism and the spiritual quest of the Zionist pioneers – the quest for freedom and unity. David Littwak depicted the New Society as a socialist utopia. He envisioned a community rising in the Land of Israel on a cooperative basis utilizing science and technology in the development of the Land. He told his European guests: Nothing on earth is perfect, not even our New Society. We content ourselves with making our young people physically fit (75).

In Herzl's fiction, the Palestinian frontier is not only a geographical concept but it is also an intellectual/spiritual reality which significantly contributed to the making of the inhabitants of the New Society. Herzl idealizes the frontier, identifying it as a continuous process of exploration and modernization which brings prosperity and happiness, simultaneously, to the Zionist pioneers escaping from European persecution, and to the native Palestinians struggling to escape from ages of poverty and backwardness. For Herzl, the virgin landscape of Palestine, which was neglected for centuries, has provided unlimited opportunities of success and prosperity for the Jewish immigrants and the native inhabitants of the land. When the first European Zionist-Friedrich-arrived in Palestine, accompanied by his German benefactor- Kingscourt- they found a wasteland: "Over the distant horizon loomed the deforested hills of Judaea. The bare slopes and the bleak, rocky valleys showed few traces of present or former cultivation" (42). They "hurried away from Jaffa, and went up to Jerusalem on the miserable railway. "If this is our land," remarked Friedrich sadly, "it has declined like our people." (43).

In the beginning, the Jewish immigrant who came from Europe was more authentically westernized, due to the experience of living in the West for centuries. For the new immigrant, Europe was the area of civilization, the home country from which s/he emigrated, and whose ways they had rejected in favor of the wilderness of Palestine. On the new frontier, the process of transformation took place, and the European Jew became the native son of the New Society. In the new immigrant community: "The words of Solomon glowed with a new vitality: The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. I have surely built. Thee a house of habitation, a place for Thee to dwell in forever" (187). After the interaction with the landscape of Palestine, the Jews were metamorphosed into Zionists deeply rooted in Palestinian soil. Even the German lord, Kingscourt, was impacted by his experience on the new frontier. The narrator "swore that he [Kingscourt] a Christian German nobleman, was becoming thoroughly »judaized« (171).

Unequivocally, the new frontier experience had begun with an escape from anti-Semitism and a search for the promised land³ but ended in a discovery of culture and lost identity. Restoring the ancient land of Palestine became synonymous with a search for values, history, and traditions. The first Jewish immigrants saw in Palestine an opportunity to regenerate their religious faith, their spirits, and the power of the Temple of Solomon. When Kingscourt and Friedrich approach “the Valley of Jehoshaphat” near Jerusalem, Friedrich became emotional: “I thought it was just something in the Bible. Here our Lord and Savior walked. »Jerusalem!« cried Friedrich in a half-whisper, his voice trembling. He did not understand why the sight of this strange city affected him so powerfully. Was it the memory of words heard in early childhood? Memories of Seder services of long-forgotten years stirred in him. One of the few Hebrew phrases he still knew rang in his ears: »Leshana Ha-baa be-Yerushalayim,«-«Next Year in Jerusalem!« (42). In the New Society, the Jews looked different simply because they were no longer ashamed of being Jews: “It was not only beggars and derelicts and relief applicants who professed Judaism in a suspiciously one-sided solidarity. No! The strong, the free, the successful Jews had returned home, and received more than they gave” (187). The narrator proceeds: “Other nations were still grateful to them when they produced some great thing; but the Jewish people asked nothing of its sons except not to be denied. The world is grateful to every great man when he brings it something; only the paternal home thanks the son who brings nothing but himself” (188).

JEWISH IMMIGRANTS ON THE PALESTINIAN FRONTIER

The story of Zionism started with the foundation of a homeland for the Jews in Palestine⁴. The journey of the European Jews eastward to settle on the Palestinian frontier and establish the state of Israel has been considered as an integral part of Jewish culture and history. In *Altneuland*, the Palestinian frontier, since its inception in the late nineteenth-century, has been associated with the development and civilization brought by European Jewish immigrants to Palestine. The new frontier has the capacity to liquidize divisions, smash separate identities and forge them into one. Interaction with the frontier creates a way of life that is authentically Jewish. Attending a musical composition, “Sabbatai levi” at the opera in Palestine,

3 Like Herzl, Chaim Weizmann argues that “there is a country which happens to be called Palestine, a country without a people, and, on the other hand, there exists the Jewish people, and it has no country” (cited in Eisenzweig, p. 282).

4 In *The Jewish State*, Herzl argues that he attempted to gain the approval of Sultan Abdul-Hamid to grant Palestine to the Jews in return for regulating “the whole finance of Turkey” (*The Jewish State* 30) but His Majesty rejected the offer saying to Herzl’s messenger: “Let the Jews save their billions. When my empire is partitioned, they might get Palestine for nothing” (*The Jewish State* 78).

Friedrich listened to the music and meditated on the thoughts it inspired, the significance of the Temple flashed upon him: "In the days of King Solomon, it had been a gorgeous symbol, adorned with gold and precious stones, attesting to the might and the pride of Israel. In the taste of those days, it had been decorated with costly bronze, and paneled with olive, cedar, and cypress—a joy to the eye of the beholder", however, the Jews could not have been grieving for it for *eighteen centuries*. Surely, they could not have been spending all this time mourning for a mere piece of ruined masonry. But, in the text, the Jews "sighed for an invisible something of which the stones had been a symbol. It had come back to rest in the rebuilt Temple, where stood the home returning sons of Israel who lifted up their souls to the invisible God as their fathers had done upon Mount Moriah" (189).

The Palestinian frontier witnessed the transformation of Friedrich, the European immigrant, who told his German friend in the beginning of the narrative "I have no connection with Palestine. I have never been there. It does not interest me. My ancestors left it eighteen hundred years ago. What should I seek there? I think that only anti-Semites can call Palestine our fatherland« (39). In the opera, Friedrich, who was brought up in the Jewish Ghettoes of Europe became aware of Jewish history. He realized that the Sabbatai Zevi "was a false messiah who appeared in Turkey in the seventeenth century. He succeeded in creating a large movement among the Oriental Jews, but in the end he himself became a renegade from Judaism and ended ignominiously« (97). Apparently, the Palestinian frontier experience played a significant role in purging the Jewish consciousness from European impacts transforming it into a new Zionist identity. It was the frontier spirit of adventure that liberated the Jewish genius from the dead land of the past. The new frontier was dynamic as it shifted with time and socio-economic desiderata. Moreover, the Zionist immigrants placed Palestine on the map of the modern, civilized world: "The great European express lines all connect with the Jerusalem line, just as the Palestinian railways in turn link up with Egypt and Northern Africa. The north-to south African railway (in which the German emperor was interested as long ago as the 1890's) and the Siberian railway to the Chinese border, complete the railway system of the Old World" (77).

It was the frontier experience which allowed the immigrants to overcome the trauma of persecution in Europe and transcend other cultural complexes. On the geographical frontier, Jews descending from different cultures meet and interact with other races—Arabs, Orientals, and Greeks. The new Palestinian frontier was thronged with people from all parts of the world: "Brilliant Oriental robes mingled with the sober costumes of the Occident, but the latter predominated. There were many Chinese, Persians, and Arabs in the streets, but the city itself seemed thoroughly European. One might easily imagine himself in some Italian port. The brilliant blue of sky and sea was reminiscent of the Riviera, but the buildings were

much cleaner and more modern. The traffic, though lively, was far less noisy” (59). The frontier interface becomes a hybridizing zone, the crucible and the catalyst which brings to a glorious mixture both settler and native, colonizer and colonized who attribute to form the national character of The New Society which is constructed on European values of tolerance and ethics of volunteering.

According to David Littwak, “All members of the New Society, men and women alike, are obligated to give two years to the service of the community. The usual thing is to give the two years between eighteen and twenty-after completing their studies. (I want to add, by the way, that education is free to the children of our members from the kindergarten through the university” (74). David points out that in the New Society “The men in the employ of the New Society worked only several hours a day, but they concentrated all their strength into those seven hours. They laid roads, dug canals, built houses, cleared stones from the fields that were to be plowed with electric plows, planted trees” (165). He affirms the Utopian vision of an emerging state built by Zionist immigrants in Palestine: “We are merely a society of citizens seeking to enjoy life through work and culture” (75). In the New Society, poverty is abolished and the bread of the poor is as cheap as the bread of the rich. In a pre-Zionist Palestine, the landlords used to exploit hundreds of thousands of people who work in the field of agriculture but the New Society liberated the poor Arabs from these inherited burdens.

In a post-Zionist Palestine, the New Society achieved numerous contributions in the area of agriculture, where “vegetables are shipped to all parts of Europe-to Paris, Berlin, Moscow, and St. Petersburg-by rail” (111). In their tour across the country, Kingscourt told Friedrich reached the extensive plain, which was thickly sown with wheat and oats, maize and hops, poppies and tobacco. There were trim villages and farmsteads in the valley and on the hillsides. Cows and sheep grazed ruminating in succulent meadows. Here and there great iron farm machines gleamed in the sunshine. The whole landscape was peaceful and joyous (121). During their first excursion in Palestine, Kingscourt and Friedrich visited the agricultural communities established by the early Jewish immigrants who came from Russia to Palestine. They were told that »the colonization movement began after the persecutions in Russia in the early 1880's. But, there are villages more remarkable than ours. There's Katrah, for instance, founded by university students who forsook their books for the plow.« (47).

Thanks to the efforts of the Jewish immigrants, huge industrial projects were implemented on the frontier. Near larger towns such as Tiberias, “industrial activities predominate and the farming is more or less incidental”. In the coastal zone, “which is very much like the Riviera, they grow (as in the vicinity of Nice) tomatoes, artichokes, melons..... etc.” (111). In terms of the establishment of mega-projects, a Zionist engineer called Fischer introduced his plans for his greatest

work: the canal from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea in which he utilized the difference in levels very cleverly (150). Furthermore, the Zionist modernizing project takes gigantic proportions in terms of the construction of a trans-continental railway system. The narrator illustrates: We made sure of a coast-line railway southward from Jaffa to Port Said and northward to Beirut, via Caesarea, Haifa, Tyre and Sidon, with a junction at Damascus. After that came the new line to Jerusalem; the Jordan Valley trunk line with spurs to the east and one to the west to Lake Kinneret; the Lebanon lines (151).

The New Society not only achieved industrial progress where “under our streets, tunnels have been provided for the reception of all kinds of pipes and cables” (87) but also utilized economic, industrial and agricultural sciences to enhance the prosperity of the Jewish population and serve the interests of the local natives: “The whole merit of our New Society is merely that it fostered the creation and development of the co-operatives by providing credits, and—what was even more important—by educating the masses to make use of them” (81). The co-operative method has become one of the strongest motives pushing toward the development and prosperity of the New Society. The New Society also advocated the co-operative method which serves the interests of the working class and the poor native community. Davis states: “I see in the New Society nothing but a syndicate of co-operative societies, a large syndicate which comprises all industry and commerce within itself, keeps the welfare of the workers in mind, and fosters the ideal for practical reasons” (220). He adds: »We are simply a large co-operative association composed of affiliated co-operatives. And this, our congress, is really nothing more than the general assembly of the co-operative association which is called the New Society” (215).

The advance of the Palestinian frontier has been synonymous with the growing stature, power and moral profundity of the Zionist immigrants. It was the frontier experience which brought prosperity and civilization to a pre-historic country. Unlike a pre-Zionist Palestine where there was no medical service, the New Society provides “medical aid to the sick, and finds work for the well” and “the various hospitals are connected with the charity headquarters by telephone” (73). Dr. Sascha, the Russian Jewish immigrant describes the medical achievements in the New Society: “When we come to Jerusalem large numbers of people, gentlemen, have had their eyesight saved or restored there. You can imagine what a benefaction that clinic is for the Orient. People come to it from all over Northern Africa and Asia. The blessings bestowed by our medical institutions have won us more friends in Palestine and the neighboring countries than all our industrial and technical progress» (105).

Explicitly, the Zionist achievements on the Palestinian frontier transformed a primitive land into a civilized country which becomes at the center of world tourism industry: “In the meantime, the tourist manager reserved accommodations for five hundred guests at first-class hotels in Italy, Egypt, Asia Minor and Greece,

and provided them with tickets on the Italian railways (they were to embark either at Naples or at Genoa, as they chose). Outwardly, the expedition resembled the pleasure tours of the Near East" (161). In addition to the contributions in the sphere of tourism, the New Society made progress in the political domain: "Candidates announce their desire to stand for election in the newspapers themselves. Each subscription slip has a coupon attached which serves as a ballot" (83). Unlike surrounding Arab countries governed by dictatorial regimes where personal liberties are confiscated, the New Society embraced the freedom of the press: "Newspapers founded and conducted by private individuals" (84). Nevertheless, in the democratic Utopia of the New Society, there are evil people with radical views who push toward the establishment of a purely Zionist state. One of them is Rabbi Dr. Geyer, who will pose as the rival of David Littwak in the presidential elections.

The Palestinian frontier enabled David to achieve the Zionist dream. David, who descends from the poorest Jewish classes in Vienna, is nominated to compete in the presidential elections in the New Society. Due to the potential provided by the new frontier, David becomes a member of the well-to-do class, an owner of a ship and a multi-national company. His family members were among the first immigrants who were swept along with the general tide of prosperity after they settled in Tiberias where they used to celebrate Jewish rituals such as "the Seder". By the end of the narrative, David will be elected as the president of the New Society. In *Altneuland*, Herzl states that on the new frontier "the penniless young intelligentsia, for whom there were no opportunities in the anti-Semitic countries and who sank to the level of a hopeless, revolutionary-minded proletariat, these desperate, educated young men had become a great blessing for Palestine, for they had brought the latest methods of applied science into the country" (117).

Throughout *Altneuland*, using the perspective of David Littwak, one of its central characters, Herzl delineates Palestine as a new frontier invaded by enthusiastic Jewish settlers "who streamed into the country, had brought with them the experience of the whole civilized world. The trained men graduated from universities, technical, agricultural and commercial colleges had brought with them every type of skill required for building up the country" (118). Throughout the novel, Herzl confirms his view that Palestine is originally a Jewish land restored by Zionists. One of the immigrant Russian farmers at the Zionist colony of Neudorf emphasized: "It was always known that we Jews are a people, and that Palestine is the land of our ancestors" (126). Apparently, Herzl's motto "land without people for a people without land"⁵ (Goldman 1955: 6) attempts to justify the immigration

5 Herzl summarized the Jewish question as follows: There is a people without a country (the Jews) and there is a country without a people (Palestine) and the Jewish problem could be solved by transporting "the landless people into the un-peopled land".

of European Jews to Palestine on the basis of their lack to a homeland and the discrimination and persecution they suffered in Europe.

HERZL'S UTOPIA AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE ZIONIST DREAM

The events of the novel start in a Jewish suburb in Vienna at the end of the nineteenth-century. The readers are introduced to Dr. Friedrich Loewenberg, an educated young Jew who had a doctorate in law but like other European Jews did not find a job due to dominant anti-Semitic sentiments sweeping the European continent. Sunk in deep melancholy, he "sat at a round marble table in one of the most charming of Viennese cafes" where he remembers one of his Jewish friends, Oswald, who "went to Brazil to help in founding a Jewish labor settlement" (5) but he died there after catching yellow fever. Friedrich also lamented the current conditions of the unemployed Jewish "physicians, newly baked jurists, freshly graduated engineers" who "had completed their professional studies, and now they had nothing to do" (6). Friedrich also suffers from feelings of frustration and disappointment because he fails to marry a rich girl who belongs to the upper class: "If I were to ask Ernestine Loeffler's father for her hand, he would probably laugh at me. I am a mere lawyer's assistant, with a salary of forty gulden a month" (8).

The opening part of the novel overflows with references to European Jewish characters who are divided into three categories: well-established rich Jews who work in commercial and industrial activities, middle class Jews equipped with skills and academic degrees but are unemployed, and also a poor class, the inhabitants of the Jewish ghettos and slums. The reader confronts characters such as Mr. Leopold Weinberger, member of the firm of Samuel Weinberger and Sons of Bruenn and Mr. Laschner, one of the most important men on the stock exchange as well as Gruen and Blau, the two wittiest men in Vienna. Other Jewish figures such as Mr. Schlesinger, the representative of Baron Goldstein, the renowned banker, appeared in the opening part of the novel. The narrative also refers to, Mr. and Mrs. Loeffler, Mr. Weinberger, Mrs. Laschner, Dr. Walter, a lawyer, and Dr. Weiss, a rabbi from a provincial town in Moravia who refers to Zionism early in the novel as a political system aiming to rescue European Jews from persecution⁶: »A new movement has arisen within the last few years, which is called Zionism. Its aim is to solve the Jewish problem through colonization on a large scale. All who can no longer bear their present lot will return to our old home, to Palestine« (16).

6 Herzl summarized the Jewish question as follows: There is a people without a country (the Jews) and there is a country without a people (Palestine) and the Jewish problem could be solved by transporting "the landless people into the un-peopled land".

The reader is also introduced to the poor Jewish family of Hayim Littwak, the peddler, his wife, Rebecca, his daughter Miriam and his ambitious son David who will play a key role in the immigrant Jewish community in Palestine. Occasionally, According to the incidents of *Altneuland*, Friedrich occasionally provides financial assistance to the impoverished family of the Littwaks, who live in abject poverty in the Jewish Ghetto of Vienna. The Littwaks escaped from Eastern Europe to settle in an impoverished ghetto in Vienna. The narrator describes the first visit of Friedrich to this miserable Jewish family: The Littwaks' one-windowed room, too, was in darkness, though the woman was awake and sitting upright on her straw pallet. Friedrich noticed that the narrow room contained no stick of furniture whatever. Not a chair, table, or cupboard. On the window sill were a few small bottles and some broken pots. It was a picture of deepest poverty. A whimpering baby lay at the woman's flabby breast. The mother stared at him anxiously out of her hollow eyes (25). During the visit, Young David told Friedrich about his dream of immigrating and settling in Palestine: "I shall go to the Land of Israel with my parents and Miriam. That is our country. There we can be happy« (27).

The action of the novel moves forward and Schiffmann, one of Friedrich's Jewish friends, showed him an advertisement in a paper made by a German nobleman, Mr. Kingscourt. The German millionaire made his fortune in America, bought an island in the pacific and he is looking for "an educated, desperate young man willing to make a last experiment with his life". The rich German seeks a partner to accompany him in his Journey to stay in a remote island in the South Pacific, "a rocky little nest in Cook's Archipelago". He wants to live in isolation from human beings after his wife betrayed him by involving herself in an illicit sexual affair with his nephew. Friedrich met with Kingscourt and accepted the challenge. They sailed in Kingscourt's amazing yacht in their journey to the deserted island: "The yacht was rolling on the waters of Trieste harbor. The two men made their final purchases for the long journey in the town" (37). Near the island of Crete, Kingscourt told Friedrich: »Your fatherland lies ahead of us -Palestine« and encouraged him to visit Palestine before he "says farewell to the world". In the beginning, Friedrich was hesitant: "I have no connection with Palestine. I have never been there. It does not interest me. My ancestors left it eighteen hundred years ago" (39). Succumbing to the persuasion of Kingscourt and remembering David Littwak's emphatic statement about his intention to stay in his fatherland, Friedrich accepts to make an excursion in Palestine.

From the very beginning of the text, Palestine is depicted as a Jewish territory, the fatherland of Friedrich and David Littwak: "The prow of the yacht was turned toward Jaffa. Kingscourt and Friedrich spent several days in the old land of the Jews" (Herzl 1941:41). The two men were appalled by the backwardness and miserable conditions of the holy land. They spent few days visiting major Palestinian

cities including Jerusalem, then, they resumed their journey to the South Pacific island where they would stay for twenty-one years. Afterwards, Kingscourt and Friedrich decided to return to Europe. On their way back to Europe, they stopped at the harbor of Jaffa for the second time and decided to make a tour across the holy land. This time, they found a completely different Palestine populated by immigrating European Jews and Zionists who came from different European countries bringing civilization and advancement to a decadent country. The rest of the narrative strikingly displays the wide differences between the primitiveness of a pre-Zionist Palestine and the ultra-civilized Palestine in the post-Zionist era. Stunned by the civilized modernity of the Zionist Utopian state in Palestine, which was established in twenty-one years by Jewish pioneers, Kingscourt and Friedrich decided to join what Herzl calls "the New Society".

When the first European settlers -Kingscourt and Friedrich- arrived in a pre-Zionist Jaffa, they were appalled by the repulsive scenes of the dirty city and its rough people: "Jaffa made a very unpleasant impression upon them. The town was in a state of extreme decay. Landing was difficult in the forsaken harbor. The alleys were dirty and neglected, full of vile odors" (41). In *Altneuland*, the native inhabitants of the country constitute a primitive minority of backward folks: "Everywhere misery in bright Oriental rags. Poor Turks, dirty Arabs lounged about-indolent, beggarly and hopeless. A peculiar, tomblike odor of mold caught one's breath"(42). Moving from the city of Jaffa to Jerusalem, the visitors-Kingscourt and Friedrich- were shocked by the deterioration of the holy city: "They hurried away from Jaffa, and went up to Jerusalem on the miserable railway. "If this is our land," remarked Friedrich sadly, "it has declined like our people." (43). On the way leading to the city of Jerusalem Friedrich and Kingscourt were thunderstruck by the dirty appearance of the natives: "The inhabitants of the blackish Arab villages looked like brigands. Naked children played in the dirty alleys" (42). In Jerusalem, they were upset by the inhospitable spectacle of the ancient city: "Jerusalem by daylight was less alluring-shouting, odors, a flurry of dirty colors, crowds of ragged people in narrow, musty lanes, beggars, sick people, hungry children, screeching women, shouting tradesmen. The once royal city of Jerusalem could have sunk no lower (43).

Herzl's narrative indicates that the Zionist immigrants are ordained by God to create an idealistic society on the land which witnessed "the miracles of Moses". The narrative refers to the moral responsibility of the Zionist immigrants to bring civilization to the primitive land of Palestine. According to Herzl's novel, the colonized Palestinians gained benefits from the process of colonization because the colonizers came to civilize a wasteland country. The native Palestinians, according to Herzl's narrative, lived in a country inhabited by other Oriental races in addition to the Greeks. When Prince Hohenlohe, Imperial Chancellor of Prussia,

asked Herzl who dwells on the lands that Herzl intended to purchase in Palestine, Herzl responded, "Oh, the whole mixed multitude of the Orient, Arabs, Greeks" (Eisenzweig 1981: 281). When the first Europeans -Friedrich and Kingscourt-arrived in Palestine, they found a wasteland: "Over the distant horizon loomed the deforested hills of Judaea. The bare slopes and the bleak, rocky valleys showed few traces of present or former cultivation" (42).

The first wave of settlers who immigrated to Palestine came from Russia. The frontier of settlement proceeded in different directions and the expanding frontier was the line of the most rapid and effective Judaizing process of Palestine. During their visit to Jerusalem, Kingscourt and Friedrich met with one of the Zionist pioneers, who migrated from Russia. They met with him near the Wailing Wall: "Besides the praying beggars and the guides, there was present a gentleman in European clothing, who turned and spoke to them (44). After talking with him about the deterioration of the Jewish people in Diaspora, he replies: "If you ever come to us in Russia, you will realize that a Jewish nation still exists. We have a living tradition, a love of the past, and faith in the future. The best and most cultured men among us have remained true to Judaism as a nation" (45). The stranger is the Russian oculist, Dr. Eichenstamm, who came to Palestine with his daughter, Dr. Sascha, to provide eye treatment to the Russian Jews who newly immigrated to Palestine: "We are not here solely for pleasure, gentlemen. We are interested in eye diseases (46).

Sasha suggested that Kingscourt and Friedrich should visit the colonies established by the newly immigrant Jews in Palestine: »Our Jewish settlements, they are the most remarkable phenomenon in modern Jewish life" (45). Then, Sasha proceeds: "Societies in Europe and America, the so-called 'Lovers of Zion,' promote the transformation of Jews into farmers in this old land of ours. A number of such Jewish villages already exist. Several rich philanthropists have also contributed funds for the purpose. Our old soil is productive again. You must visit the Jewish villages before you leave Palestine« (46).

When Friedrich and Kingscourt reached the Jewish settlements, Eichenstamm told them that the colonization movement began in Palestine after the persecutions of the Jews in Russia⁷ in the early 1880's. Approaching the colonies, "they looked at Rishon-le-Zion, Rehobot, and other villages that lay like oases in the desolate countryside. Many industrious hands must have worked here to restore fertility to the soil, they realized, as they gazed upon well-cultivated fields,

7 By 1899, and during Sultan Abdul-Hamid's reign, nine Zionist settlements were already established in Palestine. These settlements helped to accommodate thousands of Russian Jews who escaped to Palestine as a result of their persecution in Russia after being accused of "the assassination of the Tsar Alexander the Second of Russia in 1882" according to the Zionist thinker Menachem Ussishkin (cited in Al-Swafiri p. 178).

stately vineyards and luxuriant orange groves.” (47). In the aftermath of their visit to the Jewish colonies in Palestine, the European visitors returned to the yacht in the harbor of Jaffa. They sailed toward Port Said in Egypt, where they anchored for a couple of days, then they crossed the Suez Canal and entered the Red Sea waters in December 1902 navigating their way toward the remote island in the South Pacific.

After spending twenty-one years on the South Pacific Island, the two friends—Friedrich and Kingscourt—decided to return to Europe. On their way back home, Kingscourt encouraged Friedrich to take a look at the lands of his “blessed ancestors”. They crossed the *Mediterranean*, and disembarked at Port Said but this time they found that people no longer travel to Asia via the Suez Canal. In Port Said, an Egyptian city located on the banks of the Suez Canal “the shabby bazaars no longer swarmed with the vivid, multicolored, polyglot pageant that had once been typical of the town. The most fashionable globe-trotters had been accustomed to pass through Port Said; but now, except for the natives, only a few half-drunken sailors lounged before the dirty cafes” (53). Friedrich and Kingscourt were told that travelers to Asia preferred to use Palestinian harbors rather than the Suez Canal. At the harbor of Port Said, Kingscourt and Friedrich “learned from the captain of a German trading vessel that traffic between Europe and Asia had taken a new route—via Palestine” (54). They told the German captain that twenty years ago Palestine was a forsaken country. The captain explains: “You’ll find fast boats to all the European and American ports at Haifa and Jaffa» (55).

THE IMAGE OF POST-ZIONIST PALESTINE

In a pre-Zionist Palestine, Jaffa was a dirty city, but in the aftermath of the Jewish/Zionist immigration to Palestine, the city was transformed into a modernized commercial hub: “A magnificent city had been built beside the sapphire blue Mediterranean. The magnificent stone dams showed the harbor for what it was: the safest and most convenient port in the eastern Mediterranean” (57). Arriving at the Jaffa harbor, they found “great ships, such as were already known at the end of the nineteenth century, lay anchored in the roadstead between Acco and the foot of the Carmel” (56). Instead of the cottages and dirty slums inhabited by the local population in the pre-Zionist era, “thousands of white villas gleamed out of luxuriant green gardens all the way from Acco to Mount Carmel”. The inhabitants of these villas are well-dressed and civilized European immigrants.

At the harbor of Jaffa, Kingscourt and Friedrich met with David Littwak, the poor Jew Friedrich has known at the Cafe Birkenreis of Vienna in the beginning of the narrative. David once more thanks Friedrich for the generous help which

saved his family from starvation more than twenty years ago. David has immigrated to Palestine and was able to achieve the Zionist dream in the land of the ancestors. Now he is a businessman and a ship owner. As their guide, David told Kingscourt and Friedrich that Jaffa housed colonial banks and the branch offices of European shipping companies. Jaffa which was a pre-historic city prior to Zionist immigration was transformed into a modern metropolis: "There were many Chinese, Persians and Arabs in the streets, but the city itself seemed thoroughly European. One might easily imagine himself in some Italian port" (59). In the post-Zionist era, the city is characterized by "the absence of draught animals from the streets. There was no hoof beat of horses, no crackling of whips, no rumbling of wheels". The European Jewish immigrants brought civilization to the city: "automobiles speeded noiselessly by on rubber tires, with only occasional toots of warning" in addition to "an electric overhead train" (60).

David took the guests -Kingscourt and Friedrich- in a tour around the Jaffa city in his luxurious car led by his driver, Friedrichsheim, a Jew originally from Vienna. David explained to the guests that Jewish immigration to Palestine was an inevitable historical process: "At the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth, life was made intolerable for us Jews« (62). Palestine provided the only safe refuge for Jews persecuted by European anti-Semitism: "The persecutions were social and economic. Jewish merchants were boycotted, Jewish workingmen starved out. Jew-hatred employed its newest as well as its oldest devices. The blood myth was revived" (63). David introduced other examples of Jewish hatred in Europe: The Jews were accused of poisoning the press, as in the Middle Ages, they had been accused of poisoning the wells. As workingmen, the Jews were hated by their Christian fellows for undercutting the wage standards. As business men, they were dubbed profiteers. They were forced out of government posts. The law courts were prejudiced against them. They were humiliated everywhere in civil life (64).

The only solution for the Jewish dilemma in Europe was provided by the Zionists who advocated immigration to the land of their ancestors. Eventually, "the Jewish immigration took place in the full light of day" (94). In Palestine, the early immigrants, according to David, decided to set up a "New Society on our precious old soil" (63). Herzl, in *Altneuland*, depicts a multi-cultural and religiously tolerant Utopian society constructed on the European models. David Littwak points out that in the New Society "we punish only those crimes and misdemeanors which were penalized in enlightened European states. Nothing is forbidden here that was not forbidden there" (92). Using David as a mouthpiece, Herzl explains: "The fundamental principles of humanitarianism are generally accepted among us. As far as religion goes, you will find Christian, Mohammedan, Buddhist, and Brahmin houses of worship near our own synagogues" (64). In a similar context,

David raises the issue of the holy shrines in Palestine during a talk with his European guests: "With the advent of Zionism at the end of the nineteenth century, the problem of the Holy Places came up. The Christian Holy Places have been held by non-Christians from time immemorial. Geoffrey of Bouillon and his knights grieved because Palestine was held by the Moslems". However, the Zionists, unlike the Muslims, prefer to detain the Christian Shrines in Palestine permanently as the common possession of Christendom. When you visit Nazareth or Jerusalem or Bethlehem you will see peaceful processions of pilgrims of all the nations" (121).

In the post-Zionist era, "Palestine has the same comforts as in the European large cities" (97). In the emerging Jewish state, the Arabs enjoy many benefits. Reschid Bey, a member of the New Society is introduced to Kingscourt and Friedrich as "a handsome man of thirty-five. He wore dark European clothing and a red fez. His salute to them was the Oriental gesture, which signifies lifting and kissing the dust" (65). He was educated in Germany and "his father was among the first to understand the beneficent character of the Jewish immigration". Reschid became rich because he kept pace with the economic progress of the emerging Zionist state. When Kingscourt asked Reschid about the attitudes of the former inhabitants, the numerous Moslem Arabs, toward the Zionist settlers who occupied their native land, he replied: Those who had nothing stood to lose nothing, and could only gain. And they did gain: Opportunities to work, means of livelihood, prosperity. Nothing could have been more wretched than an Arab village at the end of the nineteenth century. The peasants' clay hovels were unfit for stables. The children lay naked and neglected in the streets, and grew up like dumb beasts (114).

As a result of the Zionist immigration to Palestine, the barren land which was neglected for centuries by the Arabs and Turks was metamorphosed into a civilized community and thriving Jewish settlements. According to Reschid's narrative, the Arab Palestinians should be grateful to the Zionist settlers who turned the swamps and bare hills of Palestine into paradise transforming the Palestinian wasteland into a modern Utopia called the New Society. In a post-Zionist Palestine, modernized villages were constructed by immigrants. These villages "are scattered all over our prosperous land. Up yonder, in the Valley of Jezreel, for example, you must not expect to see the filthy nests that used to be called villages in Palestine (111).

When Kingscourt asked Reschid: "You Moslems. Don't you regard these Jews as intruders?", the latter responded: would you call a man a robber who takes nothing from you, but brings you something instead? The Jews have enriched us. Why should we be angry with them? They dwell among us like brothers. Why should we not love them? I have never had a better friend among my co-religionists than

David Littwak (115). Further, the Jewish immigrants are portrayed by Reschid as wise folks who used to “judge between the Arabs” at times of Arab-Arab hostilities: We Moslems have always had better relations with the Jews than you Christians. When the first Jewish colonists settled here half a century ago, Arabs went to the Jews to judge between them, and often asked the Jewish village councils for help and advice. There was no difficulty in that respect (116).

CONCLUSION

In colonial American literature, the colonizers justified colonization on the basis of a series of colonial myths such the Manifest Destiny myth, the cannibalistic/man-eating myth and the savagery-civilization equation. In *Altneuland*, Herzl ignores most of the mythology which provides justifications for the process of colonization. There are more than fifty passages in the old Testament which all refer to promises of the holy land. God had promised the Jews Canaan as their “ever-lasting covenant”: “To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit” (Psalm 105:1as 1, Cited in Gohar, 2001, p. 92). In the first book of Genesis, God appeared to Abraham and said to him: ‘Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you’. (Genesis 13:14-17, Cited in Gohar, 2001, p.39). However, Herzl’s Zionist project on the Palestinian frontier is not motivated by radical religious doctrines. It is not based on the sacredness of the Jews, or the holiness of the land or the divinity of the Torah. His project does not connote any messianic vision par excellence. While the idea of establishing a bi-national state in Palestine is apparent in Herzl’s novel, it becomes an impossibility in other Zionist narratives⁸. Writers such as Leon Uris for example did not want to make any compromise between the Arabs and the Jews but he insisted on a policy of power and strength. In *The Haj*, he depicted the Jews as the majority of population and consequently the ruling class unwilling to enter into negotiations and compromises with the Arabs⁹.

Herzl’s Zionist project primarily aims to find a solution for the European Jews jeopardized by the threats of genocide and anti-Semitism. Referring to the Jewish immigrants, who escaped from persecution in Europe, the narrator points out: “They had their own communities in the Ghettoes, to be sure; but there they lived

8 See Saddik Gohar: »Narratives of Colonialism, Race and Ideology in Leon Uris’s *The Haj*. *Studies in Islam and the Middle East* Vol.3.1 (2006): 1-16.

9 See Saddik Gohar: »The Distortion of the Arab-Israeli Conflict in Contemporary American Fiction: A Study of *the Haj*«. *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies* Vol. 8 (2007): 31-48.

under oppression. In the Judengasse, they had been without honor and without rights; and when they left it, they ceased to be Jews. Freedom and a sense of solidarity were both needed. Only then could the Jews erect a House to the Almighty God Whom children envision thus and wise men so, but who is everywhere present as the Will-to-Good” (189). Therefore, the frontier is a shaping force underpinning the social, cultural, moral, economic and political norms that provided a basis for the Jewish immigration to the land of the forefathers. On the frontier, the Diaspora Jews regained their history and cultural identity: “Jews had prayed in many temples, splendid and simple, in all the languages of the Diaspora. The invisible God, the Omnipresent, must have been equally near to them everywhere. Yet only here was the true Temple because only here had the Jews built up a free commonwealth in which they could strive for the loftiest human aims” (187).

The policy of the Zionist pioneers who came to modernize Palestine is not shaped by extreme religious ideologies or ethnic doctrines. They were triggered by the spirit of pragmatism and optimism cherished by the immigrants who escape from annihilation. In part one of the narrative, Kingscourt told Friedrich: Everything needful for the making of a better world exists already. And do you know, man, who could show the way? You! You Jews! Just because you're so badly off. You've nothing to lose. You could make the experimental land for humanity. Over yonder, where we were, you could create a new commonwealth. On that ancient soil, Old-New-Land! (50). In *Altneuland*, Herzl did not push vehemently for the colonization and settlement of Palestine but he was seeking for a safe asylum for the persecuted European Jews. He was convinced that the return of the Jews to their native land is necessary and desirable.

Nevertheless, Herzl was more convinced that the creation of settlement societies and the support of the working class to establish a complex of agricultural colonies were both a dream and moral duty toward the immigrants and the native community. Unlike radical colonial narratives which exclude the colonized natives, *Altneuland* assimilates the Arab population into the New Society. The Muslim Arab community, represented by Reschid Bey's family played a crucial role in The New Society. Reschid Bey, the Palestinian and his wife, Fatma are members of the New Zionist Society. Reschid plays an important role in internal politics and he was a vehement supporter of David Littwak during the presidential elections.

In western colonial narratives, eliminating the colonized subaltern is crucial for the fulfillment of the process of colonization¹⁰. Though slightly affected by Biblical promises and religious mythology about the Promised Land, Herzl's

10 See Saddik Gohar: “The Palestinian Question in *the Haj*”. *Tanta Faculty of Arts Journal* (January - 1995): 73-114.

Zionist project did not follow the policies of European colonialism par excellence. Throughout the text, Herzl refers to the establishment of a society rather than an independent Jewish state. David Littwak told Kingscourt: "Nothing on earth is perfect, not even our New Society. We have no state, like the Europeans of your time" (75). This approach was rejected by militant Zionists¹¹ who rejected Herzl's narrative on the basis that it propagates for a multi-national society rather than a purely Jewish state. In *Altneuland*, Herzl does not consider the founding of Israel as part of a holy plan or a salvation process which includes the occupation and settlement of all Eretz Israel. While western colonization is forced by brutal military force, the emerging immigrant community in Palestine does not have an army or any similar repressive apparatus. Unlike European imperialist policies in overseas colonies which endorsed genocidal campaigns against native populations, Herzl's project does not aim to uproot the indigenous Palestinians or remove them out of their land but he wants to integrate them in the New Society. In this context, *Altneuland*, unlike colonial texts, does not introduce what Jean-Francoise Lyotard calls "grand narrative" (Lyotard 1979:23) simply because it is not shaped by radical political perspectives or extreme Zionist agendas.

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Saddik Mohamed Gohar
United Arab Emirates University, UAE
s.gohor@uaeu.ac.ae



V iskanju sionističnega sna na palestinski meji: kritičen pristop k Herzlovemu romanu *Altneuland*

Članek kritično obravnava kanonični sionistični roman Theodora Herzla, *Altneuland / Old New Land* kot narativ o meji, saj predstavlja process judovskega priseljevanja v Palestino kot neizbežen zgodovinski process, ki poskuša rešiti evropske Žide pred preganjanjem in vzpostaviti večnacionalno utopijo na palestinskem ozemlju, kot egalitarno in kozmopolit-sko skupnost Judov, Arabcev in drugih skupnosti.

Ključne besede: sionizem, meja, priseljevanje, Palestina, Narativ, judovska zgodovina, kolonizacija.

“We princes are set on stages” Performing Power in Elizabethan England

Elke Mettinger

Abstract

The aim of this article is to explore Elizabeth's performative power as manifesting itself on the scaffold and on the stage, in royal portraits and processions. Drawing on Foucault and new historicism, it will discuss the Queen's reliance on spectacle and ambiguity to enhance her authority and reach the population at large.

Key words: Elizabeth I, spectacle, ambiguity of power, Foucault, Shakespeare, *Henry V*

This paper will focus on sovereign power in Elizabethan England as it manifests itself on the scaffold and on the stage, in royal portraits and processions. Drawing on Foucault and new historicism it sets out to discuss the question of how much Elizabeth – through the media and discursive practices of her time – relies on visibility, theatricality and paradox to enhance her authority. While the scaffold and the stage, highlighting the conflation of punitive and theatrical modes, operate with displays of state power, royal portraits and processions expose the monarch herself to the public gaze – in iconographic and real modes.

THE SCAFFOLD

Foucault in his *Discipline and Punish* traces the development from bodily torture as a public spectacle making state power visible in the medieval and early modern periods to carceral institutions shifting the focus of control to the mind. He claims that the public execution is not only a judicial, but also a political ritual that makes power manifest. The crime attacks its victim and ultimately the sovereign whose power is restored in the punishment (Foucault 47–48). Hence, the public execution is meant to show “the dissymmetry between the subject who has dared to violate the law and the all-powerful sovereign who displays his strength” (49).

Foucault identifies the people watching as the main characters in the spectacle of the scaffold, whose ambiguous roles are seeing, being made afraid, participating, witnessing and guaranteeing the punishment. He also mentions the possible inversion of the executions, which reveal aspects of carnival, with authority being mocked and criminals becoming heroes. Thus, the role of the crowd un masks sovereign power as fragile and vulnerable. And in the long run it becomes obvious that the executions do not even frighten the people. The criminal has nothing to lose in the face of death and thus entertains the cheering crowd with curses and blasphemies. As for the gallows speeches Foucault is skeptical about their honest acknowledgement of crime and punishment, seeing the pamphlets that have come down to us as mostly fictional speeches later printed and circulated for the purpose of suggesting ideological control (57–68).

Jonathan Sharpe’s “Last Dying Speeches” is a Foucauldian reading of 17th century English executions as a theatre of punishment. The victim’s stereotyped farewell speech does not address the crime in question but gives a general account of past sinfulness, with the purpose of warning future delinquents, to make visible – and audible – the internalisation of obedience and the state’s ideological control, to make those about to be executed acknowledge the justice of their punishment. They play their part via this last speech while the watching crowds are indispensable for the legitimization of the execution (Sharpe 158–163), which would be

murder without the crowd as witness. The spectacular public execution is so to speak a moral imperative (Höfele 49-50).

The dramatic performance on the scaffold is a principal method of demonstrating the power of the state and asserting its legitimacy. It is meant to show the people that crime does not pay although the deterrent effects should not be overestimated (Sharpe 166-167), if we consider the huge number of executions conducted for centuries from the Elizabethan period onward. Public executions and hangings at Tyburn amount to 6160 during Elizabeth's reign (Smith 217). There are very few remaining unrepentant and obviously very few last minute reprieves under Elizabeth I. These pardons may also have reminded the people of royal power, as Thomas Laqueur acknowledges in "Crowds, Carnival and the State in English Executions" (325), which also refers to the post-Elizabethan period, but his and Sharpe's central tenets apply to the 16th century as well. Laqueur focuses on the carnivalesque aspect of these spectacles, on their openness and unpredictability. The whole atmosphere borders on the risible and chaotic with executions often failing their purpose of demonstrating state authority as they are random occasions, held in unfavourable locations. Tyburn is a desolate place outside a barnyard and quite in line with carnival beyond the borders of civilisation, thus having little potential for state power, signs of which are strikingly absent from the execution scene. And strangely enough, the state seems to lack interest and authorial control and hardly tries to direct the behaviour of the condemned. Although many of them perform their role according to expectation, others deliberately undermine the scenario through comic behaviour, provocative clothes or some other kind of defiant performance. And even if those about to die do not laugh in the face of authority, executions provide comic entertainment for the audience (Laqueur 309-323).

Processions to Tyburn are a wild and heterogeneous carnival crowd, united by their concern with disorder, noise and drink, thus reminiscent of the public theatres on the Southbank or in Shoreditch. Socially diverse as they themselves are they guarantee the equal treatment of all condemned, irrespective of their social rank. And when executions are finally no longer public, they become untheatrical and thus irrelevant (Laqueur 352-355) – in line with Foucault's statement that "[p]unishment had gradually ceased to be a spectacle" (9).

Carnival in the Bakhtinian sense of "celebrat[ing] temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order [and] mark[ing] the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions" (10) would seriously impair the sovereign's power. I would still argue for a synthetic view of public executions displaying carnivalesque characteristics but more so visible signs of royal power, above all in 16th century religious matters. Elizabeth's execution of Catholics is a way of consolidating her visible power as a Protestant monarch.

The Catholic victim on the scaffold is subject to the power of the Protestant state which insists that the felon dies as a traitor and not as a heretic (Lake and Questier 69). Mary Stuart challenges this code by stressing her dying as a martyr to her Catholic faith (Höfele 48). The state's recoding heresy into treason illustrates its somewhat limited power in the delicate issue of religion. Especially the well-documented executions of prominent Jesuits like Edmund Campion or Thomas Cottam attract huge crowds. Though the Protestant state can mostly rely on the support of the London crowd, the latter is still fickle and their response hard to predict. And apart from Protestants, also Catholics attend the spectacle as well as people without any particular religious reason, who simply wish to be entertained. So the setting offers a site for various groups trying to bend the event's rituals to their own purposes and to construct individual meanings of it. And just like the crowd has its own agenda, so do those to be executed. Still, apart from the 1588 rush in the execution of 14 priests, which is accompanied by convenient propaganda, the state stresses its relative leniency towards Catholics, who can easily avoid death. Elizabeth is rather reticent about too much indulgence in bloodthirstiness and, here again, ambivalent on the issue of how to treat Catholics (Lake and Questier 70-88).

The horrible practice of displaying the victim's body when taken on a cart to Tyburn signifies the power of the state in the Foucauldian sense of disciplining the populace. The criminal body serves as a bearer of state ideology. Making the scaring violence of the punishment visible shapes people's view of state power, but turns out not to be an effective deterrent instrument. On the other hand, at the moment of facing death the Catholic traitor can use their scaffold speech to say whatever (s)he wants, is firmly in control of the performance and "free to play their parts according to their own reading of the script" (Lake and Questier 103).

The mixture of violence and farce, punishment and carnival, defiance and obedience, religion and ideology exposes the state's unstable authority due to unpredictable role playing and audience response (Lake and Questier 107). Sharpe speaks of "a part [...] played" (162) most effectively by English criminals about to be executed and Laqueur linguistically confirms this alliance of scaffold and stage thus: "[T]he state clearly did not enjoy a monopoly on the writing of scripts for its own juridical playhouse" (329). And the common people watching can take part in state action just as they can as groundlings in the pit when watching an actor perform a royal role on the apron stage in one of Shakespeare's history plays.

Thus, however fragile or variable the dynamics between Protestant authority, Catholic victim and participating crowd is, the execution is a celebration of monarchical power with a clear counterpart in the theatrical world whose protagonists involve authors, actors and audience in an equally fluid performance open to various interpretations. And the resemblances between them go beyond these: In

the 1570s the first permanent structures for either mode of spectacle are erected: in 1571, the Triple Tree for public hangings at Tyburn, a rural area outside London (Smith 218), and in 1576, the first public theatre in Shoreditch, upon which many others will follow both here and on the Bankside in Southwark. The raised platform of the public theatre – incidentally called ‘scaffold’ in *Henry V*’s Prologue (1.0.10) – makes its affinity with the scaffold all too obvious. Both Tyburn and London’s public theatre districts lie outside the official jurisdiction of the city. Attending executions and theatre performances alike are favourite Elizabethan pastimes. Despite the brutal disemboweling, quartering, boiling and public display, executions and hangings are staged rituals abounding in breathtaking suspense like the performances of Kyd’s *Spanish Tragedy* or Shakespeare’s *Titus Andronicus* – execution-as-theatre and theatre-as-execution in Höfele’s terms (62). Both share a small entrance fee making sure that all classes can attend – with seats for few people, while the majority are standing. Food and drinks are sold and at Tyburn also pamphlets recording the life and crimes of the victim (Smith 218). So the whole atmosphere at Tyburn is strongly reminiscent of the one that Andrew Gurr so fascinatingly describes for the public theatre in his *Playgoing in Shakespeare’s London*.

THE STAGE

Elizabeth licenses the profession of playing against much resistance and aspires to establish the theatre as a means of manifesting her power. The connection between theatricality and power is obvious from many facts, such as the hierarchical seating of the spectators around the monarch on the stage at court and their response to the relationship between the play and the royal spectator. Also, the stage costumes are real court clothes, especially in history plays (Orgel, *Power* 5–10).

In a Foucauldian take on the mechanisms of power Greenblatt sheds light on its connection with performance both in the Elizabethan world and on its stage:

Queen Elizabeth [is] a ruler without a standing army, without a highly developed bureaucracy, without an extensive police force, a ruler whose power is constituted in theatrical celebrations of royal glory and theatrical violence visited upon the enemies of that glory. [Her] power [...] depends upon its privileged visibility. As in a theatre, the audience must be powerfully engaged by this visible presence. (Greenblatt, *Negotiations* 64)

For him “[t]heatricality is [...] one of power’s essential modes” (46) and Shakespeare and the Elizabethan playing companies are most successful in absorbing

and exploiting much of the “energies of a political authority that was itself already committed to histrionic display and hence was ripe for appropriation” (40).

Tennenhouse generally claims that “[t]he Renaissance monarch understood himself or herself as deriving power from being the object of the public gaze” (155). But even though the Queen “believed deeply [...] in display, ceremony, and decorum, the whole theatrical apparatus of royal power” (Greenblatt, *Renaissance* 167), her famous saying “We princes are set on stages, in the sight and view of all the world duly observed”¹ cannot be understood only in the sense of displaying and exercising royal power. The statement is uttered in the context of her signing Mary Stuart’s death warrant and reveals rather her exposure to the gaze of her subjects that she feels uncomfortable with. She seems at times to have perceived her own visibility as a kind of burden (Mullaney 96-97) making her vulnerable. Montrose disagrees with Greenblatt’s claiming a close link between “a poetics of Elizabethan power” and “a poetics of the theater” (*Negotiations* 64) and would rather locate Shakespeare’s theatre beyond the total control of the state. Elizabeth being exposed to the observation and evaluation of her subjects implies limited royal control of her own public image and of personations of herself on the public stage. In order to control at least the latter kind of dramatic representations, the state is keen to strictly regulate them. Elizabeth seeks to control meaning making in the domain of cultural production absolutely. In contrast to Greenblatt, Montrose considers royal power rather demystified and destabilised through theatrical representation on the Shakespearean stage. The Queen’s licensing of playing might be an attempt at the containment of critical discourses, which can never be fully achieved (Montrose, “Stage” 46-49). And it is less the theatre and its moral implications that bother the city authorities, than the political issue of who controls the means for representing power (Tennenhouse 95).

The relationship between the crown and the Renaissance stage is thus complicated, ambiguous and full of tension between intimacy and danger and can work both ways – as a celebration of royal authority and – theoretically – as the opposite, because “[t]he theater is too anarchic to be [...] confined” (Orgel, *Authentic* 86) by its patrons’ intentions. The theatrical, performing greatness, “is highly charged because it employs precisely the same methods the crown was using to assert and validate its own authority” (Orgel, *Authentic* 84). Personations of a royal role can even border on rebellion if we think of *Richard II* and its deposed monarch.

1 The metaphor of the player-monarch is often used by Elizabeth and also by James I, who, in his *Basilicon Doron* puts it thus: “The king is as one set upon a scaffold”, in a later edition emended to “stage” (Orgel, *Authentic* 87-88). The ambiguous ‘scaffold’ is perfectly suited to illustrate the connection between the stage and the block, but also the vague danger that James must have felt about his royal role.

This connection between crown and stage will be examined precisely by means of Shakespeare's history play *Henry V*, "an enthusiastic display of performative kingship" (Montrose, *Playing* 82). Apart from comedies, Shakespeare focuses on history plays during Elizabeth's reign. They can operate reassuringly in the context of the unsettled succession that would strengthen Elizabeth's position in the sense that at least some of the previous rulers of England have died childless and not led the country into ruin. And via theatrical illusion they can offer a special kind of protection against censorship. They are all about royal roles representing historical English kings on the stage that certainly invite comparison with the reigning monarch by triggering mental frames in the audience. Depending on the play this comparison can work either way – it can support royal authority but also potentially damage it, as in *Richard II* and its commissioned performance on the eve of the Essex Rebellion, in which the theatre seems to have the potential to subvert the authority of the state despite the Queen's efforts to protect it against the latter. This ideological bias can even be inherent in one and the same play, as the case of *Henry V* demonstrates. This play can be read as celebrating Elizabethan power but also as pointing at a dramatic crisis at the end of her reign. It has been considered as the play in which Shakespeare comes "closest to state propaganda, [but even here] the construction of ideology is complex" (Dollimore and Sinfield 214). The legitimations of power and war in *Henry V* doubtless remind the playgoer in the Globe of those in Elizabethan England: The Bishop of Ely assures King Henry of the rightfulness of his pretensions in France underpinning his power rooted in nature (Dollimore and Sinfield 216-17):

You are their heir, you sit upon their throne.
The blood and courage that renownèd them
Runs in your veins ... (1.2.117-119)

just like the Bishop of Exeter encourages him by arguing that France belongs to him "by gift of heaven,/By law of nature and of nations..." (2.4.80-81) in contrast to the French King's "borrowed glories" (2.4.80). And again in the honey-bees speech the Archbishop of Canterbury convinces Henry of the legitimacy of his war in France. Power is legitimised by a God-given order, "a rule in nature" (1.2.188) that demands obedience from its subjects:

... Therefore doth heaven divide
The state of man in diverse functions,
Setting endeavour in continual motion,
To which is fixèd as an aim or butt
Obedience. For so work the honey bees,
Creatures that by a rule in nature teach
The act of order to a peopled kingdom. (1.2.183-189)

In much the same manner Bishop Andrewes in a sermon assures Elizabeth of the sanctity of her war in Ireland: “At this time against these enemies it is a war sanctified” (Andrewes 325).

Even though *Henry V* is about national unity, it also revolves around threatening insurrection that is lurking in Elizabethan England as well. In his famous soliloquy on the eve of the battle of Agincourt Henry is both aware of the ideological role of ceremony and of the danger of deceptive obedience which he is unable to ensure and control. Just like Elizabeth he complains about the burden of royal responsibility and about being subject to theatrical representation:

We must bear all.
O hard condition, twin-born with greatness,
Subject to the breath of every fool, whose sense
No more can feel but his own wringing.
What infinite heart's ease must kings neglect
That private men enjoy?
And what have kings that privates have not too,
Save ceremony, save general ceremony? (4.1.205-212)

Identifying ceremony as the only thing that distinguishes him from the common man Henry goes on to unmask it as hollow, thus revealing his fundamental doubts about monarchical authority.

... Oh, be sick, great greatness,
And bid thy ceremony give thee cure.
Think'st thou the fiery fever will go out
With titles blown from adulation? (4.1.224-227)

His insight into the mechanisms of flattery together with the burden of responsibility for his country epitomise the loneliness and restlessness of power that make him envy the sound sleep of a “wretched slave”:

I am a king that find thee, and I know
'Tis not the balm, the scepter and the ball,
The sword, the mace, the crown imperial,
The intertissued robe of gold and pearl,
The farcèd title running 'fore the king,
The throne he sits on, nor the tide of pomp
That beats upon the high shore of this world;
No, not all these, thrice-gorgeous ceremony,
Not all these, laid in bed majestical,
Can sleep so soundly as the wretched slave (4.1.232-241)

It is of course more than ironic when a man who is responsible for an invasion costing thousands of lives pities his own fate of which the well-sleeping common man knows nothing:

The slave, a member of the country's peace,
 Enjoys it, but in gross brain little wots
 What watch the king keeps to maintain the peace (4.1.254-256)

This subversion of the king's glorification – also evident in the mismatches between the Choruses and what follows – can be read as an ambiguous characterisation of Henry on Shakespeare's part, but one that paradoxically is to intensify his power and the theatrical interest in the play. For Greenblatt only equivocal celebrations of royal power have theatrical force; the charismatic authority of monarch and stage alike depend upon subversive ambiguity (*Negotiations* 62-63). This ties in with the creation of theatrical illusion by playwright, players and audience who must invent the ideal king; the Prologue explicitly appeals to their "thoughts that now must deck our kings" (1.0.28) whose imperfections they are invited to "piece out" (1.0.23). And this necessity extends beyond the theatre into real life. Royal power is shown to its subjects in the same way as a play in a theatre to its spectators. The apparent production of subversion, the paradoxes and ambiguities of power, are its very condition in Elizabethan England (Greenblatt, *Negotiations* 65).

The analogy between the fictional Henry V and the real Elizabeth I is blurred, however, by the role of the Earl of Essex who rivals the Queen in the last years of her reign. Henry's victory in France and his return to England have often been compared to Essex's campaign in Ireland and his expected successful return home. But this comparison is not flawless. First of all, in the end Essex does not prove to be successful. His unapproved return home without having crushed the Irish rebellion deteriorates his by then already troubled relationship with Elizabeth I and ultimately leads to his execution. Even more importantly, Henry has the great advantage over Elizabeth of uniting in his person the roles of military general in the battlefield and political ruler of the kingdom. Thus he is not confronted with the problem of a mighty rival whom Elizabeth faces in the person of Essex. In this sense, Dollimore and Sinfield consider *Henry V* "a powerful Elizabethan fantasy simply because it represented a single source of power in the state" (223). This leads to a third problem arising from the two radically different versions of Shakespeare's *Henry V* text that make for its controversial cultural functions. If we take the dominant Folio text, the equation to be made would rather be between Henry V and the Earl of Essex, to whom Shakespeare in the Chorus to the final act makes the only reference to contemporary politics in his whole oeuvre when addressing the

... general of our gracious empress,
 (As in good time he may) from Ireland coming,
 Bringing rebellion broachèd on his sword (5.0.30-32)

And yet this anticipation makes sense for only a couple of months in 1599 – before Essex infamously returns home. This version pays tribute to the Earl of Essex, but line 32 might still sound alarming both to an Elizabethan audience and to the Queen. Either way, the play can hardly serve as celebrating Elizabeth's unique power. If, however, we assume, as Annabel Patterson does, the Quarto text to be closer to the actual performance before London audiences, Henry may well have been perceived as Elizabeth. This Quarto version lacking the Choruses and thereby Henry's glorifications, might still be more sympathetic to the king because the ironic mismatches with the subsequent scenes are also missing. Patterson reads the Quarto version of *Henry V* "as presenting yet another symbolic portrait of [Elizabeth]" (46).

PORTRAITS

The queen's attempts to control royal portraiture have been stressed by Roy Strong, who has published widely in the field of Elizabethan portraits. Despite her vanity, Elizabeth is quite reluctant to sit in the early years of her reign. This will change after her excommunication in 1570, when, with the incipient vogue for portraits, displaying a queenly portrait in one's house also becomes a pledge of loyalty. In addition, the portraits reflect her two bodies as royal queen and virtuous lady and justify her omnipotence over Church and State. While at home official illuminations as icons of royal power and Protestantism are instrumentalised as powerful visual propaganda, hideous pictures of her as the scourge of Catholic martyrs, for instance, circulate abroad, especially after Mary Stuart's execution. Still, the ostentatious reliance on royal portraits reveals a strange contradiction in a Protestant state that is otherwise so keen on condemning (religious) images as Catholic idolatry (Strong, *Portraits* 5-42).

The portraits of the post-1588 period are impressive icons of royal political power. The Armada portrait with its not too subtle dichotomy of a Spanish Armada sinking under a dark sky and an English fleet sailing in sunshine portrays Elizabeth with her hand on the globe, thus underlining her claim to world domination. In a similar manner, the Ditchley portrait shows her standing on a map of England – her feet placed on Oxfordshire. In this portrait, "Elizabeth is England, woman and kingdom are interchangeable" (Strong, *Gloriana* 136). A new dimension added here and reiterated in the Rainbow portrait is "the association of [her] monarchical presence with cosmic control of the elements"

(Strong, *Gloriana* 138). But the Rainbow portrait goes one step further. Coming out during Elizabeth's last great spectacle, her 1602 visit to Robert Cecil at Hatfield, its message is more hidden, yet all the more far-reaching. The jewel in serpent form on her left sleeve symbolises royal wisdom. In her right hand she holds a rainbow of peace with the motto "Non sine sole Iris" – there is no rainbow without the sun. At first sight, this identifies her as the source of light and life and alludes to the common metaphor inherent in the Elizabethan world view of the monarch as the ruler of the state in line with the sun as the ruler of the heavens. Many critics including Strong have stressed the rainbow as uniting religious and secular symbols. What is striking is its lack of colours, which permits two ambivalent readings, a subversive one emphasising the Queen's fading radiance and a glorifying one that sees her as outshining even the rainbow (Fischlin 197-198). The political agenda – overlooked by most critics – is suggested by Neill (29-31), who decodes the Latin tag as subtly linking Elizabeth's posture with the conquest of Ireland, one of whose ancient names is Iris. Read this way, there is no Ireland without the Queen. Anticipating the Irish rebel Tyrone's surrender to Essex's successor Mountjoy and thus the English victory of 1603, which will end the Nine Years' War, the portrait appropriates the rainbow to symbolise – not very peacefully – the incorporation of the Irish into the English nation.

Apart from this creepy staging of royal power, the eyes and ears on Elizabeth's rich Irish mantle come close to suggesting a kind of Foucauldian panoptic control that her all-seeing power seems to strive for. According to Foucault

the major effect of the Panopticon [is] to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary. (201)

In the same manner, Elizabeth's critical (Irish) subjects are exposed to permanent potential control by the sovereign's all-encompassing gaze whose very potentiality should make them comply with the rules dictated by the state. Bentham's principle that "power should be visible and unverifiable" (Foucault 201) translates into Elizabethan (upper class) subjects looking at Elizabeth / the Rainbow portrait but never knowing whether they are being looked at in a particular moment even though they must be aware it may always be the case. Here again, there is potential for a subversive reading, as Fischlin (201) also concedes. The mantle that enrobes Elizabeth might also reveal her dependence on Ireland. In addition, the Queen and her mantle – programmatic of her snoopiness to see and hear

everything – might remind us of Shakespeare’s Henry V spying on his subjects in Erpingham’s cloak (Neill 29):

Lend me thy cloak, Sir Thomas. Brothers both,
Commend me to the princes in our camp. (4.1.24-25)

Identifying the nation with her own royal body, Elizabeth with her bridal coiffure poses as the spouse of her kingdom. This, in turn, establishes yet another analogy to Henry V’s marriage to the French princess who comments on the event as a double kingdom wedding:

As man and wife, being two, are one in love,
So be there ’twixt your kingdoms such a spousal
...
That English may as French, French Englishmen,
Receive each other. ... (5.2.324-331)

In a similar manner, the all-seeing Elizabeth of the Rainbow portrait would be going to create a nation of “Irish Englishmen” – as Shakespeare might prophetically announce in the Epilogue (Neill 32).

PROCESSIONS AND PAGEANTS

Portraits on the one hand and pageants, tilts and tournaments on the other are closely related in terms of imagery (Strong, *Gloriana* 135) and the message they convey. Urban royal entries and rural royal progresses where pageants are presented have been perceived as exhibitions of royal power, and as visible and effective state propaganda. Processions are an important constituent of the cult of the Queen that also address the ordinary citizens. Theatre, entertainment and ceremony, especially their ambiguous and often subversive dimensions, are employed by Elizabeth to make power visible. Through the ceremonial aspect of the literally theatrical the stage can mirror the court spectacles. The powerful attraction of pageantry is most visible in traditional values of a chivalric code which Elizabeth, as a legally illegitimate daughter, needs to legitimise her authority (Orgel, *Authentic* 75-77). The royal entry is designed as a means of communication between herself and the urban classes. Her rather traditional 1559 entry into London is a triumph for the Protestant Reformation (Strong, *Art* 11-12). Still, Montrose (*Playing* 27) is anxious to stress the secular character of the ceremony. The official record of this entry characterises “the citie of London [as] a stage wherin was shewed the wonderfull spectacle, of a noble hearted princesse

toward her most loving people" (qtd. in Montrose, *Playing* 26). The theatricality of power is all too evident in this depiction and in Elizabeth's speech and behaviour by which "she heralded the new importance that her reign would give to the performativity of sovereignty" (Montrose, *Playing* 27). She offers a show of mutual love, self-sacrifice and virginal motherhood including a manipulative speech casting royal power into romantic and erotic relations (Harington qtd. in Greenblatt, *Renaissance* 168-169). She pays for parts of the pageant and is involved in the (not so spontaneous) preparations. In contrast to James I, she plays at being part of the pageants and is communicating with her people on entering London (Goldberg 29-31).

Strong claims that the cult of the Queen is promoted by the progresses which consolidate support for her regime, make its attitudes popular and the abstract monarchy concrete in the presence of the Queen (*Art* 77).² She relies more than any other Renaissance monarch on these royal visits which provide a public stage on which to demonstrate her royal authority and to interact with her subjects in the calculating hope of support. The royal goals in matters of religion and war thus achieved are worth the huge financial investment and the burdens of travel. Elizabeth uses the power of her royal presence to set a religious example by regularly attending Mass and thus demonstrating royal and religious authority (Cole 1, 140). She is so much convinced of the progresses as enhancing her royal image and popularity that she enforces them against the advice of her counsellors – even taking profit from the discrepancy between inconvenienced court members and welcoming hosts, as this disruptive climate sharpens her royal power at the centre of everyone's attention, and facilitates her ability to rule and preserve her independence. With the strategies of intentional confusion and delaying decisions she forges her authority (Cole 4-11). Still, in the 1580s, when religious threats affect her safety, the progresses are curtailed. And she is too cautious to visit the (Catholic) north of England. In terms of personal diplomacy, Elizabeth relies on royal displays, public appearances and interaction between herself and her subjects. The presence of ambassadors procures her an international audience to demonstrate her royal power. Many of them come to secure marriage with her, which she encourages to avoid war and keep control of foreign negotiations. The progresses

2 William Leahy challenges the view of the enormous success of royal processions as public relations events by seeing them spatially limited to regions where Elizabeth feels safe and popular and temporally limited to unproblematic decades. In other words, these progresses confirm the status quo, but they are not exploited as a means of winning over potentially hostile people or regions (1-5). He seeks to demonstrate that the heterogeneous mass of the common people are likely not to have been successfully subjected by the progresses, not to have reconstituted sovereign power (12-17). His claim is refuted by Cole (12) who claims that the Elizabethan monarchy reaches a wide audience including the common man.

often give her flexibility and freedom of maneuver or even manipulation, and she uses the power of her presence to indicate (dis)favour. But she also takes advantage of progresses to emphasise England's military strength (that her male colleagues fulfil in battles) and her own responsibility as protectress of the kingdom. To audiences at home and abroad military pageants and tilts suggest personal and national reputation, strength, victory, unity and her symbolic participation in battles. In times of crisis or threatening war, however, when her authority is challenged, Elizabeth prefers the security of royal palaces in the London area, as martial ceremonies lose their meaning in times of real battles. Important though the progresses are as Elizabeth's personal exercise of visible power, their open access and the chaos of travel make her vulnerable, as not only well-disposed people come into contact with her. Hence, access to the Queen is ambiguous as her safety is at stake. The power of royal presence, meant to elicit feelings of loyalty, can thus occasionally turn out badly for minor offenders or thoughtless babblers. Almost equally ambiguous is the political message conveyed. The demonstration of royal power can easily be thwarted by unpredictable criticism or rumours spread by her subjects, mostly about her gender and her favourites. Here again, the challenges to the self-created image reveal the limitations of royal authority and its control (Cole 144-169).

The most famous progress leads Elizabeth to Kenilworth Castle in July 1575, where Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, spares neither effort nor money to persuade the Queen – unsuccessfully – to marry him. The courtly entertainments including *The Ladie of the Lake* and Davison's *Proteus* presented in her honour during her 19 days' stay, compiled by George Gascoigne in *The Princely Pleasures* (Orgel, *Masque* 39), turn out to become what Greenblatt calls "the greatest theatrical spectacle of the age" (*Will* 45-46). He conjectures that if 11-year-old Shakespeare saw the Queen amidst these festivities in his neighbourhood "his sense of the transforming power of theatrical illusions" (*Will* 50) may have originated then and there.

The annual Accession Day Tilts on 17 November, proclaimed as an official holy day of the Protestant Church, display royal power to the population as a whole with festivities and secular entertainment in honour of the Virgin Queen replacing the old medieval saints' days and religious plays. Thus the art of festival is made subservient as the monarch's instrument of visible power and rule and proves her monarchy to be "populist by instinct" (Strong, *Art* 19, 154). The public displays take place at the Whitehall tiltyard, a permanent structure offering room for 10-12,000 spectators not only from the court but also from the city who pay the small sum of 12 d as entrance fee. In these tilts, the religiously neutral chivalric code is stressed, exhibiting the queen as the focus of her knights' loyalty to all her subjects, which becomes ever more important from the 1580s on with an ageing

childless Elizabeth threatened by many plots being hatched at home and abroad (Hammer 41-43).

Accession Day Tilts are controlled by Henry Lee, the Queen's chamberlain, in pre-Essex times. During the last four years of Elizabeth's reign, with Essex being banned from the scene, Cecil seems to be in charge of controlling them. He employs the young lawyer John Davies, author of the laudatory and acrostic *Hymnes of Astraea* (1599), who is greatly admired by the Queen and seems to have suggested the programme for the Rainbow portrait (Strong, *Gloriana* 157). Still, it is rewarding to examine the 1595 Accession Day entertainments before Essex's downfall, for they illustrate Elizabeth's increasing problems. Though generally designed to honour the Queen, they turn out to be Essex's barely disguised self-advertising performance. He dares to abuse this biggest public event of the year to arrange his return to royal favour while at the same time showing his frustration with the Queen. This risky strategy reveals his personal dilemma of having to win Elizabeth over to his side, but also her difficulties in this struggle over political power. She can neither afford to lose Essex's military skills nor a too open breach between the Essex and the Cecil factions that might undermine her own authority. This again highlights her fundamental problem of being a female ruler surrounded by male advisers who would always think they knew better. Elizabeth is upset but this goes perhaps unnoticed. The masses are absorbed by spectacle and enjoyment; some might sense a satirical attack on the Cecils while only few courtiers are aware of the political explosiveness of the performance. Nonetheless, the fact that it is possible to upstage the Queen on her special day shows how malleable late Elizabethan public occasions actually are, the manipulation of which for their own purposes also has to do with the courtiers financing much of them with their own money. And it proves them to be quite different from the early Stuart masque, which is state-funded royal propaganda within the closed court environment (Hammer 53-58).

CONCLUSION

Under Elizabeth, ambiguous power is circulated among her subjects through the discursive practices of punishment, performance, portrait and progress in order to regulate their behaviour, even if her control towards the end of her reign begins to waver.

Public executions are great demonstrations of monarchical power to the common people but can easily slide into carnivalesque entertainments in which the crowd eludes authority's control. Elizabeth as Supreme Governor of the Anglican Church has Catholics executed as traitors. Still, her leniency towards them

often reveals her ambivalence on the issue of how to treat them. Like the scaffold, the theatre is an unstable ideological site and so is its relationship to the crown. Even plays like *Henry V* can be understood in multiple ways by different playgoers during the performance and thus cannot fully be controlled by the state. Henry's power is at times ambiguous just like Elizabeth's, but both seem to work through this paradox. Elizabeth also exploits royal portraits as emblems of her political power. Especially the Rainbow portrait with its ambiguous motto and Elizabeth's ambiguous attire and accessories conveys a daring message of political omnipotence and panoptic control. Her progresses demonstrate royal power also in terms of religious stability, military defense and personal diplomacy. Still, the paradox of access and the occasional ambiguity of the message conveyed unmask her restricted ability to always shape events to her purpose.³ What seems worth stressing here is that Elizabeth in her reign covers the whole spectrum of punishment and surveillance from bodily torture on the scaffold to control of the mind by means of portraiture, the latter anticipating what Foucault considers to be modes of power, discipline and punishment developed in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Quite in line with Goldberg's claim that "contradiction defines the essence of the discourse of power" (7) all of the above testifies to the ambivalence of Elizabeth's royal authority and image-making. Even though Greenblatt's claim that her power often produces its own subversion in order to contain it is controversial, spectacle combined with paradox is indeed Elizabeth's most potent vehicle of power. While Shakespeare might be fascinated by exploring "the interplay between theatricality and political legitimation" (Montrose, *Playing* 98) in *Henry V*, Elizabeth is proficient in exploiting the very same in her reign. She knows "the power of display" (Tennenhouse 102) and relies on discursive practices – historically and culturally specific in the Foucauldian sense – to maintain and enhance her power, ensure obedience and bind her subjects to her reign and religion.

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3 Interestingly enough, the Earl of Essex plays a crucial role in Elizabeth's late reign in performances of *Henry V*, in the Rainbow portrait, in Accession Day tilts and finally as a victim on the scaffold. She obviously perceives him as a dangerous rival aspiring to power thus making manifest her problems on account of her gender in a profoundly patriarchal society but also her authority to dispose of him.

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Elke Mettinger

University of Vienna, Austria
elke.mettinger-schartmann@univie.ac.at



Izkazovanje moči v elizabetinski Angliji

Namen članka je s pomočjo Foucaultovega in novega historicizma raziskati performativno moč kraljice Elizabete I. kot se kaže pri uporabi na odru in izven njega, v kraljičinih portretih ter procesijah.

Ključne besede: Elizabeta I., spektakel, mnogopomenskost oblasti, Foucault, Shakespeare, *Henry V*.

The End of Ideology: The Poetry of Cathy Park Hong¹

Brian Willems

Abstract

The poetry in Cathy Park Hong's *Empire Engine* (2012) is separated into three timelines: the period of Westward Expansion in the United States, a contemporary story of fine art reproduction in China, and a futurist story of data workers in California. These three sections are united in their interrogation of the role of ideology in creating and sustaining an empire. I argue that the first timeline stages a representation of ideology in the traditional Althusserian sense, that the second timeline shows this representation as inadequate, and most importantly, that the final section suggests a new model for oppression. The key for the new model presented in the third timeline lies in the job the workers have: they work with data. The main argument is that the ruling class no longer maintains its power through the ownership of capital. Instead, as McKenzie Wark maintains in *Capital is Dead* (2019), this ruling class »owns and controls information« (Wark 5). The owning and controlling of information is no longer capitalism, »but something worse« (29). Following on Wark, I argue that this use and abuse of data changes ideology in a fundamental manner. Rather than having a world from which an individual can feel more or less estranged in an Althusserian sense, the new reign of data suggests that estrangement is the fundamental experience of the world. In other words, there is no world to feel estranged from, thus leading to ideology; rather, the feeling of estrangement is already the fundamental experience of our data-driven reality. While in Hong's book this new model is located in the future, the end of the essay

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argues that a similar state is brought about not only by our data-driven world, but also pandemics such as that caused by COVID-19, which are part of our time now.

Keywords: Cathy Park Hong, ideology, special economic zones, westward expansion, COVID-19

IDEOLOGY

The first section of Cathy Park Hong's *Engine Empire* illustrates the »traditional« or Althusserian reading of ideology. This is done, at least in part, in order to set the stage for the changes to come in the second and third parts of the book. This first section takes place during the American westward expansion of the 19th century. There are two parts. The first is titled »Fort Ballads,« and it concerns the violence of westward expansion.

The first line of the book, from the poem »Ballad of the Range,« makes the Althusserian reading of ideology clear in the way that the characters turn away from a world that they do not want to be a part of and need to invent a reason for doing so. The first line goes:

The whole country is in a duel and we want no part of it. (Hong 2012: 19)

The duel referred to is the American Civil War, and the protagonists are running away from it rather than fighting in it. This simple gesture is taken as an example of Althusser's definition of ideology. The basic idea is that there is a world, that of the Civil War, that the men in the poem cannot handle. This world is so terrible that the men cannot live in it, which is seen by their wanting »no part of it« in this quote.

More specifically, this initial scene from Hong's book corresponds to part of Althusser's first thesis on ideology as presented in his 1968 essay »Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses.« He presents three theses on this topic in his essay. In the first, Althusser states that »Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence« (Althusser 256). The real conditions of existence for the protagonists of the poem are the conditions of the Civil War.

Two different imaginary relationships to the conditions of the Civil War are offered as a consequence of the protagonists being unable to live in their world. The first is the flimsy excuse that they »ain't got time to enlist« (Hong 2012: 19). This excuse is hyperbolically weak and seems to merely show that they are grasping at straws for justifying their escape. The second imaginary relationship

is seen as they start heading in »the wrong di-rection« (ibid.), meaning out west, away from the war. As the men leave, they pass by many horrific images of the real conditions of existence, such as »forts ready to be sawed into colt towns,« other forts abandoned by Southerners who »couldn't let their grudges aside and mauled / each other to blood strops,« and men who »yoke themselves to state« (ibid.) as soldiers. Instead of staying with this horror, the men pass through it in a romantic daze which represents the second »imaginary relationship« they have to the world. The men are described as »brothers« who are »heading through fields of blue rye« on their way to the »boomtowns« of the west (ibid.). Although »fields of blue rye« can be taken as a neutral description of landscape through which the brothers are passing, its juxtaposition with the horrors just seen frames the fields as an imaginary and romantic escape from the world around them.

Louis Althusser is a key reference here because he asks why is it that individuals need an imaginary cocoon to protect themselves from the real conditions of existence. He offers two false solutions and then proposes his own. The first false solution is that, starting in the 18th century, Priests or Despots thought up »Beautiful Lies« so that their followers would obey them while thinking they were obeying God (Althusser 256). The second false solution, that of Feuerbach and Marx, is related to the alienation of labor, which we can briefly state here to mean that the product of the labor of an individual has no relation to their own lives. Working on a farm that produces food is less alienating than working in a factory that produces the plastic wrapping for shipping USB cords. Thus, according to Althusser, this false solution posits that »men make themselves an alienated (= imaginary) representation of their conditions of existence because these conditions of existence are themselves alienating« (257).

Yet both of these solutions are argued as being false. In their place Althusser states that it is not the actual real conditions of existence that cause an individual to create an ideology, but rather an individual's *relation* to those conditions:

It is this relation which is at the center of every ideological, i.e. imaginary, representation of the real world. It is this relation that contains the »cause« which has to explain the imaginary distortion of the ideological representation of the real world. Or rather, to leave aside the language of causality, it is necessary to advance the thesis that it is *the imaginary nature of this relation* which underlies all the imaginary distortion that we can observe (if we do not live in its truth) in all ideology. (ibid.)

Thus in the example of the worker above, a farmer who raises food necessary for life can still be immersed in an ideology if their relation to their work is an unsatisfactory one. For example, perhaps the farmer dreams of being a florist and thus feels alienated by doing any non-floral labor.

The fact that the first part of *Engine Empire* is set amid 19th-century westward expansion in the United States is not an accident. The political ideology of the mid-1830s to the mid-1840s became the guiding force for much of the violence that took place. As Reginald Horsman argues in *Race and Manifest Destiny*, the ideology of American expansion was developed in relation to the real conditions of the conflict with American Indians. Manifest Destiny is connected to the belief that »a superior American race was destined to shape the destiny of much of the world. It was also believed that in their outward thrust Americans were encountering a variety of inferior races incapable of sharing in America's republican system and doomed to permanent subordination or extinction« (Horsman 6). Confrontation with American Indians became the first test of this belief (103). The truth was that entire groups were being wiped out. The *relation* to this fact became the ideology of *shaping the destiny* of much of the world. Thus images of Indians as noble savages was not as important as seeing them as improvable beings »who could and should be taught the virtues of the American way of life« (105). The main component of this myth, however, was that »only the American Anglo-Saxons could bring the political and economic changes that would make possible unlimited world progress« (189), reasoning which was also used to justify the enslavement of Africans (3).

In the first section of Hong's *Engine Empire*, the main character Jim shows part of the violent nature of how the ideology of Manifest Destiny works. As the men in the first poem make their way west, they come across a destitute fort and kidnap one of the young boys inside to take with them (Hong 2012: 20). This boy is Jim, who shows an innate talent for dominating his surroundings by shooting prey, and the men assume that »this queer / piper can tame this fickle, harrowed land« (ibid.). In »Ballad of Infanticide,« Jim tells the story of his parents. His father was an American Indian killer and his mother a Comanche guide. However, when his father left his mother for another woman, his mother killed the other woman and Jim's brother before Jim was able to flee. The men learn one thing of note from this story, that »Jim's a two-bit half-breed« (21), which on the one hand puts him in a position of being an even more violent supporter of Manifest Destiny rather than having any kind of sympathy for those it destroyed,² and on the other makes him, as Jen Hedler Phillis notes in her reading of the poem, »Both victim and victor of this imperial violence« (Phillis 146). In addition, Phillips directly ties Hong's work to Manifest Destiny when she says that, »put in the context of the necessary violence that allowed for Manifest Destiny, we see that,

2 Jim is both a "half-breed" and less merciful toward the Indians than the brothers that kidnapped him. A similar logic is represented in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novel *This Earth of Mankind* (1980), in which the "half-breed" Robert acts "more oppressive" toward the native Javanese than the white Dutch plantation owners.

like the victims of empire, the people who originally clear the way for it will be disavowed, shunted to margins« (144).

The story of Jim and the brothers encompasses both aspects of Manifest Destiny that Phillis mentions. First, Jim is an unapologetic image of violence, while the brothers take on the role of disavowing the rage that Jim enacts. In relation to Althusser's theses on ideology, Jim is a pure representative of the real conditions of the violence of Manifest Destiny, and it is the brothers that follow him who develop an ideology in order to justify this violence. Jim is the first one to kill an American Indian, a Miwok, who was trying to steal the brothers' mules. The men then tie the murdered man's body to the back of their mules and drag »his gutted body, tailed / by a lariat of vultures who peck him raw« (24). The Miwok's sister follows them, begging for the body to mourn. Eventually the men give in and allow her to have it. Jim, on the other hand, has no room for mercy. »Our Jim's gone husk. / He warns of us our weakness« (ibid.) is how the poem ends.

Jim is just an empty »husk« that kills, »No thought flickers behind his linseed eyes« (24). He is a vacant shell through which the violence of American expansion is funneled. His mindless violence is mirrored by the mindless work he and the brothers see a number of miners performing. The mine is »drained of its ore« (25) although the miners are still there; they »dig / and dig« (ibid.), gestures which, as Phillips argues, »position meaningless, fruitless labor as the real source of imperial power« (144).³

Jim's violence is not only directed at American Indians, however. Once the men arrive in California, he also murders French settlers (31) and retired lawmen (33). The brothers are excited that Jim is doing all this violence for them:

We scream: Do it boy! Shoot!
 He aims cold, slays them all,
 exciting us to no end.
 He says: I'm done finishing your games. (31)

The emptiness of Jim's actions reflects how Jim does none of the internal work of ideology himself. That's what »I'm done finishing your games« can mean in the quote above: Jim is a figure of the real circumstances of westward expansion. The »games« the brothers play, as seen in the way that they turned away from the Civil War and the destruction it causes to the pretty fields of the west, develop an ideology out of an inability to face the violence they are actually causing. As Phillips

3 These empty gestures foreshadow Ling Ma's novel *Severance* (2018), in which people infected with the Shen Fever are doomed to endlessly repeat the gestures ingrained on them in both work and home. And this is not a frivolous connection, since in *Minor Feelings* Hong mentions Ma's work (Hong 2020: 57).

point out, the poem represents first »the brutality of primitive accumulation, then, the disavowal of violence« (142).⁴ The »games« the brothers play represent how »the brothers imagine that they can escape this force« (144), the games are the »weakness« that Jim warns the brothers of after killing the Indian: the weakness of ideology in relation to the real circumstances it cannot »see«

At the end of this section the brothers learn that there is a bounty on Jim's head because he has overstepped his bounds and murdered a high constable. However, the brothers are unable to poison him as they plan, and Jim kills one of the brothers (Hong 2012: 35). It is Jim himself who sings »I'm tiring, I'm tiring« (36), although even in his last moments »His mind's still spitting, knifing with skill, / his victimizing intrinsic within his mind, / grinding within his skin« (ibid.). And then, as he walks through the »shadowed plain« (37) of death, which is filled with insects, he has a moment of reaching out to his mother and sister, »with the first feelings of want« (ibid.), perhaps asking for forgiveness. But they recognize him as the »killer outlaw« (ibid.) that he is, and they leave him to his death. The final image is of even the insects flying »farther off« (38), leaving Jim to go along the »denuded earth« (ibid.), presumable stripped by the violence of westward expansion. In this way Jim is a figure that shows how westward expansion and eventual settlement in the west were part of the same violence and ideology. His death shows, as one reviewer said of the poems, that »The American empire, it is made clear, will continue to grow, east to west, north to south, and everywhere beyond« (Alessandrelli 177-8). In the next section of Hong's book we will see a similar process take place. However, this time the Boomtown is Shangdu, China, which is the hometown to a massive industry of artists endlessly reproducing famous paintings by the likes of Van Gogh and Renoir, their gestures reminiscent of the miners who are still going through the empty gestures of their job long after the mines have given up all their ore. The difference in the second section, however, is that Althusser's description of the structure of ideology is seen to be lacking.

THE END OF IDEOLOGY

The second part of *Engine Empire* is titled »Shangdu, My Artful Boomtown!« and is itself divided into three parts. The first is a series of poems written from the perspective of a family member who has stayed behind in the village while their brother has gone to the boomtown city of »highspeed Shangdu« (Hong 2012: 42) to work. The second part is a series of short prose poems, some of which describe the life of the brother in Shangdu, He is an artist making reproductions of famous

4 This disavowal can be seen in how once the brothers reach the Boomtown in the west, the land it rests on is reclaimed by Mexican Indians.

paintings. The third part contains a number of different poems, including a sales pitch for the world's largest golf resort. The combined effect of these three parts is to challenge the reading of an ideology of relations as presented in the first part on westward expansion, although what replaces this ideology is left for the last section of Hong's book.

The location of the boomtown in Shangdu serves multiple functions in the poems. First, the real-world city of Shangdu is now only a set of ruins, and so it functions as a place of fantasy in Hong's book. The real city of Shangdu was originally built during the Mongol-Yuan period (1271–1368) as the summer capital for Qubilai Qa'an, and it functioned as one of the twin political centers (along with its sister city of Dadu) until it was destroyed by the forces of Zhu Yuan-zhang, founder of the Ming dynasty (Chan 1-2). However, to western readers the city is probably most well-known through the Anglicization of its name into Xanadu, popularized by Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem »Kubla Kahn« (1818). Hong references Coleridge in the poems, which is discussed below, but for this initial analysis it is important to note that the contemporary lightspeed boomtown of Shangdu is obviously fictitious, and thus disrupts the role of the imagination in the traditional explanation of ideology. This disruption takes place in the following manner. If ideology is the imaginative rationale developed because of one's relationship to their actual circumstances, then the imaginative city of Shangdu is meant to intensify the fantasy to such a degree that it feels false, or too obvious to believe in, and can thus no longer be used as a plausible rationale for dealing the real circumstances of life.

The hyperbolic fantasy of Shangdu comes to the fore in the second part of this section, that in which, at least in part, the brother of the family describes his life as an artist making copies of paintings by Rembrandt (and later Renoir), which he hears »are sold to rich town houses and hotels in a place called Florida« (Hong 2012: 47). The first prose poem is »Of Lucky Highrise Apartment 88.« The builders were in such a rush to finish it that they left the last wall unfinished, so now it is place where drunks and suicides fall to their deaths (46). In another poem, other highrises are seen to have their problems too: »Highrise 11 has no heat, Highrise 22 lacks floors, Highrise 33 has no spigots, Highrise 44 lacks windowpanes, Highrise 55 lacks stove ranges, while Highrise 66 is lopsided« (53). And that is not all. In »Of the Millennial Promenade Along the River,« a fried prawn vendor is executed by city officials after he tilts the surveillance camera that was pointing at his stall up into the sun (47). In »Of Future Wireless Highrise 110,« the voice of a lone protesting female factory worker is drowned out by the rerun of a soap on TV (51). And in »Of the World's Largest Multilevel Parking Garage,« the striking crane operators that lifted vehicles in and out of the garage are disappeared, leaving boats, busses, and even helicopters that were still attached to their cranes floating in the air while they rust in the rain (ibid.).

Two aspects of these descriptions come forth. First, these descriptions are *too much* in the sense that they are hyperbole. A highrise without a wall and helicopters left stranded by cranes at a multilevel parking garage are satirical images that are extrapolations of contemporary problems. This leads to the second aspect of the descriptions, which is that the structure and issues of Shangdu show that it is actually a »fictionalized Shenzhen, China« (Hollister 264), although it might be more accurate to say it is a fictionalization of one of Shenzhen's suburbs, Dafen Village, which is known for its art reproduction firms.

Shenzhen is an important location because it was one of four »Special Economic Zones,« or SEZs, created by then paramount leader Deng Xiaoping in 1979.⁵ These zones are usually seen as a »graduated sovereignty« experiment in capitalism within a country organized around central planning (Xu 43). However, in *Capital is Dead*, McKenzie Wark argues that the changes Deng's zones brought about were actually »something more akin to the Japanese rather than the so-called neoliberal model, of suppressing wages and funneling the surplus into export-led growth« (Wark 117). Such zones offer »a cocktail of enticements and legal exemptions that are sometimes mixed together with domestic civil laws, sometimes manipulated by business to create international law, and sometimes adopted by the nation in its entirety« (Easterling 33). The architectural design of these new zones in China was based on the New York rather than Los Angeles model, meaning they have »high densities expressed architecturally through many towers, some filled with offices and others with apartments« (James-Chakraborty 473). However, the extreme forms that the architecture of the Highrises takes on in Hong's book are more reflective of an offshoot of SEZs, the rapid building which has taken place in Chinese »boomtowns« such as the Wujin district of Changzhou, in which overbuilding has given rise to »ghost cities« which have extremely low occupancy levels (Mingye 75-7).

The hyperbuilding of Chinese ghost cities and SEZs are, at least in part, reflective of an ideology which has lost any viable relation with the real circumstances of the world. To be confronted with the thousands of empty apartments of a ghost city such as Wujin is to observe an ideology unable to cope with the world (or what is called »the earth,« below). The real conditions of dwelling can often be easy to create: the physical construction of homes. However, the ideology of a positive relation to these homes, meaning a feeling of inhabitation made by the

5 However, the history of Free Economic Zones is quite long, starting with the development of free trade ports, of which Delos in Greece is thought to have been the first. Deng's version of the Special Economic Zone was designed to »turbocharge zone growth« (Easterling 35) as part of his Open Door economic policies. In addition, Shenzhen is a special kind of SEZ, since the zone makes up the entire city, including both business and residential areas, instead of being a special zone within another district (27-36).

presence of hospitals, parks, schools, and other social institutions and amenities, is not enough to »fool« the expected number of people to move into these structures (Shepard 67). The empty cities function as physical manifestations of a failed ideology. Imagination has gotten out of control, and clearly has no connection to the reality of housing needs. The location of the second section of Hong's book in such a city does not come about by accident.

Yet Hong's poems do not just take place in an SEZ in general, but rather in a specific city, Shangdu, or Xanadu. Samuel Taylor Coleridge is specifically addressed in »A Little Tête-à-tête«: »Coleridge, it is me, your affectionate friend! / Might I interrupt you from your compositions, for a little tête-à-tête?« (Hong 2012: 57), the poem begins. In her essay »Bad English,« Hong calls this poem »a salesman's pitch« companion poem to Coleridge's »Kubla Kahn« (Hong 2020: 100).⁶ This pitch can be seen in how Coleridge's poem, which popularized the name of »Xanadu,« is interrupted by the speaker who claims to be selling something even more fantastic:

We have shattered new frontiers with our 14 golf courses.
A dexterous harmony of manmade and natural hazards,
fairway glades surrounded by leafwhelmed mountains
of tinted tallow trees and pars graced with stately flame
throated birds-of-paradise. (Hong 2012: 57)

This golf resort, which has not been finished, is even larger than the current actual largest resort in the world, Mission Hills Shenzhen, located in the same Chinese SEZ discussed above. The resort described in the sales pitch in Hong's poem has 14 courses (compared to Mission Hills Shenzhen's 12) and includes other fantastic elements: »a 150 yard beach bunker – sand imported from / the sucrose beaches of the Caribbean!« (ibid.), »manmade lakes, the water dyed a cool, hushed slate« (ibid.). Yet the resort is actually similar to another project, the Highrisers described previously, because both remain unfinished. With the golf resort, there are no golf carts yet, since they are waiting for the latest generation of »multiple-passenger rough-terrain utility vehicles« (ibid.) to arrive next month. In their place is physical labor in the form of caddies, such as »the compact little man in the plaid shorts« (58) named Xiao, who scowls and is warned »*Pig! Better not stir shit up! I'm watching you!*« (ibid.).

This vision of a 14-course golf resort replaces Coleridge's original vision of Xanadu, as the speaker indicates in addressing the poet:

6 Hong uses the term "bad English" to describe the way she "inappropriately" combines a large variety of languages and dialects in her work, as most clearly seen in *Translating Mo'um* (2002) and *Dance Dance Revolution* (2007), the latter of which features over 300 languages and dialects.

Dash off? Why must you dash off?
To dash down what you just dreamed? But my friend,
I've already dreamed up this Xanadu, (ibid.)

As indicated by the scowling Xiao, who must carry the golf bags of the rich while the resort waits for the arrival of high-tech golf carts, this imagined world is not perfect. In fact, it seems to be over-reaching. Too many courses, too much high-tech, and what is left are the sore shoulders of the angry working class like Xiao. Again, this image of the golf resort shows a failure of the imagination, a concept which is central for Coleridge. Rather than fancy, which Coleridge defines as the rational organization of sensory input, imagination is spontaneous, something which springs »instantly out of the chaos of elements or shattered fragments of memory« (Coleridge 206) and which is then given some form by the imaginer. Although this reading avoids the complexity of Coleridge's thought,⁷ the crux of the poem is to show this spontaneous generation of elements as flawed. The generation of ghost cities and SEZ golf resorts is spontaneous in the sense that it is not well-connected to ideology. As Shoshana Zuboff argues in *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*, this kind of misapplied data management »is a domain plagued by hyperbole, where projections frequently outrun actual results (Zuboff 203).

What Hong's poem foregrounds is the failure of imagination in its role in ideology. If the function of imagination is to ease an individual's relation to difficult real circumstances, then imagination in the second section of *Engine Empire* is so extreme, so out of tune with the difficulties of the present, that it is ineffective in its palliative role of ideology. This is why Coleridge is told that there is no use in dashing off to finish his poem. Xanadu has already been imagined, and on a greater scale than he could ever conceive. There is a difference though, and that is that imagine is seen as a destructive influence rather than positive. Highrises missing a whole side and expensive golf course missing carts are some of the least egregious examples of the destruction that the over-eager imagination can cause.

SMART SNOW AND COVID-19

The last section of Hong's book is different from the proceeding sections in a crucial manner, and the rest of this essay is used to bring that manner forth. In short, ideology (as defined above) supposes a world that an individual cannot accept, and thus that individual forms an ideology to defend herself from it. For example, school

7 Two classic examples of work on the imagination in Coleridge are I.A. Richard's *Coleridge on Imagination* (1962) and J. Robert Barth's *The Symbolic Imagination* (1977). For a more contemporary approach, see Evan Gottlieb's chapter "Coleridge, Nature-Philosophy, and Process Ontology" in his *Romantic Realities* (2016).

can be a cruel institution, but the ideology of »it will be worth it in the end when you get a good job« makes it bearable. The third section of Hong's book is different. It takes place in a future California in which the »new reign« of data collapses the difference between the world of »real circumstances« and the world of »ideology.« The possibility of escaping the world through the imagination of ideology has been eradicated. The method of this eradication is vividly expressed by a »smart snow« which is always falling and which can penetrate not just individuals' homes, but their minds: »You feel the smart snow / monitoring you, / uploading your mind so anyone / can access your content« (Hong 2012: 70). Smart snow sees all and even understands all, both externally and internally, in everyone's lives. The relationship to smart snow is one in which there is no escape from an oppressive world through the imagination of ideology. The smart snow is pervasive and thus blocks the characters of the poems from experiencing alienation. In other words, alienation, and the ideology it engenders, would be a relief, a relief that is unavailable (cf. Willems 44-5). Below, the pervasiveness of the smart snow is read along with the inescapable contagiousness of viruses such as COVID-19. In Hong's book, the time of smart snow is in the future, while viruses such as COVID-19 are part of our time now.

One reason there is no »other world« from which to separate our lives with ideology is that surveillance and control have penetrated our homes in the form of social media apps, cookies on our computers, and Alexia listening to everything else. This is what Shoshana Zuboff, in *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*, describes as

the everywhere, always-on instrumentation, datafication, connection, communication, and computation of all things, animate and inanimate, and all processes—natural, human, physiological, chemical, machine, administrative, vehicular, financial. Real-world activity is continuously rendered from phones, cars, streets, homes, shops, bodies, trees, buildings, airports, and cities back to the digital realm, where it finds new life as data ready for transformation into predictions, all of it filling the ever-expanding pages of the shadow text. (Zuboff 202)

This level of surveillance is unavoidable, and it is one thing the ubiquity of the smart snow represents, along with the prevalence of algorithms more generally, as well as the damage to the world we are undertaking in the Anthropocene.⁸ What makes this world different from the one described by Althusser is that this world is not something separate from us that we can have an ideological relationship to. Instead, we are already a part of this world, and the world *shapes* the way that we thinking about it, rather than our thinking being *removed* from such a world

8 Zuboff's work is part of a growing literature on data gathering, analysis and use in relation to the social realm, including Cathy O'Neil's *Weapons of Math Destruction* (2016), Safiya Umoja Noble's *Algorithms of Oppression* (2018), and Caroline Criado Perez's *Invisible Women* (2019).

or, in Althusser's second thesis on ideology, informed by our feelings about our relationship to that world. As Hong's work shows, we are actually living within a world that can be described by Alfred Sohn-Rethel's concept of »real abstraction« in which, to put it briefly here, the ability to think rationally about a situation (a form of ideology) is itself an abstraction born out of the world of capitalist commodification (Sohn-Rethel 20). This is a world, as Gean Moreno argues, »in which abstraction seems less a thing without reference – as modernists used to boast about certain paintings and morphologies – than the ultimate reference of everything« (Moreno 2). In short, as the second part of *Engine Empire* shows, the ability to escape reference to the real world is ruined. It is ruined by the extreme devastation of the world which does not let us escape the world. If only our world were easy enough to allow ideology to take place.

The third part of Hong's book is called »The World Cloud.« This title indicates not only the all-encompassing nature of the »cloud« of data about our lives, but also the conflagration of the »real circumstances« of the world and the »virtual imagination« of data. Both have become one. The first poem in this section is titled »Come Together,« which indicates the joining of the two. The poem begins:

Snow like pale cephalopods drifts down
as it melts into our lapels we are all connected
into a shared dream where we
don't need our heirloom
mouths. (Hong 2012: 65)

The snow is actually a means of data collection and surveillance. It connects all people by seemingly surveilling them equally. Yet there is another element present in this quote, and it relates to the imagination. Everyone is part of the same, shared dream, and the old ways of talking about things (»heirloom / mouths«) are no longer needed. Here, imagination, at least as it was once known, is abandoned, and something else has usurped its position.

The poem continues by describing how the imagination is rendered useless. Imagination used to be about fundamental change: »In imagining the future, / we once desired a ziggurat to crumble...« (ibid.), but now the smart snow has ended all that.⁹ However, the end of imagination does not mean that nothing can

9 A view which reflects the idea that alternative futures can no longer be imagined since all revolutionary forms of economic expression have already been subsumed by neoliberal strategies (Shapiro 2013; cf. Willems 2018: 74-6) and comes from Fredric Jameson's idea that "it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism" (Jameson 76) which is expanded by Mark Fisher into the idea of capitalist realism, which describes "a pervasive atmosphere, conditioning not only the production of culture but also the regulation of work and education, and acting as a kind of invisible barrier constraining thought and action" (Fisher 16; cf. Willems 2015: 55).

be imagined, but rather that, as with the 14-course golf course described in the second section of the book, everything can be imagined, but that everything has no relation to the real world: »now my imagination can be any nation I want« (66). Everything can be imagined, although this imagination no longer brings down ziggurats. The question that remains is, why not?

One approach to an answer is to examine some of the initial thought related to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. The journal *Identities*, based at the University of Skopje, has released a series of short pieces addressing the pandemic. In a contribution titled »A World is Ending,« Levi Bryant addresses the way that the way the virus spreads has taken away our world (read ideology) and left us with the earth (read real circumstances). Of course »world« and »earth« are used in a philosophical sense, but we can briefly state here that the assumed familiarity of the world has been replaced by the actual dangers of the earth. For example, *before*, visiting a grocery store was a trip concerned with prices, lines, and parking (the world). *Now* it is a chance not only for the death of one's self but for infecting others when one returns home (the earth). The world is that which we assumed was familiar, even safe. The earth is the actual manner in which the things around us can be connected. The earth is always a threat because objects can always be connected to other objects in ways we either forget or ignore when we are ensconced in our world.

This is not to say that COVID-19 is a special case, however. Many people in the world live much more on the earth than in the world. War, disease, abuse, racism, famine, poverty, homelessness, and many other terrible situations force one to be on earth in a way that Bryant is only beginning to describe. And yet what the virus is doing is putting groups of people in a state of precariousness to which they had probably assumed they were removed: »As they are thrown out of work and suffer the disease, the 'middle class' discover that they have more in common with the homeless person than with the billionaire« (Bryant). It is not that the world is splitting apart, but rather that it is splitting apart along new seams.

This is why Bryant can say that »A world is ending« rather than *the* world is ending (ibid.). Bryant describes his world as starting to look like the less familiar *there*, the place where war, disease, abuse, famine, poverty, homelessness, and other situations were assumed to be happening. To describe this feeling, there is a reference to the Open, a term from Martin Heidegger that is taken up by Giorgio Agamben. In literary studies, a more familiar term is *worldview*, meaning the input of the world that one is able to take into account. When I open the door to my house I assume no one is standing on the other side of it pointing a gun at me. Somewhere I know it could happen, just as I know that a plane, right now, could be falling from the sky and heading for the building in which I'm writing. But I live like it will not happen. This plane is not a part of my worldview.

What is different with the virus is that it is not that the door could or could not hide a murderer on the other side of it, but rather that the door itself has become the vehicle for murder. We see this in how the packaging in the grocery store and the air between two people that they breathe have become deadly. In this way »Death lurks everywhere and the friendly objects of the world are now all threatening« (Bryant). The only difference is that everything on the whole earth, all at once, is becoming threatening. We are finally learning about the real circumstances we have always been living in.

The smart snow in Hong's poems represents this loss of world and a confrontation with earth. In one poem, »You feel the smart snow monitoring you, / uploading your mind so anyone can access your content« (Hong 2012: 70), and in another,

smart snow has reached
total density, drifting even inside
the hospice so you can hear

the gray-eyed pulse
of comas, private as a cargo of stones
being dragged across the arctic. (73)

This »total density« indicates that the smart snow has penetrated everywhere, even into the most private of places. The snow has penetrated the imagination also, so that even attempts to imagine a different future have already been corrupted, closed off by its pervasiveness:

landscapes overlaid
with golden apps and speculation
nudging hope like the sham

time machinist who returns from
the future, convincing
everyone with his doctored
snapshots of restored

prosperity... (74)

Landscapes overlaid with golden apps sounds like an invocation of ideology as it once was: the relationship to the real circumstances of the world mediated by a rosy-glasses phone app. However, »nudging hope« can refer to the stripping of hope from the future both by the »speculation« of long-term debt obligation and the manner in which the time machinist comes from the future with fake images of a prosperous future. The time machinist is showing a future already devoid

of imagination, since the images are fake. Imagination has been shut down. The speaker is simply stuck in a present devoid of any ability to imagine the future.

I argue that the use and abuse of data that the smart snow represents changes ideology in a fundamental manner. Rather than having a world from which an individual can feel more or less estranged in an Althusserian sense, the new reign of data suggests that estrangement is the fundamental experience of the world. One's inner and outer lives are already recorded and processed. There is no escape. This has consequences for ideology because in this new world of data, there is no world to feel estranged from; rather, the feeling of estrangement is already the fundamental experience. While in Hong's book this new model is located in the future, the end of the essay argues that a similar state is brought about not only by our data-driven world, but also pandemics such as that caused by COVID-19, which are part of our time now.

But what replaces ideology? The flatness of the earth, the scary feeling that we have nothing other than the objects around us. This reading can be used to make sense of the final poem in *Engine, Empire*, which functions as a kind of epilogue. »Fable of the Last Untouched Town« at first seems like a Luddite return to a land untouched by modern technology. But that is not quite what the poem seems to be saying. The first stanza provides a key to understanding how there is no more world, only the earth:

We are the only hole in a world of light.
No lamps grid our streets, no cars flash their headlights.
When sun sets, we have no choice
but to resign ourselves. (89)

Rather than being some kind of return to nature, the last poem of *Engine, Empire* signifies being resigned to the earth. This is in fact the best relation we can have to the real circumstances of our lives. Everything else is ideology.

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Brian Willems
University of Split
bwillems@ffst.hr



Konec ideologije: poezija Cathy Park Hong

Poezija v zbirki Cathy Park Hong *Empire Engine* (2012) je razdeljena v tri časovne okvire: obdobje ekspanzije proti zahodu v ZDA, sodobno zgodbo reproduciranja vizualnih umetnosti na Kitajskem in futuristično zgodbo zaposlenih na področju podatkovne obdelave v Kaliforniji. Članek raziskuje vlogo ideologije pri ustvarjanju ter vzdrževanju imperijev.

Ključne besede: Cathy Park Hong, ideologija, posebne ekonomske cone, ekspanzija na zahod, COVID-19

Stigma as an Attribute of Oppression or an Agent of Change: The Novel *Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernardine Evaristo

Darja Zorc-Maver

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to describe the processes of stigmatization and oppression of women as presented by Bernardine Evaristo in her book *Girl, Women, Other*. The book features twelve female characters who are very different from each other, but what they have in common is that they each, in their own way, face stigma, misunderstanding and social exclusion. The social construction of stigma causes various kinds of social inequalities of the stigmatized. Through the fictional narratives of the stigmatized and the reflection of their position in the novel, stigmatized women become the bearers of change and not merely the victims of oppression.

Key words: stigma, racism, oppression, gender, Bernardine Evaristo

In 2019 the prestigious Booker Prize for Fiction went to two women writers for their new novels, the Canadian literary icon Margaret Atwood (*The Testaments*) and the first black British woman author of fiction to win it, Bernardine Evaristo (*Girl, Woman, Other*). The prize, a proven literary *succès d'estime*, is a big achievement for black British women that now have an internationally acclaimed contemporary literary voice. This is a contemporary panoramic, polyphonic novel, written partly in prose and partly as a poem or simply a poem in prose, without using initial capital letters in sentences and full-stops apart from the endings of individual (sub)chapters, which describes the fictional lives of mostly black women in Britain. The twelve protagonists are of various ages, with different cultural and social backgrounds and have very different personalities.

Her eighth novel follows 12 characters, most of them black British women, moving through the world in different decades and learning how to be. Each character has a chapter; within the chapters their lives overlap, but their experiences, backgrounds and choices could not be more different. There's Amma, a lesbian socialist playwright, and non-binary Morgan, who uses the internet to navigate their gender identity – but also Shirley, a teacher who feels alien in Amma's community, and Winsome, a bride who has arrived from Barbados to an unhappy marriage. Many of the characters are close – friends, relatives or lovers – while others simply visit the same theatre on the same night or argue with each other on Twitter. (Micha Frazer-Carroll)

THE STIGMA OF WOMEN IN THE NARRATIVES

The title of the book *Girl, Women, Other* by Bernardine Evaristo poses a question right from the very beginning. Who are the Others, according to Edmund Husserl's philosophy of phenomenology? Through the stories of the twelve female characters, we see that the Other women here are those, who are in any way different or that is at least how the world around them sees them. They are women, who do not belong to the traditional notion of femininity, with their appearance, skin colour or sexual orientation, but deviate from it in some way, who are stigmatized and socially excluded. Through the narratives of various female characters and their narrative stories, Evaristo shows how stigmatization and oppression are manifested through gender, race, social class and sexual orientation, which causes their invisibility in society and increases social injustice. Girls and women reveal themselves to the reader through very different life experiences, but what they do have in common is that they are, because of the difference, excluded, marked, and they react to it very differently. It is precisely the stigma that allows the rest of the

environment to see them as being the “Other” and “different”. This “difference”, due to gender, skin color, class, or sexual orientation, is what makes the environment perceive them primarily through the prism of difference.

The ancient Greeks used the term stigma “to refer to bodily signs designed to expose something unusual and bad about the moral status of the signifier” (Goffman 1963, 11). This has very specific effects on how the stigmatized body is literally seen and treated. The stigma namely appears as ‘real’, visible on the body of the stigmatized, because the social construction of stigma and its symbolic violence are often obscured (Howarth 2006). This is very true for the stigma of race. Race appears as ‘real’, defining a particular body as ‘raced’ – as it can be seen on the body itself. Hence the stigma of race appears non-negotiable (Howarth 2006). Goffman in his classic work entitled *Stigma: Notes about Spoiled identity* (1963) studied and analyzed the stigma and the processes of stigmatization, which he understands generally as “an attribute that is deeply discrediting” and reduces an individual “from a whole and usual person to a tainted, disconnected one” (Goffman 1963, 3). Goffman further suggests that stigma has three principal dimensions: first »*bodily abomination*« (disfigurement or physical impairment, for example); second, »*character blemishes*« (identity or lifestyle, for example); and third »*tribal stigma*« (negative characteristics associated with a particular group) (Goffman 1963, 184).

Stigmatized identities are produced through the processes of perception, typification and achieve their result in interpersonal relations in the processes of exclusion. Systematic discriminatory practices are incorporated into a micro (personal social interactions), meso (organizational and institutional procedures and strategies) and macro cultural norms and practices. Stigma thus needs to be seen as collectively constructed, institutionalized and resisted in the systems of difference, privilege and inequality that constitute the social structures and institutionalized practices of any society (Howarth 2006). Goffman defines symbols as being a part of information control; they are used to understand the others. Stigma symbols are similar. Skin color is a stigma symbol (Goffman 1963). Labels that have the power to stigmatize are propped up by discourses (according to Goffman’s stigma theory) that dehumanize and discriminate, and that explain the labelled group’s inferiority in terms of “inherent/ essential biological differences, status/breeding or just reward for prior action” (Graham & Schiele 2010).

In the book the main female protagonist Amma observes how through labelling and through various acts a discriminatory activity takes place. To the question of what it means to be a black woman among white feminists Amma responds:

she listened as they debated

what it meant to be a black woman what it meant to be a feminist when white feminist organizations made them feel unwelcome

how it felt when people called them nigger, or racist thugs beat them up
what it was like when white men opened doors or gave up their seats on public
transport for white women (which was sexist), but not for them (which was
racist) (Evaristo 2019, 18-19)

At this point the protagonist Amma starts to become aware of her oppression due to her skin colour, which is also present among white feminists. Conceptualizing race in this way not only sheds light on the operation and contestation of racism but highlights the ways in which stigma operates in order to produce and defend structural inequalities. Race is seen in or on the body itself; while race may inform social spaces, linguistic styles and fashion, it is primarily linked to the body, or more particularly the skin (Fanon, 1952).

One of the book's protagonists called Jazz, for example, is fully aware of the fact that Amma constantly experiences an invisible discrimination, since she does not belong to the majority. Jazz describes Amma with the following words:

Jazz knows full well that Amma will always be anything but normal, and as she's in her fifties, she's not old yet, although try telling *that* to a nineteen-year old, aging is nothing to be ashamed of

especially when the entire human race is in it together although sometimes it seems that she alone among her friends wants to celebrate getting older

because it's such a privilege to not die prematurely, she tells them as the night draws in around her kitchen table in her cosy terraced house in Brixton

as they get stuck into the dishes each (Evaristo 2019, 3-4)

In the novel's narratives the reduction of life chances unthinkingly is described through the life of Amma, who is the main protagonist of the novel, a black lesbian who wants to establish her own theatre. Her mum Helen is a half-caste, born in Scotland, her father was a Nigerian student. There is a clear writer's semi-auto-biographical element present there.

According to Young (1990), marginalization is perhaps the most severe form of oppression because it pushes groups to the outer edges of society, where they are made to feel invisible or experience a lack of recognition. The faces of marginalization, powerlessness and exploitation are associated with social and power divisions of labour and describe the ways in which social arrangements and structures tend to block opportunities and reproduce inequalities. Young articulates five faces of oppression, which can be used to determine the degree of vulnerability groups may experience. These are: (1) marginalization; (2) powerlessness; (3) exploitation; (4) cultural imperialism; and (5) violence (Young 1990). Young

further suggests that cultural imperialism is the universalization of a dominant group's experiences and culture and its establishment as the norm. In this matrix, the final face of oppression is violence, which implies a range of abuse including physical harm, aggression, harassment, intimidation and ridicule. Evaristo in her descriptions clearly shows the marginalization that leads to the exclusion and reduction of the individual's possibilities in the processes of stigmatization, in the school that takes place in mutual relations and can lead the individual to deviant behavior and 'criminal career':

when he complained of the cold, the teachers said he had behavioural problems
when he spoke patois, they thought he was thick and put him in a class the year below, even though he was top of his class back home

when he was naughty with his white schoolmates, he alone was singled out and sent to the Sin Bin

when he got angry at the injustice of it all, they said he was being abusive

when he stomped out of the classroom to let off steam, they said he was being aggressive

so he decided to be, threw a chair at a teacher, narrowly missing him the first time

but not the second

he was sent to Borstal for the crime of chair-throwing, LaTisha, it was like a prison for young offenders, where he served time with junior murderers, rapists and arsonists (Evaristo 2019, 195)

These negative social perceptions of the individual are internalized by the author and they become part of the self-perception. Before the beginning of a 'criminal career' there are processes of defining, labeling, marginalization, which, with the increasing strengthening of unwanted behavior, reduce the chances of an individual for socially desirable alternative forms of behaviour. These labeling processes that take place in interpersonal relations are not limited to the individual but can lead to discrimination against different individual groups that differ from the majority culture.

We can recognize the different degrees of marginalization based on race. Hélène Cixous asserts that the man/woman and white/black dichotomies emanate from the same oppressive system of binary opposition. She writes: "As soon as [women] begin to speak, at the same time as they're taught their name, they can be taught that their territory is black: because you are Africa, you are black. Your continent is dark. Dark is dangerous" (Cixous 1976, 878). Cixous further says that

the oppressions come from the same place: the phallogentric culture built on the Symbolic Order (Cixous 1976, 19).

Identity is thus established through the processes of differentiation which lead to the oppression and exclusion of those who are different in the opinion of the majority. Socio-economic situation may be one of the factors on the basis of which an individual has less chance of success. When one of the featured women characters named Carol first visits college she feels her difference, not only because of the color of her skin but because of a social environment that is different from most others. She claims:

most students weren't like that but the really posh ones were the loudest and the most confident and they were the only voices she heard

they made her feel crushed, worthless and a

nobody without saying a word to her

without even noticing her

nobody talked loudly about growing up in a council flat on a skyscraper estate with a single mother who worked as a cleaner

nobody talked loudly about never having gone on a single holiday,
like ever

nobody talked loudly about never having been on a plane, seen a play or the sea, or eaten in a restaurant, with waiters

nobody talked loudly about feeling too ugly, stupid, fat, poor or just plain out of place, out of sorts, out of their depth

nobody talked loudly about being gang-banged at thirteen

when she heard another student refer to her in passing as 'so ghetto', she wanted to spin on her heels and shout after her, excuse me? ex-cuuuuuse me? say that to my face, byatch!

(people were killed for less where she came from)

or had she misheard it? were they actually (Evaristo 2019, 132)

The feeling of invisibility and social isolation is one of the facets of oppression, which Carol experiences at her visit to the faculty and it is the result of her difference. The heroines in the various narratives of Evaristo's book are, in fact, faced with "visible" social categories or social identities (such as race and ethnicity) as well as "invisible" ones (such as sexual orientation and social class (Bowleg 2012)). Woodward challenges the narrowness of the conventional views of identity:

Identities are forged through the marking of difference. This marking of difference takes place both through the symbolic systems of representation, and through forms of social exclusion. Identity, then, is not the opposite of, but depends on, difference. In social relations, these forms of symbolic and social difference are established, at least in part, through the operation of what are called classificatory systems. A classificatory system applies a principle of difference to a population in such a way as to be able to divide them and all their characteristics into at least two, opposing groups – us/them, self/other”. (Woodward 1997, 29)

STIGMA AS AN AGENT OF CHANGE

An individual can respond to oppression in a variety of ways. One of the strategies is to identify with it. Amma’s mother is an example of this. In a patriarchal marriage, she accepted the subordination of herself as a wife and renounced her own development. The author writes: “Amma saw it as symptomatic and symbolic of her mother’s oppression Mum never found herself, she told friends, she accepted her subservient position in the marriage and rotted from the inside “ Evaristo 2019, 35). The subordinate role of the mother is more minutely described here:

Mum worked eight hours a day in paid employment, raised four children, maintained the home, made sure the patriarch’s dinner was on the table every night and his shirts were ironed every morning meanwhile, he was off saving the world

his one domestic duty was to bring home the meat for Sunday lunch from the butcher’s – a suburban kind of hunter-gatherer thing

I can tell Mum’s unfulfilled now we’ve all left home because she spends her time either cleaning it or redecorating it

she’s never complained about her lot, or argued with him, a sure sign she’s oppressed

she told me she tried to hold his hand in the early days (Evaristo 2019, 11)

Amma’s father is from Ghana and came to Great Britain, where he never really became successful and felt at home. His migrant experience the author describes as traumatic: “It must have been so traumatic, to lose his home, his family, his friends, his culture, his first language, and to come to a country that didn’t want him once he had children, he wanted us educated in England“ (Evaristo 2019, 35).

In her book *Stigmata* the French author H el ene Cixous does not perceive stigma only in a negative way, but sees in it also a potential development of the new,

“in another reign, in another scene, that of vegetation [...] the stigma is a sign of fertilization, of germination” (Cixous 1998, 14). It is just the vulnerability that stigma causes that it at the same time enables new possibilities. Thus, while vulnerability may well be an opening, a wound, a stigma, Cixous’s interest lies in our *response* to this wounding: do we close it up, sewing it tightly together to avoid any possibility of contagion? Or do we allow the wound to blossom, opening ourselves to new encounters and new possibilities, however joyous or painful they might be? In this way, Cixous suggests the necessity of considering vulnerability - as porosity - as both a point of horror *and* a promise of regeneration (Cixous 1976, qtd in Boone, 86).

The female characters in *Girl, Woman, Other* deal with oppression and stigma in several ways. By expressing this, they reflect their position of inequality, which points to the way to bring about changes. They do not subscribe to the role of powerless victims but are critical to the world around them. Jazz, Amma’s daughter does not accept a subordinate position: “I mean, how on earth can you be a Professor of Modern Life when your terms of reference are all male, and actually all-white (even when you’re not, she refrained from adding) (Evaristo 2019, 61). In the oppressed women there is rage and readiness to fight: “I’m not a victim, don’t ever treat me like a victim, my mother didn’t raise me to be a victim” (Evaristo 2019, 61). Amma, the main protagonist in the novel rebels against the traditional binary understanding of gender.

Amma

the only person of colour in the whole school

she demanded to know why the male parts in Shakespeare couldn’t be played by women and don’t even get me started on cross-racial casting, she shouted at the course director while everyone else, including the female students, stayed silent

I realized I was on my own

the next day I was taken aside by the school principal (Evaristo 2019, 8)

They are aware of the need to talk about their subordinate position, name it, and oppose it, especially where it has become part of them as an internalized self-oppression. An example of this is given by the author:

Nzinga didn’t miss a beat in replying that black women need to identify racism wherever we find it, especially our own internalized racism, when we’re filled with such a deep self-loathing we turn against our own

it struck Amma that this woman could be a formidable opponent (Evaristo 2019, 82)

Dominique, another fictional character, expresses her awareness of difference in a slightly modified manner:

her relationship history of blonde girlfriends might be a sign of self-loathing; you have to ask yourself if you've been brainwashed by the white beauty ideal, sister, you have to work a lot harder on your black feminist politics (Evaristo 2019, 79)

Carol, on the other hand, finds support in her mother, who encourages her not to give up:

lastly, did me and Papa come to this country for a better life only to see our daughter giving up on her opportunities and end up distributing paper hand towels for tips in nightclub toilets or concert venues, as is the fate of too many of our countrywomen?

you must go back to this university in January and stop thinking everybody hates you without giving them a chance, did you even ask them? did you go up to them and say, excuse me, do you hate me?

you must find the people who will want to be your friends even if they are all white people

there is someone for everyone in this world

you must go back and fight the battles that are your British birthright, Carol, as a true Nigerian (Evaristo 2019, 133-134)

The narration of stories in the novel is also of form political statement, rebellion and broadcasting »voices« excluded from or neglected within dominant political structures. By narrating their life stories they become visible and are being heard and thus get the power for change. By giving a positive meaning to their own identity, oppressed groups seek to seize “the powering of naming difference itself, and explore the implicit definitions as deviance in relation to a norm, which freezes some group into a self- enclosed nature “(Young 1990, 171). Diversity thus does not represent more difference as defined by the privileged group, but rather means specificity and heterogeneity. A relational understanding of difference leads to greater justice without neglecting the specificity of individual groups. Social movement asserting the positivity of group difference have established this terrain, offering an emancipatory meaning of difference to replace the old exclusionary meaning (Young 1990, 160).

The theory of intersectionalism has shown the influence of race, gender and class on the identity and experience of women, while emphasizing how the addition of individual categories increases the marginalization, exclusion and oppression of

women (Davis 2008, 70 -71). Syed (2010) asserts that researchers need to advance from using intersectionality as a framework to develop intersectionality-based theories capable of offering insights into identity (work) processes. Studies that utilize intersectionality-as-framework and intersectionality-as-theory explore how multiple interlocking identities are constructed by relative sociocultural power and privilege (Parent et al. 2013). Jones (2009, 298) in her intersectional study discussed “two identity processes at work”, one focused from the outside in and the other from the inside out. Identity work encompasses how people categorize them. As a framework, intersectionality reminds researchers that “any consideration of a single identity, such as gender, must incorporate an analysis of the ways that other identities interact with, and therefore qualitatively change, the experience of gender” (Warner and Shields 2013, 804-5). Evaristo shows this through one of the protagonists, who knows that the various forms of oppression are intertwined and form various forms and degrees of underprivileged status, she says:

yes but I'm black, Courts, which makes me more oppressed than anyone who isn't, except Waris who is the most oppressed of all of them (although don't tell her that)

in five categories: black, Muslim, female, poor, hijabbed

she's the only one Yazz can't tell to check her privilege (Evaristo 2019, 80)

Thus multiple social identities (such as race, gender, disability) intersect at the micro level of individual experience to reveal multiple interlocking social inequality (i.e., racism, sexism, ableism) at the macro social-structural level (Bowleg 2012).

According to Watson's (2008, 131) theory of self-identities as the individual's own notion of who s/he is becoming and social-identities as “cultural phenomena [which] relate to various social categories existing societally and are, in effect, ‘inputs’ into self- identities (mediated by identity work) rather than elements of self-identities as such”. This kind of self-identity construction the women continuously rebel against in the novel, one of them says:

they go inside the building and climb the stairs as Waris continues talking, says she's learned to give as good as she gets if anyone says any of the following

that terrorism is synonymous with Islam

that she's oppressed and they feel her pain

if anyone asks her if she's related to Osama bin Laden if anyone tells her she's responsible for them being unemployed

if anyone tells her she's a cockroach immigrant
 if anyone tells her to go back to her jihadist boyfriend
 if anyone asks her if she knows any suicide bombers
 if anyone tells her she doesn't belong here and when are you leaving?

if anyone asks if she's going to have an arranged marriage if anyone asks her why she dresses like a nun

if anyone speaks slowly to her like she can't speak English if anyone tells her that her English is really good if anyone asks her if she's had FGM, you poor thing

if anyone says they're going to kill her and her family (Evaristo 2019, 60)

Women's narratives in Bernardine Evaristo's novel *Girl, Woman, Other* Narratives function in the book's master narrative as different forms of broadcasting »voices« otherwise excluded from or neglected within the dominant political structures. They open up and address the various forms of oppression of women in the modern world that are intersecting with each other, thus reducing women's opportunities in the patriarchal world. In this world they are stigmatized because of their differences, which characterizes each of the heroines in her own way. Despite the vulnerability caused by oppression, they do not give up their Otherness, but this allows them new spaces of life to experience themselves and the world. The novel's fictional heroines thus suggest that a different world is possible without dichotomous divisions based on a patriarchal system. These women expose themselves and offer the reader the opportunity for a different perception of diversity, not based on exclusion but on acknowledging and respecting diversity. By describing the invisibility, stigmatization and the process of the othering of women, Evaristo proves that "writing is precisely the very possibility of change, the space that can serve as a springboard for subversive thought, the precursory movement of a transformation of social and cultural structures« (Cixous 2008).

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Darja Zorc Maver
darja.zorc-maver@guest.arnes.si
University of Ljubljana



Stigma kot atribut zatiranja ali agent spremembe: Roman Bernardine Evaristo *Girl, Woman, Other*

Namen prispevka je opis procesov stigmatiziranja in zatiranja žensk kot jih prikaže avtorica Bernardine Evaristo v svoji knjigi *Girl, Woman, Other*. V knjigi nastopajo liki dvanajstih žensk, ki so si med seboj izredno različne, vendar jim je skupno to, da se vsaka na svoj način sooča s stigmatizacijo, nerazumevanjem in socialno izključenostjo. Socialna konstrukcija stigme pozroča socialne neenakosti stigmatiziranih. Skozi pripovedi stigmatiziranih in refleksijo svojega položaja stigmatizirane ženske v romanu postanejo nosilke sprememb in ne zgolj žrtve zatiranja.

Ključne besede: stigma, rasizem, zatiranje, spol, Bernardine Evaristo

Ernest Hemingway in Slovenia since 1990: Scandal, the Soča and Six-Toed Cats

Simon Zupan

Abstract

The position of Ernest Hemingway in Slovenian culture in the pre-1990 period was systematically examined by Maver (1990). Developments since then, however, have not yet been researched in a synthetic manner. The article analyzes three aspects of Hemingway's presence in Slovenia: literary-critical reception of his works in Slovenia after 1990; his position in Slovenian popular culture; and the statistical data about the number of book loans for his books in Slovenian libraries. The analyses confirm that Hemingway's position in Slovenia has not changed dramatically and that he remains recognized as one of the foremost 20th century American writers.

Keywords: Ernest Hemingway, literary reception, literary criticism, popular culture, book loans

INTRODUCTION

Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961) has been a prominent international literary figure for decades. In some European countries, his name and even translations began to appear in the 1920s (e.g., Heller 1992: 27, Winther 1992: 20, Lundén 1992: 51), not long after his first works were published in English (see Reynolds 2000). Slovenian readers, on the other hand, first encountered his name in 1932¹, when the literary monthly *Dom in svet* reviewed Jack London's novel *The Valley of the Moon*. Although the reviewer Boris Orel primarily focused on London's novel, he also mentioned several contemporary American writers, including Hemingway. It was notable that, according to Orel, the response to Hemingway and his contemporaries in Europe had been lukewarm because they were – “too European” (Orel 1932, 330). Hemingway's status in Slovenia before World War Two substantiated that observation, given that his presence remained limited to a few sporadic (meta-)literary references. After the war, however, the situation changed. Once Hemingway's texts became available in Slovenian translation, he soon became not only a well-known author but also a celebrity, and ultimately “a very popular novelist among the Slovenians” (Maver 1990, 62). Hemingway's position in the Slovenian literary system and culture in the pre-1990 period has been examined by Maver, whose research followed three distinct lines: the general response to Hemingway in Slovenia; the response of Slovenian literary critics to his work; and the reputed presence of Hemingway on the Isonzo front during WWI (Maver 1990). No attempt has since been made to synthesize Hemingway's position in Slovenia after 1990, and the present study aims to partly fill that void. Following the Introduction, the central part of the article comprises three sections with subsections: section 2.1 includes an analysis of two afterwords from the new book editions of Hemingway; section 2.2 examines Hemingway's perception in Slovenian popular culture across three different thematic domains (2.2.1–2.4.1); while section 2.3 comprises an analysis of the book loans for Hemingway in Slovenia over the last twenty years. The article closes with the Conclusions.

HEMINGWAY IN SLOVENIA SINCE 1990: AN OVERVIEW

As was the case with the preceding three decades (cf. Maver 1990), the period between 1990 and 2019 was relatively vibrant for Hemingway in Slovenia. In terms

1 According to Maver (1990, 51), Hemingway's name first appeared in Slovenia in 1933 in an index of banned books in Germany, which was regularly updated by the literary monthly *Ljubljanski zvon*; however, recent findings showed that Hemingway had been referred to by Orel (1932) at least one year earlier.

of book editions, the range of his fiction in Slovenian expanded, with nine new books, including a new (second) translation of *The Old Man and the Sea* (Hemingway 2011) and a collection of short stories *Big Two-Hearted River* (Hemingway 2010) comprising seven old translations by Janez Gradišnik and six new ones by Miriam Drev; the remaining seven books were reprints of existing translations². In addition, three of his non-fiction works were translated³. This dynamics could not compare to the three decades leading up to 1990, when over twenty books of Hemingway's prose came out in Slovenian; however, given that most of his fiction was already available in translation by 1990⁴, it is understandable that the frequency of new editions eventually decreased.

Equally dynamic was the response to Hemingway and his works in Slovenia in the same period. In addition to two comprehensive literary essays published as *Afterwords*, two unpublished doctoral dissertations on Hemingway were compiled (Kern Slapar 2009; Zupan 2009) and at least two dozen MA and BA theses. Among more recent publications, it is necessary to mention a study by Johnston (2019), in which she sought parallels between Hemingway's famous "Iceberg Theory" writing style and the role Slovenes and Friuli play under the surface of his novel *A Farewell to Arms*. Given Hemingway's status, it comes as no surprise that quantitatively, the highest number of publications about him fell in the domain of popular culture, proving that Hemingway had retained the status of a near-celebrity. Slovenian daily newspapers, for example, published dozens of items about his life and work including commemorative articles marking anniversaries of Hemingway's death; popular speculation about his reported presence in what is now Slovenian territory during World War I; news reporting new international publications about Hemingway; as well as updates on marginal subjects, ranging from the Hemingway family cats to new cocktails named after the famous writer. In fact, it turns out that it is nearly impossible to find a newspaper in Slovenia not mentioning Hemingway occasionally in one context or the other. Although the latter contributions have limited scholarly value, they nevertheless form an integral part of the construct of Hemingway as an international cultural artefact in Slovenia.

2 *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1998, 2004, 2005), *A Farewell to Arms* (1991, 2004a), *The Sun Also Rises* (1991a) and *To Have and Have Not* (1991b).

3 *Green Hills of Africa* (Hemingway 1991c), *A Moveable Feast* (Hemingway 1991d), and *True at First Light* (Hemingway 2000).

4 To date, a total of thirty-one book editions of Hemingway's fiction have been published in Slovenian, including eight of his ten major novels and novellas and more than thirty of his nearly fifty short stories.

Afterwords

Of the nine new book editions of Hemingway's fiction, two included afterwords. By definition, afterwords comprise the following main elements: presentation of the author, the origin of the text and its presentation (or interpretation) (Glušič cit. in Grosman 1997, 45); in turn, afterwords are indicative of the literary-critical perception of a particular work in a given period. Each text about Hemingway was the work of an established Slovenian literary critic and scholar. The first was written by Vanesa Matajc (1998) and included in the 1998 reprint of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*; the second was by Matej Bogataj (2010) and was part of the short fiction collection *Big Two-Hearted River*. The other books, not even the new translation of *Old Man and the Sea* (2011), had no accompanying texts⁵. Both new afterwords were extensive and comprehensive, complying with the requirements of the genre.

In the introductory part of the essay entitled "Hemingway or the last visions of immortality", Matajc (1998) presents in great detail the history of the Spanish Civil War, its main protagonists and Hemingway's personal experience in it, providing a backdrop for her analysis. She points out that, although Hemingway held a pacifist and neutral position, maintaining that "every war is bad"⁶, he left Spain convinced that Communist Machiavellianism was a necessary evil under the circumstances, an awareness "that deeply troubles Jordan from *For Whom the Bell Tolls*" (Matajc 1990: 493). According to Matajc, the tragic ending would suggest that *For Whom The Bell Tolls* is a "novel of disillusionment" (498); however, the story predominantly affirms the motivation behind the Republican resistance, intensively testifying "to the tragic split between historical reality and the individual's illusion of it" (499). Matajc also analyzes the novel from a literary theoretical standpoint. She highlights the brief time span of the story, comprising three days and nights, which means that it could have been narrated as a longer novella (ibid.). As a comparative literature scholar, Matajc examines the position of the novel in contemporary world literature, placing it in the vein of André Malraux's literature of "man's fate" in France. She maintains that, in contrast to the pessimistic and "meaningless freedom in the world of disintegrated sense and moral order" (500) of the Lost Generation, the individual in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, embodied by Robert Jordan, becomes more sophisticated in reflecting on his tragic human

5 The absence of forewords or afterwords in other editions is not surprising. After 1990, the publishing market in Slovenia experienced difficulties because of increasing, often unfair, competition, forcing many publishers to further lower the costs. As a side effect, fewer new literary translations and afterwords were being commissioned.

6 Unless indicated otherwise, quotations were translated from Slovenian into English by the author of the article.

existence, deliberately exposing himself to danger and, aware of his own mortality, taking his love of life to the extreme (501). Other main protagonists of the novel are examined in a similar way.

In her conclusion, Matajc largely subscribes to the observation of another prominent Slovenian literary scholar, Janko Kos, from the 1964 edition of the novel that “almost all literary scholars agree that [Hemingway’s] inner scope and importance are not at the level of the most prominent writers of the 20th century” (Kos 1964, 5). Matajc agrees with Kos that Hemingway craftily combined the elements of traditional and Modernist prose, added to which were idiosyncratic stylistic features such as the simple and terse language (Matajc 1998, 510). However, in contrast to Kos, who problematizes the fact that the novel “is not an exhaustive, and even less so comprehensive representation of the political and social developments that are the cornerstone of the main story” (Kos 1964, 24), Matajc points out that the novel “is not about History as such but about the individual in it: his experiences and feelings more than a logically-controlled reflection” (Matajc 1998: 510). In turn, the novel is not socio-politically engaged; instead, it transposes the dehumanizing effect of killing for both the victim and the perpetrator not only in the Spanish Civil War but in any other military conflict.

In his essay entitled “The Enigma of Hemingway – Papa and a rebel son in one”, Bogataj first outlines Hemingway’s life, claiming it would be difficult to understand his writing without knowing his life and personality (2010, 204). He mentions Hemingway’s individualism, escapism, rebellious character, and the health problems that plagued him for years but also his cultivation of a middle-class lifestyle. Bogataj’s Afterword is one of the few published in Slovenia that mentions Hemingway’s possible homoerotic traits. In addition to *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Bogataj praises Hemingway’s shorter fiction, such as *The Old Man and the Sea*, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” and “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber” as “no doubt quality literature” (Bogataj 2010, 205). According to him, Hemingway builds on Mark Twain’s tradition, particularly that of *Huckleberry Finn* and the mimetic qualities of the dialogue in it. As was the case with Matajc, Bogataj also cites Kos’ (1964) essay, thus indicating its continuing impact fifty years on.

The rest of the Afterword is a presentation and literary evaluation of some of the short stories in the collection. Bogataj singles out “Indian Camp” (“Indijanski tabor”), which according to him, is an “initiation story, a simultaneous presentation of being born and dying” (Bogataj 2010, 208). Although the initiation fails after Nick sees more than he can take, Nick arrives at a general conclusion that “he will never die” (ibid.). Also highlighted is “The Sea Change” (“Preobrat”) because of its “terse Hemingwayesque dialogue, almost playwrighting style with little

narration" (209). In "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" ("Sneg na Kilimandžaru"), Bogataj highlights the use of Modernist interior monologue in combination with realistic objective narrative. By switching between the two, Hemingway creates intense dialogue reflecting the difficult relationship between partners, on the one hand, and the occasional excursions of the protagonist into his past in Austria, Switzerland and elsewhere (Bogataj 2010, 214). According to Bogataj, one of the most significant stories in the collection is "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber", "the most typical example of Hemingway's existentialism" (215). The story portrays "a dysfunctional couple glued together by affluence and elitism, who are at an advanced stage of mutual humiliation and permanent imposition and assertion of hierarchy between the two partners" (ibid.). According to Bogataj, Margot is representative of the powerful but demonized women in Hemingway's prose; Francis, on the other hand, is a typically weak and cowardly inexperienced man, resembling people that surrounded Hemingway in his birth family (215-216). Bogataj's conclusion is even more affirmative than Matajč's. He claims that "such men [as Hemingway] are no longer made" (217). Although opinions of Hemingway and his work are often divided, he is "a living and provocative author, not merely a mid-20th century literary giant copied by many and followed by even more grateful readers" (ibid.).

Although representing a small sample, the two essays are indicative of the evolution of literary criticism of Hemingway in Slovenia over the last few decades. In 1952, for example, Juš Kozak, the then established Slovenian writer and literary critic, published an extensive essay on contemporary literature, including a long passage on Hemingway. Referring to *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Kozak quotes a fellow-Partisan fighter according to whom "it took an American to describe the Partisan struggle for freedom as we had experienced it but in vain expected our writers to depict" (Kozak 1952, 402). In the same essay, Kozak also wonders why the same novel "is so appealing to our readers, in particular the Partisans" (404); he writes about Pablo, a protagonist in the novel, as a "dialectical portrayal of human development" (403); and queries whether "[the protagonists of the novel] are typical, as realism demands" (ibid.). In addition to showing Hemingway's popularity, the quotations reveal the then powerful aesthetic of social realism and the underlying political ideology of the time, which did occasionally seep into literary scholarship. Of course, not all contemporary Slovenian scholars and critics shared those views. Nevertheless, the contrast between Kozak and the post-1990 scholarly and critical writing about Hemingway in Slovenia reveals that modern critical writing largely converges with that of the English-speaking world from about the same period (cf. Donaldson, 1996).

Hemingway in Slovenian popular culture

Besides the literary connoisseurs, Hemingway has always been a magnet for the general public and the popular press. What distinguishes him from most other writers is that “[e]ven those who have never read a word he has written, in school or college or on their own, are aware of his presence in the world of celebrity – a rugged macho figure called Papa with a signature white beard” (Donaldson, 1996, 1). As a result, the media have always been keen to keep the readers posted about him, Slovenia being no exception. In the 1930s and 1940s, for example, Hemingway’s appearance in the Slovenian print media was limited, restricted to an odd reference to his name in the context of contemporary American literature⁷. However, following the publication of the first translations of his texts in the early 1950s and his Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954, Hemingway’s popularity increased. Suddenly, Slovenian newspapers and magazines started updating their readers with news such as his hunting expeditions in Africa (Bohanec 1953); his alleged extramarital romantic relationships (“Škandal okrog avtorja” 1951); the upcoming movies based on his fiction (“Zapiski” 1951); and the exorbitant fees for his film scripts (“Hollywoodski honorarji” 1954). Bibliographic records show that in the 1950s and 1960s, over a hundred such items appeared in Slovenian printed media alongside the book reviews (Zupan 2009).

After 1990, this situation did not change much. A search through the electronic editions of the three main national daily newspapers in Slovenia, *Delo*⁸, *Dnevnik* and *Večer*, of the last 15 years⁹ yielded over 40 news items relating specifically to Hemingway and many more that mention him in passing. The range of topics is wide, comprising the following three main groups.

Hemingway and the Isonzo Front

As was the case before 1990 (cf. McIver 1988; Maver 1990), one of the most intriguing questions for the media remained Hemingway’s alleged presence in what is now Slovenian territory during World War I. Following an extensive article in

7 Examples include frequent updates about banned American books in Nazi Germany, such as “Pisatelji na indeksu” (1933), or an observation in passing that Hemingway was a friend and contemporary of John dos Passos (Fatur, 1936).

8 The *Delo* online database also includes its affiliated publications, such as the magazine *Polet* or the tabloid *Slovenske novice*, which also published Hemingway-related items and were included in the study.

9 The year 2004 was a cut-off point because by about the end of that year half of Slovenian households had access to the internet and almost 40 per cent of users were accessing online newspapers (“Uporaba IKT” 2006, 6).

Primorski dnevnik in the late 1980s (Jeranko 1988), which left that possibility open, Torkar (1992), mostly relying on a short scholarly paper by McIver (1988), once again dismissed that claim, accentuating that Hemingway “never came within 100 kilometers of Gorizia” (Torkar 1992). Waltritsch revisited the same subject in a long article in 1999. He wrote that he was aware of the stories circulating in the Soča valley: that Hemingway had slept in a tent pitched in the front yard of a local tavern; that he had drunk under the table the local competition with 14 glasses of rum; or that there was even some Hemingway blood running in the veins of the locals (Waltritsch 1999, 12). However, according to Waltritsch, had these stories been true, “Kobarid [Caporetto] would have become the new pilgrimage Mecca of Hemingway’s Slovenian fan club” (ibid.). Instead, as the author explains, Hemingway had access to several personal accounts by English officers and medical staff who did see the Isonzo front, skillfully turning them into a novel (ibid.), an interpretation that is accepted by modern Hemingway scholars (see Rennie 2018).

Despite these efforts, the myth persisted. Its tenacity showed a decade later, when an entire monograph was dedicated to the same subject (Drekonja and Jankovič Potočnik 2009). Its authors took the effort to debunk the myth even more thoroughly than their predecessors. After meticulously studying the geography of the “Slovenian” setting in the novel, they endeavored to retrace the microlocations referred to in the book in the field. The authors found Hemingway’s descriptions surprisingly accurate, allowing them, for example, to locate the house in which Frederic Henry’s unit from the novel was located in Gorizia. However, as was established elsewhere (e.g., Vernon 2013, 390), the authors found that Hemingway could not have been in the area during the decisive Austro-Hungarian offensive, given that he arrived at the front after the Italian army had already been pushed back to the river Piave (Drekonja and Jankovič Potočnik 2009). The book was reviewed in the *Delo* by one of its then foremost journalists and cultural critics, Marijan Zlobec (2010), who adopted an interesting stance. After first acknowledging that Hemingway most likely had never set foot in the Soča valley, Zlobec closed the review wondering: “So, in spite of the scruples for a lack of evidence, is it possible that Hemingway in fact had visited the area of the former Isonzo front?” (2010). It thus seems that speculation about Hemingway’s presence on Slovenian territory will tickle the imagination of Slovenian readers for some time to come.

Fiftieth anniversary of Hemingway’s death

Hemingway is among the authors whose anniversaries are regularly observed by Slovenian newspapers. A good example was the 50th anniversary of his death

in 2011, when over ten articles appeared in *Delo* and *Dnevnik* alone, most of which clustered around 2 July, the date of Hemingway's suicide. Written for the general reader, the articles typically focused on Hemingway's life and the circumstances that influenced his writing; the literary value of his work, on the other hand, was usually presented in very general terms. One such article appeared in *Delo* on 1 July (Grujičić 2011). Its author first dedicated considerable attention to the turning points in Hemingway's life. She mentioned his dominant mother, many encounters with suicide and death as well as Hemingway's paranoia and bouts of depression that ultimately led to his early death. Much attention was given to Hemingway's "four wives, three wars and an equal number of announcements about his death" (Grujičić 2011). Also mentioned were Hemingway's masculinity, adventurousness, cultivation of sports and his problems with alcoholism and escapism. By listing the problems that dogged Hemingway throughout his life, Grujičić adopts an affirmative position, showing compassion for Hemingway as a human being, at the same time making little reference to his writing.

Three weeks later, *Delo* published another extensive article, this time by Vesna Milek (2011), one of its leading cultural critics. Much like Grujičić, Milek, relying on an article published a few days previously in *The Guardian*, mostly focused on Hemingway's life, particularly the milestones that directly influenced his literary work. For example, the article mentioned Hemingway's days in the post-WWI "bohemian and decadent Paris", which led to the novel *The Sun Also Rises* and "triggered a virus that infected entire generations and gave rise to the cult of Hemingway" (Milek 2011); or the shrapnel wounds that he received on the Italian front in World War I, which gave rise to the novel *A Farewell to Arms*. Much to the same effect, Milek interspersed the article with quotations from Hemingway, typically those that highlighted his intelligence, masculinity and cynicism. Also mentioned were his eccentricities and idiosyncrasies, such as rising before dawn to watch the matadors learn how to kill bulls in slaughterhouses or downing record numbers of cocktails to ease pain from the injuries sustained in a plane crash in Africa; not missing were the many women who surrounded him. In contrast to Grujičić, who summarized Hemingway's life in her own words, Milek made a pastiche with extensive quotations from Hemingway, his contemporaries and literary scholars. Several quotations in relation to the novel *The Garden of Eden* were also used to complete the article, including a passage from *The Guardian*, according to which Hemingway's frustration with being unable to finish the novel ultimately "killed him" (Sigal 2011).

The rest of the articles published the same year were shorter. On July 2, the date of Hemingway's death, *Dnevnik* announced the anniversary of his suicide in the title, highlighting his "clear, almost journalistic style that marked 20th century

literature” (“Ernest Hemingway, predstavnik” 2011). Two days later, *Dnevnik* reported that the WWI Kobarid Museum in Kobarid had marked the anniversary by displaying the first edition of *A Farewell to Arms*. The event was attended by the then US Ambassador to Slovenia, Joseph A. Mussomeli. The article had a telling title— “Hemingway never made it to Kobarid”, highlighting the debunked myth about Hemingway’s visit to the area (Alič 2011). Just a day later, *Dnevnik* rounded off the short commemorative series with an article on Hemingway’s fear of being followed by the FBI. Given that he had ties with Cuba during WWII, the FBI monitored Hemingway for several years, making him increasingly paranoid and, according to some, ultimately contributing to his suicide (“Preživljal sem najhujši” 2011). Articles such as one by Prinčič (2011), published the same year, followed the same pattern of mostly focusing on Hemingway’s life.

It is common to practically all commemorative articles that they adopted a sympathetic attitude towards Hemingway, almost one of compassion. Although portraying Hemingway as a strong and fearless individual, they nevertheless particularly highlighted the fact that he was a victim of the many demons that haunted him throughout his life. In this regard, his image in the Slovenian press corresponds to that of Hemingway as a “complicated blend of bravado and fear” (Wagner-Martin 2007, 1) that he is elsewhere.

Notes and other trivia

In addition to commemorative articles, Slovenian newspapers have regularly published peripheral information about Hemingway. Such articles range from news about newly discovered letters by him, anecdotes or controversies surrounding him, to articles about his pets. Including the brief references in the “On this day in history” newspaper sections, their total number exceeds several dozen a year. Admittedly, these items have lesser literary value; nevertheless, they show that Hemingway is a cultural artefact that Slovenian editors find intriguing for their readers even more than half a century after his death.

A well-known anecdote (see Sigal 2013, 105) appeared in the *Dnevnik* on the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Paris during WWII (“Hemingway je vkorakal”, 2004). Based half on historical evidence half on myths created by Hemingway himself, the article recounted his entry into Paris, at the time still occupied by the Nazis, highlighting Hemingway’s adventurous nature. The readers thus learned that while the Allies were debating how to liberate the city without destroying it, “all that Hemingway had on his mind was his favorite bar at the Ritz hotel at Place Vendome” (ibid.). The article then describes how he took a group of war correspondents straight into the city in a Jeep, stopped in front of

the hotel, “jumped from [the Jeep] with a pistol in his hand and (...) headed straight for the bar where he had drunk 25 years earlier with Scott Fitzgerald, ordering a bottle of extravagant Bordeaux wine that the staff had hidden from the German occupiers” (ibid.). Hemingway’s literary works were not mentioned. Hemingway’s macho traits were also emphasized in a long article (almost 1,400 words) published to mark 110 years of Hemingway’s birth (Grizold 2009). Although the opening paragraph mentioned Hemingway’s Nobel Prize for Literature, highlighting that he “had left a mark on American and world literature” (Grizold 2009), the article nevertheless primarily is a biographical note. His life was described as “a series of adventures interrupted by periods of depression and loneliness, his final years characterized by intense suffering after he was no longer able to write” (ibid.). The prevalent tone was that of compassion. This piece mentioned Hemingway’s injuries sustained in WWI, the controversies surrounding his alleged execution of POWs in WWII, his four marriages, two plane crashes that he had survived in Africa and his mental health problems preceding his death. It is notable that Grizold portrayed Hemingway as “a giant of gentle character, although attracted by wild animal hunting in Africa, deep sea fishing, bullfighting and boxing” (Grizold 2009).

Slovenian readers were also regularly updated on the various new discoveries related to Hemingway, including the marginal subjects often reported by international news agencies. Between 2007 and 2012, for example, newspapers published several reports about Hemingway’s letters kept by the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston. Slovenian editors found particularly intriguing Hemingway’s correspondence with the German singer and actress Marlene Dietrich, whom he had met on a French cruise ship in 1934. Endearingly calling her “my little Kraut”, he kept corresponding with her until his death. Although affection was mutual, as a quote from a letter by Dietrich in the article confirms, their relationship remained platonic; according to Hemingway, this happened because they were “victims of unsynchronized passion” (“Hemingway in Marlene”, 2007; “Papa Hemingway”, 2007). Similarly affirmative was a note on Hemingway’s correspondence with Gianfranco Ivancich, whom Hemingway befriended at a bar in Venice in 1949 while discussing his war experiences. As was the case with Dietrich, this article also quotes several lines from a letter by Hemingway, this one to Ivancich about how much he misses his Italian friend. The author of the article points out that the intimate letters show the “gentle, emotional side of the otherwise strict ‘macho’ character that Hemingway showed to the public” (“Osebna pisma”, 2012), which was important for the Slovenian readership, who were less familiar with this side of Hemingway. Slovenian readers were also informed about the discovery of previously unknown notes by Hemingway in 2007. According to the *Delo*, Cuban researchers found these in a villa that had for many

years been Hemingway's home in Cuba; the phrase "unknown notes by Hemingway" in the title suggested the discovery of a possibly unknown literary piece by the famous author. However, the article then takes a somewhat unexpected turn, as it turns out that the document had no literary value, containing only information "about the writer's body weight" ("Na Kubi našli", 2007). Given the title "Hemingway's notes found in Cuba", it seems that a headline with Hemingway's name might even have been used as clickbait. The same category included at least two reports about the cats inhabiting Hemingway's house in Key West years after the writer died and which were special because "not only do they have 9 lives, they also have 6 toes" (Štravs 2007); the reports of Hemingway's alleged spying for the Soviet Union during WWII, where he apparently disappointed his commissioners "by failing to provide any useful political information" (Bratož 2009); the news about the opening of an archives with Hemingway's documents in Cuba, and many others.

Hemingway book loans

One relatively objective indicator of Hemingway's popularity among Slovenian readers in recent years is the number of loans of his books in Slovenian libraries. For the purposes of the present study, statistical data for the 1999–2019 period were analyzed, retrieved from the COBISS information system, which connects most libraries in Slovenia¹⁰. Given that the total number of editions of Hemingway's prose in book form in Slovenian exceeds 40, a selection of four representative items was analyzed: the two most widely reprinted novels: *For Whom the Bell Tolls (FWTBW)*, with eight different editions, and *A Farewell to Arms (AFTA)*, with five; the short novel *The Old Man and the Sea (TOMATS)*, with three editions; the fourth item included three collections of Hemingway's short stories: the first two were published under the title *The Old Man and the Sea* (1955, 1969), while the third was entitled *Big Two-Hearted River* (2010) (the latter three are hereafter referred to as SF). For each of the four groups, the annual cumulative number of book loans was established to determine the trends over the two decades. In addition, the total book loans (TBL) for all four categories over the last two decades was calculated.

The data reveal that cumulatively, the TBL for all titles and editions increased slightly between 1999 and 2019 from 1,064 to 1,265. However, the growth was

10 COBISS is a shared library cataloguing system that was introduced in the 1980s and connects over 900 school, public, special and university libraries in Slovenia (Žnidarec 2019). By 1999, it included all public libraries in Slovenia ("Kazalci rasti" n.d.), which is why that year was the cut-off date in the survey. The author wishes to thank Anamarija Lešnik from the Institute of Information Science (IZUM) in Maribor for extracting Hemingway data from the COBISS database.

not linear. Instead, fluctuation was evident, with a prominent increase in 2004–2005, when TBL quadrupled to over 4,000, mostly because of *FWTBW*, as is explained below. The TBL then dropped towards the median value (1,421) within a year, stabilizing again. Between 2011 and 2014, TBL once again rose slightly, to just under 1,900, after which the curve again entered a gentle but steady decrease. The curve of *FWTBW* closely resembles that of the TBL, predominantly because *FWTBW* in absolute terms was the most frequently borrowed work by Hemingway throughout almost the entire cycle. A spike of 4,058 TBL in 2004 appeared because the novel was put on the reading list for the 2005 general high school leaving exam for Slovenian¹¹. The 2,500 additional loans in 2004, when students started preparing for the exam, and over 2,300 additional loans in 2005 (admittedly, some of which could have been by the same patrons) clearly show a correlation with the 8,344 students who took the Slovenian leaving exam (“Splošna matura”, 2005, 18), considering that many of them very likely owned their own copy of the book¹². The total number of book loans of *FWTBT* most likely was even higher, given that many school libraries had not yet joined COBISS by 2005¹³. After 2005, the number of loans for *FWTBT* quickly returned to the pre-exam level (645 loans) and remained relatively stable for the next 12–13 years, with a minor rise around 2012 with 753 loans. In contrast, *AFTA* experienced a relatively stable trend throughout the two decades. In the late 1990s, *AFTA* was in lower demand than *FWTBT*, with 348 vs. 562 loans, respectively; however, the popularity of *AFTA* gradually increased, the number of loans almost doubling to 649 in 2004; the effect was most likely caused by the reprinting of the novel in 2004 and partly as a *matura* epiphenomenon. The total book loans of *AFTA* then decreased again to the pre-2004 level (364) and remained fairly constant, with the exception of 2014, when it increased to 583 again; however, by 2019, it again dropped to the 1999 level (373).

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- 11 In Slovenia, students intending to study at university must take the general school-leaving exam (*matura*) at the end of four-year high school. Two out of five exams are in elective subjects; three in mandatory, one of which is Slovenian, the mother tongue for the majority of students (or Italian/Hungarian for the members of the recognized national minorities). The written exam in Slovenian includes a literary essay either on a Slovenian literary work or a literary work from the canon of world literature; these titles are announced when students enroll in third year.
- 12 By and including 2005, the novel was available in eight editions in Slovenian. Unfortunately, print runs typically are not included in the colophons, so it is not possible to estimate the number of privately owned copies of the novel in Slovenia.
- 13 In contrast to public libraries, school libraries joined COBISS at a slower rate. For comparison: in 2005, COBISS included 26 high school libraries; by 2019, that number rose to over 90 (“Kazalci rasti” n.d.); however, the latter number includes many schools with very few or no students taking the *matura* exam.

One interesting example is the novella *TOMATS*. Its TBL of 103 shows that it was five times less popular with readers in 1999 compared to *FWTBT*, which registered 562 loans. Although the popularity of *TOMATS* grew after the turn of the century, it was the only title in our corpus whose popularity decreased in 2004 and in 2006, reaching, in fact, its lowest point, 96 and 52, respectively. After some fluctuation, with its TBL reaching a low of 84 loans in 2010, the following year the TBL of *TOMATS* tripled, almost certainly because of a new translation of the novella in 2011, which soon pushed the TBL to around 300, where it remained until 2019. Finally, collections of Hemingway's short fiction (SF) shared some of the characteristics of *TOMATS*. The data show that SF was in the lowest demand among all four titles in 1999, with just 51 TBL per year. The numbers then grew and doubled (117) by 2003. However, as with *TOMATS*, the TBL again dropped in the 2004-2005 period, only to start increasing after 2006 and practically quadrupling in 2011 (544) compared to 2006 (138). Given that the collections were published under the same title as *TOMATS*, it is highly likely that the new edition of the novella also spurred an increase in borrowing of collections of other short fiction. However, the same trend persisted for about a year, after which the TBL for short fiction stabilized around 200, still four times that of 1999.

CONCLUSIONS

The position of Ernest Hemingway in the Slovenian literary and cultural system after 1990 has not radically changed compared to the preceding period (cf. Maver 1990). As is the case elsewhere, he remains recognized as one of the most prominent American writers (Wagner-Martin 2000, 3), both by Slovenian literary scholars and critics and among the general public. Nevertheless, a few changes can be observed. One objective difference is that the number of new book editions of Hemingway's prose has decreased. This is particularly true of new translations, given that only two new book translations were commissioned since 1990. On the other hand, reprinting old translations has not been uncommon in the same period, despite the fact that several recent studies of Slovene translations of English texts (e.g. Gadpaille and Zupan 2020; Trupej 2019; Onič 2013) have revealed that translations do age over the decades, making new ones desirable; older Slovenian translations of Hemingway are no exception. One change involves a reduction in new studies on Hemingway by established Slovenian literary scholars and critics. However, that is most likely partly connected with a decline in book editions, given that in the past, comprehensive literary essays typically accompanied or followed new book editions

(e.g. Pirjevec 1953, 1955; Jurak 1975). On the other hand, the position of Hemingway as a cultural icon in Slovenia remains strong. In some regards, the advent of electronic media, an important vehicle for popular culture, promises that Hemingway, who was once “famous on a popular level” (Wagner-Martin 2007, 158), will fare well for some time. After all, the book loan statistical data for Slovenia over the last two decades also indicate that his works have successfully stood the test of the early 21st century, still attracting a relatively stable cohort of Hemingway aficionados.

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Simon Zupan
University of Maribor
simon.zupan@um.si



Ernest Hemingway v Sloveniji po letu 1990

Igor Maver (1990) je sistematično preučil status Ernesta Hemingwaya v slovenski kulturi do leta 1990. Po drugi strani pa razvoj dogajanja v slovenskem prostoru po navedenem letu zaenkrat še ni bil deležen sintetičnega pregleda. Prispevek obravnava tri vidike Hemingwayeve navzočnosti v slovenskem prostoru: literarnokritičsko recepcijo njegovih del v Sloveniji po letu 1990; njegov položaj v popkulturi; in statistične podatke o izposoji njegovih del v slovenskih knjižnicah. Analiza je potrdila, da se Hemingwayev položaj v slovenskem prostoru ni bistveno spremenil in še vedno ostaja eden najpomembnejših ameriških piscev 20. stoletja.

Ključne besede: Ernest Hemingway, recepcija, literarna kritika, popkultura, izposoja knjig

Memoirism hype: Why do Slovenian diplomats write memoirs?¹

Boštjan Udovič

Abstract

Literary theory puts memoirs on the intersection between literary and semi-literary genres, which makes them specific by definition. But when we talk about memoirs of diplomats, they are even more specific, as they are often the only source describing events that took place in diplomatic intercourse. This article analyses the significance of writing memoirs as seen by diplomats through interviews with ten Slovenian diplomats. The interviewees agree that memoirs need to be written, not only to shed light on events that took place in diplomacy, but also because they can be important literary works and contribute to the spread of diplomatic terminology.

Keywords: diplomatic memoirs, Slovenian diplomacy, (semi-)literary genres, linguistic capacity.

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INTRODUCTION

Foreign policy and diplomacy are highly complex to understand and analyse. Among the many reasons for this are the extraordinary complexity of interactions among different players, of meanings and activities, as well as the impact of factors accompanying diplomacy and foreign policy, lack of insight into what is happening on the diplomatic stage, and—crucially—a serious lack of sources for analysing events relating to diplomatic and foreign-policy activities of states and other actors. It is precisely the latter which makes it hard for researchers in this field to create a clear picture of what went on in a particular diplomatic moment. The search for scientific truth is thus limited, and the results are defined by the fragments that a particular researcher can get. Furthermore, this increases the probability of bias in depiction.

Different approaches have been used in the past to address these shortcomings. The most widely accepted approach was to rely on official sources in depicting diplomatic activities. But already in the 16th century, we can see the emergence of a new source for explaining events in inter-state diplomacy—memoirs of diplomats. Among the early writings of this kind are the memoirs, or travelogue, of Baron Sigismund von Herberstein, who was born in Vipava, on Slovenian territory. As a Habsburg diplomat, he travelled to Russia twice, and published a Latin account of it in Vienna in 1549 entitled *Rerum Moscoviticarum Commentarii* (Notes on Muscovite Affairs). The book is still considered one of the first European works on the situation in the predecessor of the Russian Empire. Similarly, German diplomat and scholar Adam Olearius (1603–1671) described his experience on the travels to Russia and Persia in his book *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung der Muscovitischen und Persischen Reyse* (1656). Olearius partly used the travelogue of his predecessor in his writing and partly revised from his perspective the foreign images as seen by Herberstein (Javor Briški 204ff). A boom of such reports from the field came in the 19th and early 20th century. Here, we will only mention three pieces of writing that have made it to the canon of diplomatic studies: Maurice de Talleyrand's *Mémoires du prince de Talleyrand* (1891), George Buchanan's *My mission to Russia and other diplomatic memories* (1923), and James Rennell Rodd's *Social and Diplomatic Memories* (1922–1925). Among Slovenian diplomats, we must also highlight Baron Josef Schwegel, who wrote his memoirs *Erinnerungen und Briefe* shortly before his death in 1914. All this leads to the question how to categorise memoirs of diplomats (and politicians engaging in diplomacy).

The question is not as easy as it may seem, since diplomatic memoirs are complex on several levels. Firstly, they can be a mix of fact and fiction. Memoirs of diplomats are first and foremost memories, and are thus tailored to the conscious and unconscious intentions of the author and particularly their intended messages.

Secondly, while this is true by definition, it is not necessarily characteristic of all diplomatic memoirs. The literary form gives diplomats the poetic licence for coupling the facts that occurred with (perceived, real or imaginary) reactions to them. As readers we cannot know for certain whether the reactions were exactly as described in memoirs. And diplomatic courtesy makes it impossible to check. Memoirs can quite easily stray from describing events as they happened and become literary fiction. Because it is impossible to tell truth from fiction from the text itself, the reader must assume that everything in memoirs is more or less true. The third dilemma in reading memoirs is their fragmented nature. Authors are free to choose the emphases and digressions in their memoirs, which means the stories can be neither coherent nor consistent, but above all not complete. This further dims the classification of diplomatic memoirs in terms of literary genre. If we add to this the fact that diplomatic memoirs can hardly be put in a single genre category—because the “subject’s clashes and splitting make it impossible to write in one pure genre” (Juvan 318)—it becomes even more difficult to define the genre of diplomatic memoirs.²

This article does not deal with categorisation of diplomatic memoirs into literary genres (Kmecl 299; Kos 121; Žigon and Udovič 93–94), but rather explores the question why diplomats write them in the first place (on implicit or explicit memoirs *cf.* Maver 17–23 and 47–57). We therefore wish to determine whether diplomats who have written memoirs find it important that memoir literature in diplomacy exists (and why), as well as their underlying motivation for writing their memoirs. Was it their inner need, or a need/inspiration that came from their environment (e.g. from the diplomatic, scientific or publishing sphere)? We will limit our analysis to memoirs of Slovenian diplomats written after 1991, because this area has been completely unexplored so far.

The article consists of three parts. The introduction is followed by a theoretical discussion on the categorisation of memoirs in terms of literary genre. This sets the framework for an empirical research involving Slovenian authors of diplomatic memoirs, which is followed by a discussion and conclusions.

DIFFICULTY OF CATEGORISING MEMOIRS INTO LITERARY GENRES

As already shown in the introduction, it is almost impossible to categorise memoirs into “pure” literary genres. Kmecl (299) claims that memoirs should be seen as a “**didactical piece of writing** of historical nature, only that the history in

2 Egerton (223) points out that memoirs (particularly by politicians; or in our case diplomats) cannot be put in a single genre because they are an example of *polygenre literature*.

it is **evaluated** very subjectively, even personally, from the author's perspective" (emphasis added). He sees memoirs as merely a record (not a literary work) defined by the author's personal views and value judgements (about what is good or bad). Similarly, Juvan (311) understands them as a subcategory of autobiography,³ where "every element is part of its own set of interpretation signs", which means that writing memoirs is mainly about interpreting facts, not listing them. The issue is clearly not simple, as different memoirs use different levels of (de)objectivisation or even subjectivisation. Žigon and Udovič (93) note about Dimitrij Rupel's *Slovenija na svetovnem prizorišču* (Slovenia on the World Stage) that the "author only partly objectivises facts and events, and his writing is often subjective and reflects personal involvement in the political and social developments presented in the book". Consequently, they believe the "text cannot be listed among classical memoirs, nor can it be categorised as a scientific discussion". Considering that it is also certainly not a literary piece, we come to the question what it actually is. The cited article does not provide an answer to this question, but it clearly shows that memoirism, particularly diplomatic memoirism, is extremely complex in itself, since it is difficult to categorise in any specific genre.

Let us take a look at two examples of Slovenian diplomatic memoirs. Franc Mikša wrote an erotic novel *Njegova ekscelenca Christian Grasset* (His Excellency Christian Grasset) where he implicitly presents his diplomatic experience from his posting in Klagenfurt, Austria. The second is Milan Balažič's book *Diplomatska vojna za mejo med Slovenijo in Hrvaško* (Diplomatic War for the Border between Slovenia and Croatia), which uses the form of journal to describe the events from 5 January 2009 to 26 May 2011.⁴ Already these short descriptions show how two examples of the same genre can differ extremely in how they approach their subject matter. Regardless of this diversity, Kralj (206) finds a typical feature of memoirs in emphasised public events and 'significance' of the memoirist in them.⁵ Diplomatic activity is clearly a public aspect, but it includes a distinct level of privacy (*cf.* Arbeiter 157–174). A memoirist can therefore decide how much of this privacy they wish to reveal. Some (e.g. Zvone Dragan and Dimitrij Rupel) emphasise the private aspects of their diplomatic activity much more than others (e.g. Roman Kirn and Jožef Kunič). In the abovementioned memoirs of Balažič, there is no mention of private aspects, while in Mikša's work they can be found only indirectly.

3 Avsenik Nabergoj (100) writes that Smith and Watson listed 52 genres of writing life stories, among which they recognise three forms of autobiography (in first, second and third person), which they distinguish from memoirs.

4 At that time, Milan Balažič was a strategic advisor to Slovenian Foreign Minister Samuel Žbogar.

5 In this sense, as opposed to autobiography, public aspects have preference in memoirs over private ones. This implicitly leads to attempts to describe facts objectively, or a tendency to depict them in an unmarked way (in terms of ideology and value judgements).

The view that it is almost impossible to draw a clear line between memoirs and autobiography is also supported by Marcus (35–37), who points out that autobiography involves writing about the individual's identity, but this is also true for memoirs. However, Marcus (35) highlights another thing that is very important for our research—the question of motivation, the reasons why an individual decides to write a particular work. She believes writing memoirs to be a case of false modesty, or as she puts it, rather than having something to tell it is about finding someone to tell it to (36). It can also be about the need to raise the appearance of uniqueness (35), or dodging responsibility (e.g. *us vs me*; 37–38). Of course, there is also a chance that the memoirist wishes to evaluate their life and work by committing to the act of writing, although this does not necessarily mean self-presentation (as characteristic of autobiography) (40). This view is similar to that of Schulze (21ff), who introduced the notion of *ego documents*, which he sees as a result of an individual's need⁶ to write down their revelations and experience. But he also warns (24–25) that the main problem of memoirs are their objectivity and credibility.⁷

What are the defining factors that make a piece of writing a memoir?

1. The first factor is certainly the purpose (which is also defined by ideology; *cf.* Trupej 141–152) – why the author writes the text. Jurić Pahor (163) posits that, while autobiography relies on intro- and extrospection, a memoirist does not self-evaluate past actions but merely reflects and reconstructs them. In other words: “An autobiographic text was and is not seen primarily as fiction, but rather as a form of self-representation, which includes a duplicated actuality, and the story portrayed refers to the author's empirical life course, although it may be articulated only in segments” (Koron 11). So, the purpose of the two is different.
2. Apart from the purpose, the person in which the text is written also differs. Autobiographies usually use the first, second and third person, while memoirs combine subjective and third-person storytelling (Žigon and Udovič 85ff). This means a memoirist can choose which facts will be presented through a personal lens, and when they wish to depict the objective truth (due to facts that may be unknown to the reader). The importance of using objectivisation to depict certain elements as historical facts is also underlined by Verginella (95), who adds that memoirs⁸ allow [a historian] “new perspectives and new interpretative challenges” (97; *cf.* Lekić 102–103).

6 This need may be external (e.g. access to a typewriter, computer, paper, pen, historical events) or internal (own convictions, emotions, other inner impulses, etc.).

7 Perenič (430ff) lists as *ego documents* also personal, intimate diaries of literary authors, “since they include statements that help us better understand their perception of themselves and the world around them”.

8 She calls them autobiographical sources.

3. Of course, the writing of memoirs also requires a certain temporal distance of the memoirist from the events being described. The greater this distance, the higher the likelihood that the author will diverge from factual representation of events and focus mainly on their own interpretation thereof (Given 504). This was highlighted in his memoirs by Ernest Petrič (2019), who wrote: “My book does not describe facts, but memories. It is how I remember things.”⁹ This shows that it is impossible to determine a timeline on which memoirs should be written. Nevertheless, most authors write memoirs once a certain period in their life is concluded (e.g. when they retire, change jobs or fields of work, etc.). Only rarely (e.g. in our case Dimitrij Rupel, but partly also Božo Cerar, Ernest Petrič, Franc Mikša and Milan Jazbec) do they write their memoirs while still actively engaged in the particular area that the memoirs refer to.
4. But the key difference between autobiography and memoirs is the target audience. Literary theory hardly deals with this issue.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the question of target audience is paramount, since it allows us to draw at least a soft dividing line between autobiography and memoirs. We claim that the author decides whether they will write an autobiography or memoirs. If they go for memoirs, this may be clear from the title (e.g. Petrič’s *Spomini in spoznanja: diplomat, pravnik, politik—Memories and Insights: Diplomat, Lawyer, Politician*) or the preface (e.g. Grobovšek: “*Who is this book for? Everyone to a certain extent. Both young and old*”; Kirn: “*The book was written for anyone with an interest in international relations, foreign policy, diplomacy*”; Dragan: “*That is why the book V politiki in diplomaciji [In Politics and Diplomacy] will be an interesting read for a wide array of interested readers*”). If the author does not explain who the book is meant for, and ‘only’ focuses on the question why it was written, then they set it out as an autobiography rather than memoirs.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON MEMOIRS OF SLOVENIAN DIPLOMATS

Research methods

This analysis includes all Slovenian authors who wrote memoirs related to their work in diplomacy after 1991. This cut-off year was selected because it was only

9 The importance, problems and dangers (or advantages) of adaptation, for instance in translations, are highlighted by Maček (117–125) and Žigon (153–171).

10 The importance of the reader is not analysed even in the seminal work of literary theory on autobiography edited by Alenka Koron and Andrej Leben *Avtobiografski diskurz: Teorija in praksa avtobiografije v literarni vedi, humanistiki in družboslovju* (2011).

after the break-up of Yugoslavia that Slovenian diplomacy formed. First the memoirs were classified according to the status of their members (Table 1), after which a written interview was prepared for the memoirists that are still alive. Out of the 14 interview requests sent out by e-mail on 7 April 2020, we have received 10 replies.

Table 1: List of memoirs of Slovenian diplomats since 1991

Author	Memoirs	Status
Andrej Capuder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pariški dnevnik: zapiski slovenskega veleposlanika v Franciji (1993–1997)</i> (Ljubljana: Družina, 1999). 	deceased (2018)
Bogdan Osolnik	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Med svetom in domovino: spomini 1945–1981</i> (Maribor: Obzorja, 1992); • <i>O slovenski državnosti</i> (Ljubljana: ZZB, 2004); • <i>Z ljubeznijo skozi surovi čas</i> (Novo mesto: Goga, 2010). 	deceased (2019)
Bojan Grobovšek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Homo diplomaticus slovenicus</i> (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 2000); • <i>Zakaj Slovenija ni Švica</i> (Tomišelj: Alpemedia, 2014); • <i>Trst, Ljubljana, Dunaj in širni svet</i> (Ljubljana: Totaliteta, 2018). 	retired
Božo Cerar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Diplomacija za kulisami: (dnevniški zapisi Slovencev v jugoslovanski diplomaciji od avgusta 1990 do avgusta 1991)</i> (Piran: Samozaložba, 2000); • <i>Opazovalci</i> (Ljubljana: MORS, 2011), • <i>Washingtonski zapiski</i> (Ljubljana: Modrijan, 2018). 	retired
Dimitrij Rupel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Slovenska pot do samostojnosti in priznanja</i> (Ljubljana: Kres, 1992); • <i>Skrivnost države: [spomini na domače in zunanje zadeve 1989–1992]</i> (Ljubljana: Delo, 1992); • <i>Odčarana Slovenija: [knjiga o slovenski pomladi in jeseni]</i> (Ljubljana: Mihelač, 1993); • <i>Srečanja in razhajanja</i> (Ljubljana: Nova revija, 2001); • <i>Prevezem zgodbe o uspehu</i> (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2004); • <i>Predsedovanje v ognju lastnih sil</i> (Ljubljana: Nova obzorja, 2009); • <i>Predsednik ali Tako, kot je bilo</i> (Ljubljana: Vale-Novak, 2009); • <i>Slovenija na svetovnem prizorišču</i> (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 2011); • <i>Negotovo življenje 176. članice OZN</i> (Ljubljana: Nova obzorja, 2013); • <i>Zelezni in žamet ali Od kulture do države: slovenska državnost in Evropska unija po koncu hladne vojne</i> (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 2017). 	retired, professor

Author	Memoirs	Status
Ernest Petrič	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Spomini in spoznanja: Diplomat, pravnik, politik</i> (Celovec: Mohorjeva družba, 2018) 	foreign policy advisor to the President of the Republic of Slovenia
Franc Mikša	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Njegova Eksclenca Christian Grasset</i> (Dob pri Domžalah: Miš, 2014). 	retired
Jože Šušmelj	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Trpko sosodstvo: nekateri vidiki odnosov med sosednjima državama v obdobju 1946–2001</i> (Trst: ZTT, 2009). 	retired
Jožef Kunič	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ambasador vseh</i> (Ljubljana: Tuma, 2004); • <i>Za sproščenost vseh</i> (Ljubljana: Liberalna akademija, 2006). 	retired
Karl Bonutti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Med izbiri in zgodovino</i> (Gorica: Goriška Mohorjeva družba, 2015). 	retired
Livio Jakomin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Na meji</i> (Ljubljana: Koščak, 2013). 	retired
Marko Kosin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Začetki slovenske diplomacije z Italijo: 1991–1996</i> (Ljubljana: Založba Fakultete družbene vede, 2000). 	deceased (2007)
Matjaž Šinkovec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Čakajoč Samuela: prispevki k oblikovanju slovenske zunanje politike 2008–2012 med čakanjem na osebni pogovor z ministrom za zunanje zadeve</i> (USA: Lulu, 2014); • <i>The 2020 vision for the Western Balkans: the rough version</i> (USA: Lulu, 2014). 	active diplomat, Police Attaché at the embassy in Sarajevo (title Ambassador)
Milan Jazbec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Slovenec v Beogradu: 1987–1991</i> (Pohanca: Samozaložba, 2006). 	active diplomat, Ambassador to North Macedonia
Roman Kirn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>V službi diplomacije</i> (Ljubljana: Modrijan, 2017). 	retired
Rudi Čacinovič	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Poslanstva in poslanštva: od Rakičana do Madrida in nazaj: Madžarska, Južna Amerika, Švica, Nemčija, Španija</i> (Maribor: Obzorja, 1985); • <i>Slovensko bivanje sveta: razvoj in praksa diplomacije</i> (Ljubljana: Enotnost, 1994); • <i>Svet v krizi: izbor zapiskov in komentarjev</i> (Ljubljana: DZS, 2004); • <i>Smeš in naključje v diplomaciji: diplomatski mozaik</i> (Ljubljana: Samozaložba, 2006). 	deceased (2008)
Vojko Volk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Od naroda do države in nazaj: pet esejev o razpadu Jugoslavije, pravici do samoodločbe, Sloveniji in njeni samostojnosti, človekovih pravicah, Kosovu</i> (Ljubljana: Samozaložba, 2012). 	active diplomat, Consul General in Trieste (title Ambassador)
Zvone Dragan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>V politiki in diplomaciji</i> (Ljubljana: Modrijan, 2018). 	retired

Source: Own analysis.

The interviewees were sent six questions, and asked to answer them after careful deliberation. The questions were structured to cover the purpose, person, time of writing and audience (see theoretical section). Due to space constraints, the analysis will focus on the questions of purpose and significance of the memoirs. By focusing on the purpose of the memoirs as seen by their authors, we wish to determine in particular the main motivation for their creation. Was the author driven to write their memoirs by internal or external factors? And is it important (and for whom or why) that diplomats write memoirs?

Results and analysis

The first question to the interviewees was: “Why did you write your memoirs about your diplomatic activities?” Mostly, the interviewees said they wanted to present or analyse the events that happened to them. Two of them stressed they were driven by an inner need (“I promised it to myself and my family [...]. I was also encouraged to do so by some of my fellow diplomats and historians”; “There are several reasons. One is the inner need of humans to share something [...]). Others stressed in particular that they wished to present certain events through reflection of a personal experience (»[...] a book with a reflection of a personal experience of the creation and maturing of Slovenian foreign policy and diplomacy could bring added value for those interested in international relations”), or that their diplomatic job put them in a unique position to see certain events up close (“I was among the first people, if not the first one, to go abroad in 1991, under special circumstances, without recognition from the receiving country [...].”; “I described the outset of the formation of diplomacy as an observer and participant”; “I had been delaying writing on this topic for a long time”). However, some interviewees said they wrote memoirs mainly because they thought the events they witnessed should be presented “more objectively”, since the (domestic and/or foreign) public only knew them from one perspective (“With the memoirs, I wanted to objectivise the events of the time, and set them in the context of the political developments in that period”; “In my books, I avoided personal accounts, and tried to show these events objectively”). Another interesting aspect came from two interviewees who said they wrote their memoirs/analyses to justify their role in a particular time. One interviewee said he did not write typical memoirs, but an account of the events, which is why he wrote them immediately after witnessing them. He added: “But in some corner of my mind, there was also the thought of not forgetting details, or making it easier for me to answer years later the question ‘What did you do in those times?’” Another interviewee pointed out the importance of writing memoirs for the body of Slovenian memoir literature. He believes writing

memoirs is a “professional and moral duty of diplomats [...], as this enriches the nation’s identity and the national collective memory”. His answer then goes on to stress the importance of memoirs for the search for objective truth and describing events from a time you experienced as a diplomat. Finally, one of the interviewees points out as direct incentive to write his book the “decline of professionalism in Slovenian diplomacy and underestimation of the importance of having your own ambitious and proactive foreign policy in Slovenia”.¹¹

The second question for the interviewees was whether they found it important that diplomats write memoirs (and why). The logic behind the question was to establish the meaning the authors of memoirs themselves ascribe to this genre, as well as the influence of memoirs on work in diplomacy and foreign policy. The interviewees largely agreed on the importance of diplomats writing memoirs, but they differed somewhat in the reasons they provided. One interviewee said it was right for diplomats to write memoirs “if they have something interesting to tell”. Another added that writing memoirs was important for “things not to be forgotten”, but he was against publishing memoirs at any cost or as ‘photobooks’ (i.e. memoirs that mainly stress the importance of a particular actor). Several interviewees agreed that diplomatic memoirs are not meant to “glorify the ‘outstanding’ work of an individual”,¹² and one even remarked that memoirs should be interesting, which is not a given since “uninteresting people also get into diplomacy”.¹³ In general, the interviewees agreed that memoirs were a remarkably welcome tool for establishing diplomatic practice and theory, and one even said the “painstaking processes and random events that brought us forward should be better presented”. The same interviewee highlighted the role of the individual as a key creator of successful or unsuccessful diplomatic events. In this sense, one of the interviewees also stressed that “writing memoirs, particularly in languages with a small number of speakers, strengthens and expands the linguistic capacity of expressing different social realities”. Another added the aspect of memoirs contributing to the development and understanding of foreign policy, pointing out that memoirs can “raise interest, especially among young people, for Slovenian foreign policy and diplomacy”. From the perspective of

11 Bonutti (13–14) lists three reasons for writing his memoirs: “Perhaps I wanted to fill the void that was left in my life after my wife’s death. [...] Many friends and acquaintances who are at least vaguely familiar with my life path have had remarks in recent years that I had experienced so many interesting things and met so many interesting people, and that it would be good to preserve this [...]. And the third reason [...]: I have always followed the disputes dividing the Slovenian nation with a bitter taste. [...] I wish for these memoirs to shed light on my work and help understand the reasons for some of my decisions, which I always took aiming at de-escalation”.

12 One interviewee said: “We have different kinds of memories. Memoirists often put themselves and their role in the forefront. They glorify their achievements and hide their errors. Such memoirs do more harm than good for historical depiction of events.”

13 A notable remark was that diplomatic cables certainly made for a more interesting read than memoirs.

foreign policy and diplomacy, we should also mention a point made by one of the interviewees that writing memoirs was important “if social, political or economic shifts notably impacted the country of service”, while he believes memoirs to be “unnecessary if one’s diplomatic service was in normal and routine circumstances”.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the interviews has shown three common points in reasoning why Slovenian diplomats (should) write memoirs. The main position of all the interviewees is that diplomats should write memoirs because this sheds light on the events they witnessed, while also adding a personal touch to certain historical frameworks, and above all offering insight into how actors in processes and relations in diplomacy and foreign policy act and think. With respect to the personal touch in memoirs, most interviewees agree it should be there. However, memoirs should not serve to glorify the achievements of an individual or hide their errors, since this would mean distorting the historical reality this individual witnessed. Drawing from the presented theoretical framework, we can confirm that Slovenian memoirist diplomats mostly support writing memoirs, not autobiographies.

Another common point in the interviews was that memoirs are also highly valuable for the development of diplomatic theory and practice. Most interviewees either explicitly or implicitly agreed that memoirs of diplomats could contribute to better understanding and higher quality of diplomacy and foreign policy, as well as their better formulation and structuring with respect to other activities of the state in the areas of interior and foreign policy. In this context, one of the interviewees stressed that “non-ministers and non-diplomats do not have access to such quantity of information as [foreign] ministers and diplomats”. Diplomatic memoirs are also important from the perspective of diplomatic terminology and language. Therefore, we cannot speak of the specific importance of diplomats’ memoirs only in the context of diplomatic studies, and their added value should also be sought on the intersection between social and humanist sciences, including literary theory. We must not forget that some diplomats frame their memoirs as a literary works due to the sensitivity of the information presented or situations that might put someone in a difficult position (e.g. *Njegova ekselenca Christian Grasset, Predsednik ali Tako, kot je bilo, Grenke pomaranče*).

The third finding confirmed by a majority of the interviewees is that diplomats should write memoirs from a certain temporal distance. The interviewees agreed that the relevance of memoirs is in critical evaluation of certain things, which is only possible once the events no longer cause any stir with the memoirist. On the other hand, some of the interviewees pointed out that it made sense to write soon after

events happen. This reduces the chance of the memory of the events being distorted, and at the same time allows greater analysis than after more time has passed.

In general, we can conclude that the interviewees agree memoirs are important and needed, particularly in the system of developing national diplomacy and foreign policy, because the personal experience of an individual, their view of the world and their critical evaluation of events can contribute to better understanding of and better attitude towards diplomacy and foreign policy.

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Boštjan Udovič
University of Ljubljana
Bostjan.udovic@fdv.uni-lj.si



Navdušenje nad memoaristiko: Zakaj slovenski diplomati pišejo spomine?

Memoari oz. spominska literatura je v literarni teoriji uvrščena na presek med literarnimi in polliterarnimi zvrstmi. Kot takšna je že *per definitionem* specifična. Če pa govorimo o spominih diplomatov, so ti še bolj specifični, saj so mnogokrat edini vir opisa dogodkov, ki so se v diplomatskem občevanju zgodili. Pričujoči članek, na podlagi 10 izvedenih intervjujev med slovenskimi diplomati, ki so napisali (pol)literarna dela, analizira pomen pisanja spominov, kot ga razumejo diplomati sami. Intervjuvanci se strinjajo, da je spomine pomembno pisati ne samo zaradi osvetljevanja dogodkov, ki so se zgodili v diplomaciji, ampak tudi zato, ker so spomini lahko pomembno literarno delo oz. delo, ki prispeva k uveljavljanju terminologije s področja diplomacije.

Ključne besede: diplomatski spomini, slovenska diplomacija, (pol)literarne zvrsti, jezikovna samoniklost.

Matej Cigale (1819–1889) als Übersetzer von Schulbüchern¹

Tanja Žigon

Abstract

Der Jurist und Sprachforscher Matej Cigale (1819–1889) ging in die slowenische Kulturgeschichte vor allem als Redakteur der slowenischen Ausgabe des Reichsgesetzblattes und als Vater der slowenischen Rechtsterminologie ein. Doch hat sich Cigale auch auf anderen Gebieten einen Namen gemacht: Wegen seiner ausgezeichneten Sprachkenntnisse wurde ihm die Herausgabe des deutsch-slowenischen Wörterbuches (1860) anvertraut, er legte eine gesammelte slowenisch-deutsche Wissenschaftsterminologie (1880) vor, wirkte als Aushilfskorrektor im k.k. Schulbücherverlag und gab selbst einige Schulbücher heraus. Im vorliegenden Beitrag wird vor allem seine Übersetzung des Heuffler'schen Schulbuches für den Erdkundeunterricht (1861) untersucht: Es wird den Fragen nachgegangen, wie Cigales Übersetzung beim Zielpublikum aufgenommen wurde, auf welche Probleme Cigale beim Übersetzen gestoßen ist, welche Strategien er sich bediente und wie sich die von ihm eingeführte Terminologie durchgesetzt hat.

Schlüsselwörter: Matej Cigale, Übersetzen, Schulbücher, Erdkunde, Terminologie, 19. Jahrhundert

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EINLEITUNG

Die frühen Anfänge des staatlichen Schulwesens in der Habsburger Monarchie liegen im 18. Jahrhundert und fallen in die Zeit Maria Theresias und Josephs II. Eine bedeutende Wende stellen aber erst die Schulreformen nach der Revolution 1848 dar: Erstens war man sich zu dieser Zeit allmählich der wichtigen Rolle der Bildung bewusst, zweitens differenzierte sich das Schulwesen aus² und drittens kann man nach 1848 von einer staatlich reglementierten Schulbuchproduktion und damit von einem raschen qualitativen und quantitativen Fortschritt der slowenischen Schulbuchproduktion sprechen (vgl. Mikoletzky 1972: 33–54; Žigon, Almasy und Lovšin 2017: 43–50). Da sich Gymnasien zum Ziel setzten, auf ein Universitätsstudium vorzubereiten, wurde das Ideal der Allgemeinbildung postuliert: Es wurden sprachlich-historische (Religion, Latein, Griechisch, Muttersprache, Geographie und Geschichte) und mathematisch-naturwissenschaftliche Fächer (Mathematik, Naturgeschichte und Naturwissenschaften) wie auch diverse freie Gegenstände unterrichtet (Almasy 2018: 75–76). Während die ersten slowenischen Schulbücher im 18. und Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts Katechismen und ABC-Fibeln waren, denen nach 1848 die Schullesebücher folgten (ibid.: 124–126), wurden ab den 1860er-Jahren die ersten fachspezifischen Lehrbücher herausgegeben (Žigon, Almasy und Lovšin 2017: 78–81). Eines der ersten gymnasialen Lehrbücher, die aus dem Deutschen ins Slowenische übersetzt wurden, war das 1859 von Ludwig von Hohenbühel-Heufler (1817–1885) verfasste Schulbuch *Kurze Reichs- und Länderkunde des Kaiserthums Österreich*. Die slowenische Ausgabe erschien 1861 im k.k. Schulbuchverlag;³ das bedeutet, dass das Lehrwerk für den Gebrauch in Gymnasien staatlich approbiert wurde. Das Heufler'sche Heimatkundewerk wurde von Matej Cigale unter dem Titel *Kratek popis Cesarstva Avstrijskega sploh in njegovih dežel posebej* ins Slowenische übersetzt.

Gemäß der Aufforderung von Anthony Pym, nämlich „Study translators, then texts“ (Pym 2009: 30) werden im Beitrag zuerst Matej Cigale und dessen biographischer Hintergrund sowie seine übersetzerische Tätigkeit mit besonderem Hinblick auf seine Übertragungen von Schulbüchern beschrieben. Des Weiteren werden, wie Pym (1998, 2009), und Wolf (2003, 2012) vorschlagen, die historischen Umstände untersucht, in denen das Schulbuch entstanden ist: Es werden anhand der Archivadokumente kulturpolitische Machtkonstellationen dargestellt, welche die Entstehung und die Herausgabe der slowenischen Übersetzung des Heufler'schen

2 Es entstanden neue Schultypen: Diese waren die Volks-, Bürger- und die Realschule, diverse Formen von Berufsschulen, welche man Fortbildungsschulen nannte, und die Gymnasien (mehr dazu vgl. Žigon, Almasy und Lovšin 2017: 24–51; vgl. auch Schmidt 1966: 8–16).

3 Bereits im Jahr 1772 wurde der *Verlag der deutschen Schulanstalt* gegründet, der als Vorgänger des seit 1855 bestehenden Schulbücherverlags gilt (N.N. 1872: 8).

Schulbuches begleitet und ungünstig geprägt haben, und schließlich die terminologischen Schwierigkeiten, Hindernisse und Herausforderungen besprochen, mit denen Cigale und andere zeitgenössische Übersetzer konfrontiert waren. Es wird von der These ausgegangen, dass sich viele der von Cigale eingeführten Benennungen und Termini durchgesetzt haben, dass es aber auch etliche, oftmals Neubildungen, gab, bei denen Cigale selbst nach besseren Lösungen suchte und das entsprechende slowenische Wort erst allmählich in den allgemeinen Sprachgebrauch aufgenommen wurde. In diesem Sinne übernahmen Übersetzer im 19. Jahrhundert nicht nur eine vermittelnde Rolle, sondern setzten auch Weichen für die Entwicklung einer einheitlichen, standardisierten und kodifizierten Nationalsprache mit ausgebauter Terminologie für alle Fachbereiche.

BIOGRAPHISCHES UND CIGALE ALS ÜBERSETZER

Um den weiteren Ausführungen einen Rahmen zu verleihen, soll nun zunächst auf den Lebens- und Schaffensweg Cigales eingegangen werden.⁴ Er wurde 1819 in einer bäuerlichen Familie im abgelegenen kleinen Dorf Črni Vrh (dt. Schwarzenberg) in der Nähe von Idrija (Idria) in Innerkrain geboren. Erst mit elf Jahren kam der wissbegierige Junge in die dortige Dorfschule und besuchte anschließend das Gymnasium in Görz. Anfang der 1840er-Jahre entschloss er sich, in Ljubljana (Laibach) Theologie zu studieren, doch verließ er bereits nach einem Jahr das Priesterseminar und zog nach Graz, um das Studium der Rechtswissenschaften aufzunehmen. Das in Graz angefangene Jurastudium beendete er 1846 in Wien. In den Studentenjahren vertiefte er auch sein linguistisches Wissen im Serbischen, Kroatischen, Tschechischen und Russischen und versuchte sich als Übersetzer. Er übertrug einige Lieder und übersetzte in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Juristen Anton Mažgon (1812–1849) die Triester Gemeindeordnung – eine Aufgabe, die den beiden von dem damaligen kaiserlichen Statthalter des Österreichischen Küstenlandes in Triest, Franz Seraph von Stadion (1806–1853), anvertraut wurde. Nach dem absolvierten Studium bestand Cigale erfolgreich die Richterprüfung, konnte jedoch wegen mangelnder finanzieller Mittel die richterliche Laufbahn nicht verfolgen; im Herbst des Revolutionsjahres 1848 nahm er die Einladung des unternehmerischen und belesenen Laibacher Druckers Joseph Blaznik (1880–1872) an und übernahm in Ljubljana die Redaktion des ersten (leider kurzlebigen) slowenischen politischen Blattes *Slovenija*. Im Oktober 1849 wurde Cigale wegen seiner ausgezeichneten Sprachkenntnisse nach Wien gerufen, um bei der Vorbereitung

4 Die im Weiteren angeführten Daten sind folgenden Quellen entnommen: Urbanc 2005: 10–11, Atelšek 2013, Kacin 2013, Kolarič 2013, Nuč 2017: 145–150. Hier findet man alle detaillierten Angaben zu den jeweiligen bio- und bibliographischen Daten.

der juristisch-politischen Terminologie mitzuwirken. Seitdem war er in der Terminologiekommission tätig, wo er mit Franc Miklošič (1813–1891), einem der Begründer der wissenschaftlichen Slawistik, zusammenarbeitete. Nachdem Miklošič das »Redaktionsbureau« verlassen hatte, wurde Cigale Ende des Jahres 1849 zum provisorischen Redakteur und ab 1850 bis zu seinem Tod 1889 zum Redakteur der slowenischen Ausgabe des Reichsgesetzblattes. Bereits 1853 gab Cigale mit den Juristen und Fachübersetzern Matija Dolenc (1810–1876) und Janez Navratil (1825–1896) die *Juridisch-politische Terminologie für die slavischen Sprachen* heraus (vgl. Hebenstreit in Wolf 2001: 171–173), wobei er den Hauptteil der redaktionellen Arbeit erledigte und auch das Vorwort verfasste (vgl. zu Cigales Übersetzungen von Rechtstexten Jemec Tomazin 2010: 91–97, 111–115; Nuč 2017, 2020). Bei der terminologischen Arbeit war Cigale mehr oder weniger sich selbst überlassen; er konnte weder auf eine ausgereifte slowenische Sprache zurückgreifen noch Wörterbücher heranziehen. Darüber hinaus gab es zu dieser Zeit fast keine slowenischen Rechtstexte, die er als Paralleltexte hätte verwenden können. Aus diesem Grund wurde Cigale bereits zu Lebzeiten als Vater der slowenischen Rechtsterminologie apostrophiert (mehr dazu Nuč 2017: 41–42), wobei die Zeitspanne von 1849 bis 1889 in der Entwicklung der slowenischen Rechtsterminologie sogar als Cigales Periode bezeichnet wird (Goršič 1920: 155).

Cigale tat sich allerdings nicht nur auf dem Gebiet der juristischen Terminologie hervor. Wegen seiner ausgezeichneten Sprachkenntnisse wurde er 1854 mit der Aufgabe betraut, das deutsch-slowenische Wörterbuch zusammenzustellen. Unter Berücksichtigung der Vorarbeiten seiner Vorgänger gab er 1860 das vom Laibacher Fürstbischof Anton Alois Wolf (1782–1859) finanzierte Wörterbuch mit mehr als 2000 Seiten heraus (Cigale 1860; mehr dazu Nuč 2017: 147–148). Als 1895 auch noch das slowenisch-deutsche Wörterbuch, redigiert vom Linguisten Maks Pleteršnik (1840–1923), erschien, wurde das erste große wissenschaftlich bearbeitete lexikographische Werk für die slowenische Sprache abgeschlossen (Lukan 1978: 202). Des Weiteren veröffentlichte Cigale auch linguistische Diskussionsbeiträge in slowenischen Fachzeitschriften (z. B. *Slovenski pravnik*), praxisorientierte Texte zur Verwendung der slowenischen Sprache in den damaligen Zeitungen (*Novice*, *Slovenski glasnik*, *Kres*) und gab 1880 eine gesammelte slowenisch-deutsche Wissenschaftsterminologie (*Znanstvena terminologija z ozirom na srednja učilišča*) heraus, in der alle Termini, die im Slowenischen zu seiner Zeit kursierten, deskriptiv erfasst wurden.

Letztlich spielte Cigale aber auch im Bereich der Herausgabe der ersten slowenischen Schulbücher und damit bei der Entstehung der jeweiligen Fachterminologie eine wichtige Rolle, denn es waren gerade die Schulbücher, die ganze Generationen angehender slowenischer Intellektueller in der Hand hielten. Somit übte Cigale einen großen Einfluss auf die sprachliche Entwicklung und auf die Standardisierung der slowenischen Schrift- und vor allem Wissenschaftssprache

aus. Dies war ihm möglich, weil er als Aushilfskorrektor im k.k. Schulbücherverlag⁵ wirkte (N.N. 1872: 24) und die slowenischen Ausgaben der Lehrwerke vor dem Druck prüfte. Cigale hat in dieser Funktion aber sicherlich mehr geleistet als lediglich typographische Fehler auszubessern; man kann davon ausgehen, dass er auch als Begutachter von Schulbüchern wirkte, so manches komplett überarbeitete (z. B. die beiden Katechismen, den *Veliki katekizem* und den *Mali katekizem* in 1889), selbst neue Lehrwerke schrieb, z. B. die Grammatiken für slowenische Volksschulen (*Prva, druga in tretja slovnica za slovenske ljudske šole*), und Schulbücher bzw. einzelne Schulbuchtexte aus dem Deutschen und aus anderen Sprachen übersetzte (vgl. Almasy 2018: 104–105).

Im vorliegenden Beitrag richtet sich das Augenmerk auf Cigales Schulbuch für das Fach Erdkunde. Anhand der Archivquellen werden zunächst seine Übersetzung des Heufler'schen Schulbuches für den Erdkundeunterricht aus dem Jahr 1860 und seine nie gedruckte Übersetzung des Lehrbuches *Grundzüge der allgemeinen Erdkunde* besprochen. Anschließend wird anhand der 1860 erschienenen Übersetzung des Heufler'schen Schulbuches den Fragen nachgegangen, auf welche Probleme Cigale beim Übersetzen gestoßen ist, welcher Übersetzungsstrategien er sich bediente und wie sich seine neu eingeführte Terminologie durchgesetzt hat.

ARCHIVQUELLEN ZU DEN ÜBERSETZUNGEN DER GEOGRAPHIESCHULBÜCHER

Matej Cigale hat sich in den 1860er-Jahren zweimal mit dem Übertragen von Schulbüchern für den Erdkundeunterricht beschäftigt. Beide Male hatte er auf der formalen Ebene (Herausgabe, Approbation und der tatsächliche Gebrauch in den Schulen) mit unvorhergesehenen Schwierigkeiten zu kämpfen, was mit Hilfe von Archivadokumenten rekonstruiert werden kann.

Cigales slowenische Übersetzung der *Kurze[n] Reichs- und Länderkunde des Kaiserthums Österreich* wurde Ende des Sommers 1861 mit der hohen Staatsministerial-Verordnung für die »Verwendung beim Unterrichte an Mittelschulen« approbiert (AS33 Landesregierung in Laibach, Fasz. 31/14, Aktenr. 1717 v. 5. März 1869), doch konnten die politischen Zustände, die zur Zeit des Erscheinens herrschten, für das neu übersetzte Lehrwerk ungünstiger gar nicht sein. Anfang der 1860er-Jahre entsprach das Heufler'sche Schulbuch nämlich nicht mehr der politischen Realität der damaligen Zeit, da es im Zuge der italienischen Unabhängigkeitskriege zu österreichischen Territorialverlusten kam; so wurde im Juni 1859 zuerst die österreichische Herrschaft in der Lombardei beendet, im Wiener Frieden

5 Von den hauseigenen Korrektoren wurde die typographische Korrektur der Lehrwerke besorgt, für alle Sprachen der Monarchie gab es außerdem einen Aushilfskorrektor.

vom Oktober 1866 wurde Venetien als italienischer Besitz bestätigt (vgl. Teil II, Kapitel II, Punkt VII im Schulbuch: Heufler 1859: 152–186; Heufler 1861: 146–165) und 1867 kam es durch den Umbau des Kaisertums Österreich zu einem Staatenverband auf der Grundlage des österreichisch-ungarischen Ausgleiches. Cigale hatte in seiner Übersetzung den Verlust der Lombardei zwar berücksichtigt und die entsprechenden Passagen ausgelassen, doch konnte er die weitere politisch-historische Entwicklung nicht voraussehen. Somit wurde das neu herausgegebene slowenische Lehrwerk bald zu einem Relikt der vergangenen Zeiten und war für den schulischen Gebrauch nicht mehr aktuell. Aus den Akten, die acht Jahre nach der Approbation entstanden sind, geht eindeutig hervor, dass es mit dem Werk starke Absatzprobleme gab, denn, wie es in der Akte heißt: »Es ist hiervon noch eine namhafte Anzahl von Exemplaren am Lager vorrätig, deren Nutzbarmachung für Schulzwecke wünschenswerth erscheint« (ibid.).⁶ Das Ministerium für Cultus und Unterricht ersuchte 1869 umgehend »um die Äusserung, ob Aussicht vorhanden ist, dass der im k.k. Schulbücherverlage erschienenen slowenischen Ausgabe der österreichischen Reichs- und Landeskunde ein größerer Absatz gesichert würde, wenn dessen Preis herabgesetzt und das Werk selbst theilweise umgeändert würde« (AS33 Landesregierung in Laibach, Fasz. 31/14, Aktenr. 1717 v. 5. März 1869). Zu einer Neuauflage des Schulbuches kam es nie: Die Landesregierung in Laibach riet nach der Beratung mit einzelnen Bezirkshauptmannschaften in einem Schreiben vom 20. November 1869 von einer zeitgemäß umgeänderten Neuauflage zu herabgesetztem Preis ab, denn von dem Lehrwerk wurden in all den Jahren lediglich 100 Exemplare verkauft (AS33 Landesregierung in Laibach, Fasz. 31/14, Aktenr. 8584). Doch soll hier erwähnt werden, dass die niedrigen Absatzzahlen auch damit zusammenhingen, dass Cigales Übersetzung für die Verwendung an Gymnasien mit slowenischer Unterrichtssprache,⁷ welche es in den 1860er-Jahren noch gar nicht gab (Hojan 1972: 33),⁸ approbiert wurde.

Wie man den Archivquellen entnehmen kann (AS31 Statthaltereie in Laibach, Fasz. 31/13,14, Aktenr. 5262 v. 27. April 1863) hatte Cigale 1863 seine zweite Übersetzung eines geographischen Schulbuches fertiggestellt. Es handelte sich um das

6 In diesem und weiteren Zitaten werden sowohl die damalige Schreibweise als auch die eventuellen Schreibfehler beibehalten.

7 Das Unterrichtsfach Slowenisch wurde in den 1850ern als Freigegegenstand an den Mittelschulen zugelassen. Allmählich wurde Slowenisch auch bei anderen Gegenständen als Unterrichtssprache eingeführt, zunächst beim Religionsunterricht (dagegen hatte es nie Widerstände gegeben), später auch bei den »leichten« Fächern wie Geographie und Geschichte (von 1806 bis 1910 ein gemeinsames Schulfach (Almasy 2018: 88).

8 In Görz, Triest und Koper wurde an den Gymnasien auf Italienisch und Deutsch unterrichtet, in Kranj, Maribor, Celje und Ljubljana gab es gemischtsprachige Gymnasien, die restlichen Gymnasien (z. B. in Graz, Klagenfurt sowie noch eines in Celje und Ljubljana) wurden deutsch geführt (Schmidt 1966:137; Rumlper und Seger 2010: 225).

von Anton Schubert verfasste Lehrwerk *Grundzüge der allgemeinen Erdkunde* (slow. *Početni nauk o zemljepisu*). In diesem Fall hat sich das k.k. Staatsministerium an die k.k. Landesbehörde gewandt, ihr das Manuskript Cigales übermittelt und darum gebeten, sich im Einvernehmen mit der k.k. Staathalterei in Graz »gutachtlich zu äußern, ob das Bedürfnis einer solchen Übersetzung in dem Grade vorhanden sei, um die Herausgabe derselben auf Kosten eines Studiums- oder Schulfonds zu rechtfertigen« (ibid.). Um Hilfe wurde die Direktion des Laibacher Gymnasiums gebeten, die am 4. Juli 1863 (ibid., Aktenr. 8475) feststellte, dass Schuberts Geographiebuch »derzeit weder an den hierländigen noch an den steiermärkischen Gymnasien benutzt« wird, denn man verwendet das Schulbuch aus der Feder von Vincenz F. Klun (ibid.).⁹ Über die bereits vorhandene Übersetzung von Cigale schrieb man: »Was den sprachlichen und stilistischen Werth der fraglichen slowenischen Übersetzung betrifft, so lautet das mitfolgende Gutachten des Lehrers Josef Marn, so wie auch der k.k. steiermärkischen Statthalterei hierüber günstig. Die Sprache ist leicht verständlich und korrekt, die Terminologie gut gewählt und die Übersetzung im Allgemeinen gelungen zu nennen« (ibid.). Doch liest man im Weiteren, dass man auf einen bedeutenden Absatz kaum rechnen dürfte, »da beschränkte Vermögensverhältnisse der weit überwiegenden Mehrzahl der Schüler kaum die Beschaffung der unentbehrlichen Lehrbücher gestatten« und auch, dass die Unterrichtssprache am Gymnasium Deutsch sei, weswegen die slowenische Übersetzung nicht »unumgänglich nothwendig« sei; man fügte aber noch hinzu: »Höchstens könnte es den Schülern der ersten Gymnasial- oder Realklasse Dienste leisten und manchem, der im deutschen Sprachausdrucke noch minder geläufig ist, als slowenisches Hilfsbuch für das geographische Studium willkommen sein« (ibid.). Tatsache ist, dass die Übersetzung in der Schublade liegen blieb,¹⁰ doch spricht dieses Beispiel auch davon, dass die Interessenlagen der damaligen Zeit sehr komplex waren und dass nicht immer in Wien über die »slowenische Schulrealität« entschieden wurde, manchmal hatten die Behörden in Krain selbst alle Fäden in ihren Händen.

ÜBERSETZUNG DES HEUFLER'SCHEN SCHULBUCHES

Das von Hohenbühel-Heufler verfasste und von Cigale ins Slowenische übertragene Schulbuch für den Erdkundeunterricht war zum Gebrauch in den Unter- gymnasien oder -realschulen bestimmt, doch wurde es, wie oben skizziert, in den

9 Vincenz F. Klun (1823–1975) verfasste mehrere geographische Schulbücher (vgl. Pirjevec 2013); um welches Schulbuch konkret es sich in diesem Fall handelte, ist aus der Akte nicht ersichtlich.

10 Mitte der 1860er-Jahre wurde beim Verlag Slovenska Matica noch darüber diskutiert, ob man das Schulbuch herausgeben sollte, doch hat man die endgültige Entscheidung nie getroffen (Urbanc 2005: 11).

Schulen kaum verwendet. Trotzdem kann nicht geleugnet werden, dass Cigale, der im Zeitraum von 1869 bis 1877 als Redakteur und Bearbeiter von geographischen Namen auch beim ersten der im Verlag *Slovenska matica* erschienenen slowenischen Weltatlas *Atlant* mitgearbeitet hatte, auf diesem Gebiet Pionierarbeit leistete. Seine Nachfolger, die ab den 1865er-Jahren weitere Geographieschulbücher übersetzten (z. B. Ivan Lapajne, der die Erdkunde für Volksschulen von Blasius Kozenn (slow. Blaž Kocen; 1876)¹¹ übertrug) oder selbst verfassten (z. B. Janez Jesenko (1865, 1883) und Ivan Vrhovec (1897)¹²), griffen immer wieder auf Cigales Werk zurück.

Die slowenische Übersetzung des heimatkundlichen Schulbuches, das das Grundwissen über das Kaisertum Österreich und seine Länder vermittelte, wurde auf 381 Seiten gedruckt und folgte der Makrostruktur des Heufler'schen Originals, ließ aber die Lombardei-Kapitel (Heufler 1859: 169–178) aus, da diese nach den österreichischen Territorialverlusten Ende der 1850er-Jahre nicht mehr aktuell waren. Auch auf inhaltlicher Ebene sind bei der Übersetzung keine Abweichungen vom Ausgangstext festzustellen. Als Jurist und erfahrener Übersetzer von Rechtstexten hielt Cigale an dem Äquivalenzprinzip fest: In der Übersetzung wurden sowohl alle Informationen aus dem Ausgangstext beibehalten als auch jegliche Ergänzungen vermieden. Als Terminologe hatte er jedoch das Bedürfnis, seine terminologischen Lösungen in den Fußnoten zu erläutern (Tabelle 1).

Tabelle 1: Cigales terminologische Erklärungen in den Fußnoten.

<i>Kratek popis Cesarstva Avstrijanskega</i> (Heufler 1861)	
1	Beseda pogorje (<i>Gebirgszug, Gebirgskette</i>) se rabi v ti knjigi za rajdo gor ali za gore, ki se stegujejo na dolgost; beseda gorovje (<i>Gebirgsgruppe</i>) pa za gore, ki se razraščajo bolj na širokost (S. 10).
2	Razvodje (<i>Wasserscheide</i>) pomeni vodno mejo ali mejo med vodami, ki se odtekajo v različne večje reke ali pa tudi v različne morja (S. 13).
3	Porečje (<i>Flussgebiet</i>) v širšem pomenu, v katerem se sploh rabi v teh bukvah, pomeni ves svet, ki visi proti kaki reki, da se vse vode z njega odtekajo vanjo; ravno tako pomeni pomorje (<i>Meeresgebiet</i>) v širšem pomenu vse tiste dežele, ki so nagnjene k temu ali unemu morju, da vse njih vode vanj teko (S. 20).

Wenn ein im Slowenischen weniger geläufiger Fachausdruck im Text zum ersten Mal vorkam, wurde in Klammern der deutsche Begriff hinzugefügt, dem eine

11 Während die tschechische Übersetzung seines Schulbuches 1880 approbiert wurde, erschien die slowenische Übersetzung von Lapanje im Verlag von Eduard Hölzel in Wien und ist auf den approbierten Listen des Ministeriums für Cultus und Unterricht nicht zu finden (Alex 1876–1918).

12 Alle genannten Werke wurden für den Schulgebrauch approbiert (vgl. *ibid.*)

detaillierte slowenische Erklärung folgte. Der Zieltext war somit für den Zielleser verständlicher und sicherte auch Kenntnisse der deutschen Terminologie, die für das weitere universitäre Studium nicht nur wichtig, sondern unumgänglich waren; eine solche Praxis beim Übersetzen kennt man auch aus den Übersetzungen mathematischer und botanischer Lehrbücher der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts (Žigon und Almasy 2020: 38–49). Die oben angeführten Fachbegriffe sind auch bei Jesenko (1865: 34–35) oder Vrhovec (1897: 12) zu finden und gehören heute zum festen Fachwortschatz im Slowenischen.

Viele geographische Begriffe benutzte Cigale ohne diese zusätzlich zu erklären, da sie im allgemeinen Sprachgebrauch relativ oft benutzt wurden. Diese Termini sind später auch in seiner *Wissenschaftlichen Terminologie* (Cigale 1880) wie auch im Slowenisch-deutschen Wörterbuch von Pleteršnik (2014) zu finden. Ein Beispiel dafür ist der Begriff »Anhöhe«, der 1861 von Cigale als *berdo* und 1880 in der *Wissenschaftlichen Terminologie* als *brdo* mit dem Vermerk »ggr.« übersetzt wurde, was darauf hinweist, dass es sich um einen geographischen Begriff handelt. In der Terminologie von 1880 wurde ferner auf die aus dem Kroatischen übernommene Übersetzung *povišica* hingewiesen (Vermerk: *kroatische Terminologie*), die sich später nicht durchgesetzt hat. Ähnlich wird bei dem Wort *Küste* vorgegangen, wobei sich bis heute im Slowenischen der Begriff *obala* etabliert hat. Auch Cigale kannte die Bezeichnung *obala*, und zwar aus dem 1818 von dem Philologen Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787–1864) herausgegebenen serbischen Wörterbuch *Srbski riječnik*.¹³

Tabelle 2: Geografische Begriffe, die ohne weitere Erklärung gebraucht wurden.

	Kurze Reichs- und [...] (Heufler 1859)	Kratek popis Cesarstva [...] (Heufler 1861)	Wissenschaftliche Terminologie (Cigale 1880)	Slowenisch-deutsches Wörterbuch (Pleteršnik 2014 [1895])
4	Anhöhe (S. 282)	berdo (S. 258)	ggr. brdo, povišica (kroat. T.)	břdō
5	Küste (S. 18)	morski breg (S. 19)	ggr. morski breg ali kraj, morsko obrežje	obřežje

Obwohl Cigale über ein außergewöhnliches Gespür für eine ausgewogene Verwendung, Schaffung und Einführung slowenischer Exonyme für die Namen aus allen Teilen der Welt verfügte und damit mit einem Prozess begann, der heute

13 Der Eintrag in der *Wissenschaftlichen Terminologie* lautet: »Ufer, ggr. breg (bei Vuk auch obala, nicht obal); Uferland, obrežje, pribrežje« (Cigale 1880: 128). Es wäre interessant, sich in diesem Kontext auch anderssprachige Texte anzuschauen, die sich mit den slowenischen Gebieten beschäftigen (vgl. Maver 2018: 17–23).

in der Standardisierung im Bereich der geographischen Namenkunde mündet (vgl. dazu Kladnik 2005, 14–15), ist es bei seiner Übersetzung des Schulbuches aus dem Jahr 1861 relativ schwer, eine einheitliche Übersetzungstrategie zu definieren (Tabelle 3). Die Cigale-Übersetzung weist nämlich erhebliche Inkonsistenz auf, da er in einigen Fällen nur den deutschen (Beispiel 6: Wasserfall *Lauffen*) oder nur den slowenischen Namen (Beispiel 7: *jezero sv. Volfganga, jezero Celsko*) anführt, in den anderen wird wiederum der slowenische (oder der deutsche) Name kursiv in Klammern angegeben (Beispiele 6 und 7). Im Fall der ungarischen Stadt Pécs (Beispiel 8) steht die alte slowenische Benennung der uralten Bischofsstadt an der ersten Stelle, gefolgt von den Ortsnamen in slowakischer, ungarischer und deutscher Sprache. Im Beispiel 9 sind die geografischen Eigennamen nur auf Slowenisch angeführt, so dass der Leser nicht unbedingt weiß, um welches Komitat (*županija*) bzw. welche Wälder es sich handelt. Dem Zielleser war in diesem Kontext wahrscheinlich nur das Exonym *Blatno jezero* (dt. *Plattensee*, ungar. *Balaton*) bekannt, bei allen anderen Namen bestand die Gefahr, dass man die Toponyme nicht mal auf der Landkarte finden konnte, worüber sich der slowenische Erzähler Fran Erjavec (1834–1887) in einem Brief an seinen Kollegen Fran Levstik (1831–1887) beklagte (Žigon 1931: 494).

Tabelle 3: Geographische Namen in Cigales Übersetzung.

<i>Kratek popis Cesarstva Avstrijanskega (Heufler 1861)</i>	
6	[...] dva slapa, divji <i>Lauffen</i> in pa <i>Traunfall</i> (Trunski slap), katerih se ladije ogibljejo po izkopanih kanalih (S. 40).
7	jezero Labinsko (<i>Almsee</i>), jezero sv. Volfganga, jezero Celsko, Mesečno (<i>Mondsee</i>) in Atsko (<i>Attersee</i>) (S. 98).
8	[...] starodavno škofje mesto Pečuh ali Pečuj (slovaški: Petikostely, magj. <i>Pecs</i> , nem. <i>Fünfkirchen</i>) (S. 302).
9	Vesprimska županija [...] obsega severovzhodno okolico Blatnega jezera, velike hrastove, lipove in bukove gozde loga Bakonjskega in pa Šomljavske vinske gorice (S. 303). ¹⁴

Ferner weist die Cigale-Übersetzung auch noch weitere Charakteristika auf: Erstens orientierte sich der sehr wortgetreue – manchmal zulasten der Idiomatik zu wortgetreue Cigale – stark am Ausgangstext und blieb dem Original treu, was sich vor allem in der Beibehaltung der Wortreihenfolge des Originaltextes widerspiegelt (Tabelle 4). Zweitens benutzte er des Öfteren unpersönliche Verbformen, insbesondere Strukturen mit dem Pronomen »se« und Lösungen mit

14 Der Text auf Deutsch lautet: »Das Veszprimer Komitat [...] umfasst die nordöstliche Umgebung des Plattensees, die großen Eichen-, Linden- und Buchenforste des Bakonyer-Waldes, die Rebentügel von Schomlau (Somlyo)« (Heufler 1861: 330).

der Verbform in der dritten Person, was bei den juristischen Texten erwünscht ist, jedoch im Slowenischen unnatürlich klingt, wenn es sich um geographische Schultexte handelt.

Tabelle 4: Beibehaltung der deutschen Wortfolge in slowenischen Sätzen.

	Kurze Reichs- und [...] (Heufler 1859)	Kratek popis Cesarstva [...] (Heufler 1861)
10	Es gibt im Kaiserthume eine einzige Gegend, wo die Vorposten der Nordslaven und Südslaven westwärts das deutsche, ostwärts das magyarische Hauptgebiet scheiden, und in welcher eine große Stadt liegt, deren Bevölkerung zwar deutsch ist, jedoch auch aus allen anderen Hauptstämmen, insbesondere auch aus dem Stamme der Italiener, zusammengesetzt ist (S. 37).	V našem cesarstvu je en edini kraj, kjer bi djal sprednje straže severnih in južnih Slovanov pregrajajo glavno okolijo na zahod nemškega, na vzhod pa magjarskega naroda, in v katerem stoji mesto veliko, ljudstva res da po največem številu nemškega, pa vendar zloženega tudi iz vseh družih glavnih plemen, zlasti tudi iz laškega (S. 37).

Abschließend seien hier noch einige ungewöhnliche Lösungen erwähnt, die als Folge der noch nicht vorhandenen slowenischen Termini zu verstehen sind. So übersetzte Cigale *Säugetier* als *dojivka* (Heufler 1861: 213), während *Insekten* zu *preščenjenci* (Heufler 1861: 32) wurden; allerdings führte Cigale bei den letzterwähnten in Klammern auch die Übersetzung *insekti* (ibid.) an. Cigale versuchte auf der Grundlage des deutschen Begriffs (säugen; slow. *sesati*) einen neuen slowenischen Begriff zu bilden, der sich jedoch später nicht etablierte. Die Neubildung *dojivka* wurde nämlich nicht aus dem Verb *sesati*, sondern aus dem Verb *dojiti* (dt. *stillen*) abgeleitet. Der Unzulänglichkeit dieser Lösung musste sich Cigale bewusst gewesen sein, denn bereits in seiner *Wissenschaftlichen Terminologie* wurde die Neubildung *dojivka* durch den Begriff *sesavci* ersetzt, der sich daraufhin im Slowenischen auch etablierte. Ähnlich wird in der Cigale-Terminologie 1880 auch die Bezeichnung *preščenjenci* für Insekten nicht mehr angeführt, sondern das slowenische Wort *žuželka* (auch »žužovka«) angegeben, das vom Naturwissenschaftler Fran Erjavec in seinen botanischen Arbeiten benutzt wurde, wie im Pleteršnik-Wörterbuch (Pleteršnik 2014) angegeben. Cigale versuchte oft auch anhand der deutschen Wortbildungsverfahren neue slowenische Wörter zu kreieren. So suchte er nach möglichen slowenischen Zusammensetzungen, wie z. B. *pustopoljina* (*pusto+polje* = *karg+Feld*) für das Steppengebiet. Beim Begriff *pustopoljina* führte Cigale in Klammern allerdings auch das Synonym *steпа* (dt. *Steppe*) (Heufler 1861: 33) an, das sich später allmählich auch durchsetzte. Es kann also konstatiert werden, dass manchmal der Wunsch nach neuen slowenischen Begriffen so groß war, dass man um jeden Preis versuchte, ein neues Wort zu erfinden, das aber im allgemeinen Gebrauch keine Verwendung fand, so dass es später durch ein neues ersetzt werden musste.

FAZIT

Die Rolle der Übersetzer und die Bedeutung der Schulbuchübersetzungen im 19. Jahrhundert sollten nicht unterschätzt werden, sie trugen nämlich wesentlich zur Standardisierung und Entwicklung der slowenischen Fachsprache bei. Eine der wichtigen Persönlichkeiten, die im Terminologie-Bereich immense Arbeit geleistet haben, war Matej Cigale. Wie gezeigt, ist es bei einer translationswissenschaftlichen Analyse von großer Bedeutung auch die historisch-politischen und biographischen Aspekte zu beachten, denn sie entscheiden oftmals über den Erfolg oder Misserfolg eines Lehrwerkes. Das hat sich auch bei der Übersetzung des Heufler'schen Schulbuches gezeigt: Erstens war im vorliegenden Beispiel das Schulbuch für den Erdkundeunterricht bereits bei seinem Erscheinen schon teilweise veraltet, da die italienischen Unabhängigkeitskriege allmählich die politische Landkarte verändert haben, und zweitens versteht sich von selbst, dass Cigales Übersetzung dem in der Ausgangssprache geltenden Normensystem unterworfen war: Cigale war, wie man aus seiner Bio- und Bibliographie weiß, ein etablierter Übersetzer präskriptiver juristischer Texte, weswegen auch seine Übersetzung des Schulbuches sehr ausgangstextorientiert ist. Es gibt keine Ergänzungen, Erläuterungen oder Auslassungen, die dem Zielleser an manchen Stellen das Verstehen erleichtern würden. Doch sollte der Geographieunterricht zum Ziel haben, den Gymnasiasten Kenntnisse über ihre nahe und ferne Umgebung zu vermitteln. Cigale versuchte, seinem Zielpublikum wenigstens im Bereich der geographischen Namen entgegenzukommen: Es werden häufig Endonyme verwendet, obwohl es einem schwerfällt, hinter diesem Versuch eine einheitliche Strategie zu erkennen. Es werden einerseits oftmals die ursprünglichen geographischen Namen erhalten, ohne in Klammern einen slowenischen Namen zu nennen, andererseits werden aber oft alle geographischen Namen ins Slowenische übertragen, ohne den eigentlichen Namen zu nennen, was oftmals die geographische Raumorientierung erschwert. Aus den terminologischen Lösungen, die im Schulbuch und später in der *Wissenschaftlichen Terminologie* (1880) aus der Feder von Matej Cigale vorkommen, ist ersichtlich, dass verschiedene Begriffe um die endgültige Etablierung im allgemeinen Sprachgebrauch miteinander konkurrierten, wie zum Beispiel die aus dem Kroatischen, Serbischen, aber auch Tschechischen und Russischen abgeleiteten Wörter, die nach diversen deutschen Wortbildungsverfahren zusammengesetzten Neubildungen oder einfach »exotische« Neologismen, die man sich ausdenken musste und die entweder bald wieder in Vergessenheit gerieten oder sich etablieren konnten. Tatsache ist, dass Cigale dank seiner jahrzehntelangen Bemühungen um die Schaffung einer slowenischen Fachsprache in verschiedenen Disziplinen (Rechtssprache, geographische Namenkunde, Naturwissenschaften) zu Recht als Begründer der

slowenischen Wissenschaftssprache gilt, auch wenn sich viele der von ihm erdachten Neologismen nicht durchsetzen konnten.

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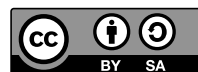
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Tanja Žigon
 Universität Ljubljana
 Tanja.zigon@ff.uni-lj.si



Matej Cigale (1819–1889) kot prevajalec učbenikov

Jurist in jezikoslovec Matej Cigale (1819–1889) se je v slovensko kulturno zgodovino zapisal predvsem kot urednik slovenske izdaje Državnega zakonika in kot oče slovenske pravne terminologije. Vendar se je Cigale izkazal tudi na drugih področjih: zaradi odličnega jezikovnega znanja so mu zaupali izdajo nemško-slovenskega slovarja (1860), zbral in izdal je slovensko-nemško znanstveno terminologijo (1880), bil je pomožni korektor pri c.-kr. založbi šolskih knjig, prav tako pa je tudi sam izdal nekaj šolskih knjig. V članku je predstavljen predvsem njegov prevod Heuflerjevega učbenika za pouk zemljepisa (1861), pri čemer je v ospredju vprašanje, kako je Cigaletov prevod sprejelo ciljno občinstvo, obravnavane so težave, s katerimi se je soočal med prevajanjem, predstavljene so strategije, ki jih je pri prevajanju uporabil, zanima pa nas tudi, kako se je uveljavila terminologija, ki jo je uvedel.

Ključne besede: Matej Cigale, prevajanje, učbeniki, zemljepis, terminologija, 19. stoletje

Matej Cigale (1819–1889) as schoolbook translator

The jurist and linguist Matej Cigale (1819–1889) made his mark on Slovenian cultural history primarily as the editor of the Slovenian edition of the Official Law Gazette (*Reichsgesetzblatt*) and as the father of Slovenian legal terminology. However, Cigale also proved himself in other fields. Due to his excellent language knowledge, he was entrusted with the publication of the German-Slovenian dictionary (1860), he collected and published the Slovenian-German scientific terminology (1880), he was an assistant proofreader at the imperial-royal schoolbook publisher (*k.k. Schulbücherverlag*) and also published several schoolbooks himself. The article mainly deals with his translation of Heufler's geography textbook (1861) by focusing on how Cigale's translation was received by the target audience, on the problems he encountered during translation and on his translation strategies, as well as on how established the terminology he introduced has become.

Key words: Matej Cigale, translation, textbooks, geography, terminology, 19th century

Les marqueurs d'identité masculine et féminine dans les fabliaux

Urh Ferlež, Miha Pintarič

Résumé

L'article traite les marqueurs d'identité dans les fabliaux, vérifiant l'hypothèse selon laquelle les hommes dans les fabliaux sont identifiés par ce qu'ils font, par le métier qu'ils exercent plutôt que par leurs caractéristiques physiques, et que les femmes sont soit identifiées par leur mari soit par leurs caractéristiques à elles. L'analyse qualitative et, ensuite, quantitative des fabliaux montre que la quantité d'informations que le lecteur reçoit sur l'identité d'un personnage varie d'un fabliau à l'autre, que les auteurs ne différencient les genres selon la quantité des marqueurs d'identité, selon leurs caractéristiques physiques, que les personnages masculins principaux sont effectivement souvent caractérisés par leur métier, alors que les personnages féminins, dans la grande majorité des cas, ne portent pas le marqueur du métier, à l'exception des personnages secondaires ou ceux qui ont le même métier.

Mots clés : fabliaux, marqueurs d'identité, hommes/femmes du Moyen âge, Rutebeuf, Jean Bodel

INTRODUCTION

Les fabliaux, petits contes transmettant les événements de la vie quotidienne, offrent, dans la clarté de leur univers, une vaste richesse de situations sociales. Dans les fabliaux, l'homme médiéval rêve les mondes imaginaires, tout en s'intéressant à ce qui l'entoure. Et qu'est-ce qui l'entoure ? Ce sont les autres, définis par rapport à l'homme médiéval, qui n'est qu'un « autre » entre les « autres ». À l'époque, le mariage (le couple) était essentiel à l'ordre social. Les récits des fabliaux y attachent un intérêt particulier. Certains personnages possèdent un nom, d'autres en sont privés. Il est clair qu'ils ont un sexe, et cela va de soi qu'ils ont aussi les devoirs qui appartiennent à ce sexe. Une femme lambda et un homme lambda, c'est le début d'un fabliau, mais la question d'identité se pose quand les hommes sont définis par leurs métiers, perdant en quelque sorte leurs caractéristiques masculines tandis que les femmes restent femmes, tout en adoptant, alors, une identité caractérisée par la beauté ou par la ruse. Est-ce toutefois la règle ? Nous essaierons de répondre à cette question.

Depuis la fin du XIX^e siècle, quand ils sont devenus le sujet d'études universitaires, un nombre infini de thèmes des fabliaux ont été traités. Les chercheurs ont analysé les récits sous des angles différents : selon le contenu, en laissant le côté linguistique à part etc. Par exemple, ils y ont cherché le comique (Crocker ; Percy), le rôle didactique (Stearns Schenck ; Horton) ou les sentiments (Wehner Eaton). Ils se sont concentrés en particulier sur le rôle et la position des femmes, étant donné que les fabliaux illustrent la société médiévale et que celle-ci semble imprégnée de misogynie et de phallocentrisme. Par conséquent, les travaux s'offrant à notre curiosité portent sur la soumission des femmes, prostitution, violence dans l'érotisme, mariage etc. (Muñoz ; Bégin ; Collart ; de Looze ; Jacobs).

Le personnage de fabliau en représente un échantillon, appelé « type ». Chaque type est, dans l'histoire, le porteur des valeurs de groupe, de société (Dufournet, 14). Il expose ces valeurs aussi bien que son statut social. Il est facile de distinguer un paysan d'un ecclésiastique et un bourgeois d'un aristocrate. Parfois, cela est clairement marqué, pourtant, dans certains fabliaux, il faut passer par d'autres aspects pour déduire la position du personnage. Dans ces cas-là, le lecteur doit lire attentivement et constater où vit le protagoniste, s'il a des biens en sa possession, comment il se comporte ou même comment il est vêtu (Leech, 83; Stearns Schenck, 71). Jean Dufournet dit que le personnage, chaque type dans les fabliaux, est un héraut qui proclame des valeurs par l'imposition d'un nom, par son habileté, sa ruse, des attributs ou des objets symboliques (Dufournet, 13-16). Il ne s'agit pas de se pencher sur les statuts sociaux dans les fables, ni sur les valeurs dont les personnages sont porteurs. Nous nous poserons la question de l'identité des sexes sans nous attarder sur la misogynie. Nous nous concentrerons sur les signes

grâce auxquels les personnages sont marqués, identifiés et identifiables au lecteur, et nous essaierons de montrer la différence entre l'identification des personnages masculins et féminins.

Notre hypothèse s'exprime ainsi : les hommes sont identifiés par ce qu'ils font, par le métier qu'ils exercent (ils sont paysans, maçons, prêtres, marchands etc.) et moins souvent par leurs caractéristiques physiques et mentales (beau, gentil, rusé, etc.). Les femmes, elles, sont soit identifiées par leur mari et même cela avec un empêchement (« belle marchande », par exemple, indique à la fois que la femme est belle et que son mari est marchand), soit par leurs caractéristiques (la beauté, la ruse, l'intelligence, etc.). Nous le vérifierons à travers dix-huit fabliaux choisis.¹ Nous traiterons les fabliaux dans lesquels les marqueurs d'identité sont exprimés de manière plus complexe ou détaillée, d'autres serviront pour l'analyse quantitative.

BODEL

Prenons, d'abord, les quatre fabliaux de maître Jean Bodel. Dans le premier, intitulé *Du villain de Bailleul*, nous trouvons un couple marié et un clerc, ainsi que dans *De Gombert et des deux clers* et *De Brunain et la vache au prestre*. Les clercs, évidemment des hommes, y sont aussi nommés chapelain ou sacristain. Ils ne sont pas caractérisés par des épithètes, mais nous pouvons déduire de leurs actions qu'ils sont voluptueux, gloutons, malins et peu fidèles au célibat. Bodel commence son fabliau du paysan de Bailleul avec une description assez longue de ses caractéristiques corporelles et de son tempérament. Il nous fait savoir ce qu'il est (un paysan) et ce qu'il n'est pas (ni usurier, ni banquier). L'écrivain se donne la peine de peindre sa laideur, qui correspond à son caractère effrayant. Le paysan de Bailleul est ainsi caractérisé par un métier et des adjectifs caractéristiques. Sa femme, elle, possède un prénom (Erne) et le lecteur obtient des informations sur son caractère : elle est une dame rouée et astucieuse qui préférerait son mari *mort et enterré*. Rien n'est cependant écrit sur son aspect physique (Dufournet, 37-42).

Dans *De Gombert et des deux clers*, Bodel procède différemment. Le paysan, messire Gombert, *parfait imbécile [...], est croyant bien faire*. Sa femme, dame Gille, est belle, gracieuse avec les yeux qui *ont l'éclat du cristal*. Quant au caractère, dame Gille est une *brave femme*. Ils ont une fille qui est décrite comme 'pucelle'. Nous connaissons donc le métier de l'homme avec deux petites remarques sur son caractère alors que la dame est décrite très soigneusement. Sa beauté entre même dans la morale du fabliau : « Aucun homme qui a une **belle femme** ne doit [...]

1 Le recueil de Jean Dufournet contient les fabliaux plutôt représentatifs qui figurent dans cet article.

laisser un clerc coucher dans son hôtel. » (Dufournet, 48-55) Dans *Brunain et la vache au prestre* le couple n'est pas caractérisé, nous n'avons qu'un paysan et sa femme. La seule information est donnée par le prêtre qui appelle le paysan « sage » (Dufournet, 56-61). Haimet, Barat et Travers sont simplement identifiés comme malfaiteurs. Travers dans *De Haimet et de Barat* décide de revenir chez sa femme et recommencer à vivre honnêtement. Sa femme est désignée comme *la dame* « Marie qui avait su se débrouiller » et Travers s'exclame qu'il n'est ni fou ni joueur et qu'il se sent fort et dégourdi (Dufournet, 56-61)

Les quatre fabliaux de Jean Bodel que nous avons sélectionnés offrent une variété d'expression des marqueurs d'identité, aussi bien dans la manière que dans le degré. Bodel décrit les caractéristiques de ses personnages systématiquement, aléatoirement. Dans *Le Villain de Bailleul* il met un fort accent sur la laideur de l'homme, alors qu'il fait l'éloge de la beauté de la dame dans *De Gombert et les deux clers*. Dans ces deux cas, il insiste plus sur les caractéristiques physiques que sur le tempérament. Dans *Brunain la vache au prestre* et *De Haimet et de Barat*, il laisse la caractérisation presque complètement à part. Dans ces quatre fabliaux, le métier caractérise l'homme (paysan, clerc, malfaiteur) tandis que les femmes restent femmes ou dames.

RUTEBEUF

Penchons-nous maintenant sur deux fabliaux de Rutebeuf, *De la dame qui fist trois tours entour le moustier* et *C'est li testament de l'asne*. Dans le premier, l'homme (le bon écuyer) est décrit comme sot, débonnaire et naïf (la femme « finit par lui faire croire que demain le ciel sera de cendre »). La femme n'est décrite que dans les jurons de l'écuyer : « espèce de grande salope, vraie putain. » Rutebeuf mentionne aussi une personne subsidiaire, appelée selon son métier - chambrière. Dans le premier fabliau il y a un clerc, dans le deuxième il y en a deux. Le prêtre est avare (« qui avait mis toute son application à accumuler revenus et biens »), mais l'évêque est défini bien différemment : « loin d'être cupide et avare, il était courtois et bien élevé ». Rutebeuf caractérise son personnage masculin dans *De la dame qui fist trois tours entour le moustier* par son métier et ses caractéristiques tandis que le personnage féminin n'est pas vraiment décrit. Il caractérise les deux clercs par les particularités de leur tempérament. (Dufournet, 330-348)

HUON PIAUCELE, BOIVIN ET EUSTACHE D'AMIENS

Dans le fameux fabliau *Estormi*, Huon Piaucele raconte l'histoire des trois prêtres qui sont, selon la description, tous les trois privés de charme. L'écrivain les dépeint à l'aide des adjectifs « gras et gros, gras et énorme, affreusement

laid ». Il insiste alors plus sur leur poids que sur leur perversion, qui est le thème du fabliau. Les prêtres essaient de séduire « *la bonne dame* » Yfame qui est également « une excellente épouse et très sage » (ses caractéristiques corporelles ne sont cependant pas mentionnées). Son mari, avec lequel elle vit dans la misère, s'appelle Jean, il est « un bel homme d'une grande robustesse ». Le héros du titre, Estormi, est le neveu de Jean, un « jeune homme » qui « se dirigea vers le prêtre [...] en homme qui n'était pas plus poltron que s'il était tout entier de fer ». Tout ce que Piaucele communique au lecteur (à vrai dire, à l'auditeur) sur les qualités d'Estormi tient dans cette citation, mais il ajoute dans la morale qui conclut le fabliau quelques informations, intéressantes pour notre recherche : « [...] croyez-vous que, quelle que soit sa pauvreté, une honnête femme se dévergondé ? – [et,] Quoi qu'il en soit, on ne doit pas, on ne doit pas à mon avis, mépriser un parent modeste, si pauvre soit-il, à moins que ce ne soit un traître ou un brigand. Même s'il est fou ou joueur, il se range en fin de compte. [Il se range, et l'ordre du monde est préservé] » Une femme est *honnête* et un homme honorable quoi que soit son *métier*. (Dufournet, 257-287)

En comparaison avec Huon Piaucelle, Boivin est plus modeste en décrivant ses personnages. Dans *De Boivin de Provins* il parle d'un *joyeux drille*, Boivin, qui est un homme « fort rusé, maître en fourberie » mais un paysan selon le métier. L'autre personnage est Mabile qui se connaît en tromperie, plus « qu'aucune femme de l'endroit. » On s'aperçoit vite qu'elle est entremetteuse, même si elle n'est jamais nommée comme telle. (Dufournet, 236-253)

Eustache d'Amiens, en revanche, est plus généreux avec les marqueurs d'identité. Le héros de *Du boucher d'Abeville* exerce le métier évoqué dans le titre du fabliau. Il est un boucher « sage, courtois, valeureux, honnête ; il rendait souvent de grands services à ses voisins pauvres et nécessiteux ; il n'était ni avare ni cupide et loin d'être méchant et médisant ». La femme qu'il rencontre sur le chemin (personnage secondaire) est « brave et pauvre ». Elle lui suggère de trouver refuge chez le prêtre qui est un vrai contraste du boucher. Le doyen est « bouffi d'orgueil et un fort méchant personnage ». Le boucher l'accuse d'être un « chapelain insensé, coquin, un rustre et insatiable du bien d'autrui ». Il vit avec deux femmes, une servante (accusée par la dame d'être « voleuse et menteuse, garce et idiote etc. »). La dame, concubine du prêtre, est décrite comme « une dame fort jolie et très mignonne, yeux vifs et rieurs ». Elle est introduite une fois comme prêtresse. Dans le fabliau apparaît aussi un « pastoureau ». Eustache d'Amiens décrit en détail le caractère des deux personnages masculins pendant qu'il se concentre sur l'aspect physique de la dame. L'écrivain fait apparaître les métiers des personnages (« doyen, boucher, pastoureau, servante ») et donne le nom « prêtresse » à l'amante de prêtre ce qui est intéressant, car nous aurions attendu une telle identification pour une épouse de quelqu'un qui exerce un certain métier. (Dufournet, 100-129)

Entre Boivin, Huon Piaucelle et Eustache D'Amiens c'est ce dernier qui insiste le plus sur les marqueurs d'identité et le fait selon notre hypothèse : la femme est décrite comme « belle pretrêsse » et l'homme comme « sage boucher ».

COURTEBARBE, HUON DE CAMBRAI ET GAUTIER LE LEU

Comme Boivin, Courtebarbe, dans *Les trois aveugles de Compiègne*, est très mesuré en décrivant les personnages. Les aveugles sont, tout simplement, aveugles, sans différenciation individuelle. Le clerc est « beau et élégant » (aspect physique), et il a un serviteur. Dans l'histoire il y a un personnage qui n'est marqué que par son métier – « l'aubergiste ou un tenancier ». (Dufournet, 314-329)

Un aubergiste apparaît aussi dans *Del prestre taint* de Gautier Le Leu, mais seulement dans l'introduction. Il raconte l'histoire du bourgeois (c'est la seule information que Le Leu nous donne sur lui) qui avait un prêtre pour voisin. Il avait aussi une femme « forte, courtoise, fraîche, gracieuse, belle et avisée », nous voyons bien que son aspect physique épouse son caractère. En plus, l'histoire montre une entremetteuse et Hersent, marguillière de l'église. (Dufournet, 171-191)

La male Honte de Huon de Cambrai raconte l'histoire d'un « Anglais » qui était un « homme extraordinairement riche, habitait une ville », mais il est décédé. Après sa mort, un « vilain » qui est « le héros de ce conte » doit amener une partie de son héritage au roi d'Angleterre. Le paysan nommé Honte est mal acquis à la cour. Il est décrit comme « l'homme brave même » dont le « discours et langage sont pleins d'effronterie et de sottises qu'au point de ne pas montrer trace de raison » et comme « fou débite des sottises » par un des chevaliers. Malgré tout, il persiste « sans méditer de ruse ni tromperie ». (Dufournet, 152-161)

Nous pouvons conclure que Gautier Le Leu décrit de manière plus détaillée la femme et laisse les descriptions des autres à part ; Courtebarbe et Huon de Cambrai n'introduisent pas de personnages féminins et caractérisent peu ceux masculins.

LES FABLIAUX ANONYMES

Analysons encore six fabliaux anonymes : *Du segretain moine*, *Des tresces*, *Baillet*, *Le dit des perdrix*, *Du prestre et du leu* et *Du prestre crucefié*. Ils ont tous en commun un prêtre corrompu. Dans *Du segretain moine* on lit l'histoire d'une bourgeoise, Idoine, qui est « très vaillante et courtoise » et en même temps « élevée, modeste, courtoise et fine ». Le moine la décrit « comme la plus belle, la plus courtoise qui soit sur tout le territoire ». Son mari, qui se trouve brutalement attaqué dans les bois, s'appelle Guillaume, il est banquier, « habile dans son métier ». La dame est

dépeinte selon plusieurs caractéristiques tandis que l'homme n'est "que" banquier. D'autres personnages sont mentionnés, marqués par leur métier : brigand, serviteur, veilleurs, servante (bonniche, la petite bonne), aubergiste, Thibaud le métayer. (Dufournet, 193-232)

Le fabliau *Des tresces* recourt à de nombreux superlatifs, car le fabliau raconte l'histoire d'un chevalier. Il est un individu « courageux, courtois, éloquent, sage, bref, plein de qualités, et qui recherche tellement la prouesse que jamais il ne voulut reculer devant aucune entreprise qui fut à sa portée ». Sa femme est une femme de grande naissance et une bonne chrétienne, cette femme est une bourgeoise qui en beauté est son parfait sosie. La description est donc faite des talents pour l'homme et des origines, de la foi et de la beauté pour la femme. (Dufournet, 288-231)

Les trois fabliaux qui nous restent contiennent tellement peu de marqueurs d'identité que nous pouvons les traiter en un seul paragraphe. Dans *Baillet* nous rencontrons un *brave savetier* qui a une « très belle femme » séduite par « prêtre lardier ». Le fabliau *Du prestre crucefié* est encore plus limité en ce qui nous intéresse. Il parle de monseigneur Roger, « le brave homme qui était passé maître dans l'art de sculpter des statues et de tailler des crucifix » et sa femme qui aimait un prêtre. *Le dit de perdrix* confronte un paysan, un prêtre et une dame « qui souhaitait non pas être très riche mais plutôt satisfaire tous ses désirs ». Notre dernier fabliau, et le plus court entre ceux que nous avons traités, est *Du prestre et du leu*. Lui aussi parle d'une dame, d'un prêtre, d'un vilain et d'une personne caractérisée par son métier - une servante. (Dufournet, 91-99, 162-167, 140-149).

L'analyse des fabliaux montre qu'il n'existe aucune règle générale pour le genre des fabliaux sur comment et à quel point les personnages doivent être caractérisés. Certains se contentent de les décrire avec un mot : « le paysan » et « une dame » (*Le dit de perdrix*), tandis que d'autres ajoutent des descriptions plus ou moins longues. Nous voyons aussi que, même dans les fabliaux où les caractères sont moins élaborés, l'homme est toujours nommé par son métier tandis que la femme souvent reste 'femme' ou 'dame' (par exemple *Du prestre et du leu*). Les auteurs insistent en général plus sur l'aspect physique et émotionnel des femmes que des hommes.

ANALYSE QUANTITATIVE

Jetons un regard d'analyse quantitative sur notre hypothèse. Nous allons compter les marqueurs d'identité dans dix-huit fabliaux. Notre analyse comprendra plusieurs catégories : les personnages qui sont caractérisés selon leur aspect physique/leur tempérament/leur métier et ces mêmes catégories pour les personnages

féminins. On commence par les personnages principaux sans clercs, pour ensuite ajouter les clercs et, enfin, compter tous ensemble. Nous mentionnerons également les personnages secondaires qui sont parfois identifiés par un métier mais nous les traiterons séparément. En fonction des chiffres obtenus, nous essaierons de formuler quelques conclusions.

Tableau 1 : Analyse des personnages principaux

Nombre des personnages (tous)	Personnages masculins avec les marqueurs d'identité pour l'aspect physique	Personnages masculins avec les marqueurs d'identité pour le tempérament	Personnages masculins avec un métier déterminé
46	7	13	29
15 femmes, 31 hommes	Personnages féminins avec les marqueurs d'identité pour l'aspect physique	Personnages féminins avec les marqueurs d'identité pour le tempérament	Personnages féminins avec un métier déterminé
	6	9	2*

Commentaire : à partir des données, nous observons que les auteurs des fabliaux choisis insistent plus sur les descriptions de tempérament pour les deux sexes sans différences. Le résultat est presque égal. Quant aux marqueurs de l'aspect physique, il y a une légère préférence du côté des femmes. Nous constatons que les écrivains décrivent presque à la même fréquence les caractéristiques corporelles et le tempérament pour les deux sexes. Une grande différence apparaît pour la caractérisation selon les métiers. Quinze personnages masculins ont un métier alors qu'il n'y a que deux femmes dont une pas même caractérisée directement (l'entremetteuse Mabile de *De Boivin de Provins*).

Tableau 2 : Analyse pour les clercs

Nombre des clercs(tous)	Clercs avec les marqueurs d'identité pour l'aspect physique	Clercs avec les marqueurs d'identité pour le tempérament
14	3	6

Commentaire : Nous voyons que la caractérisation des clercs est de moindre importance que celle des laïcs. Il semble que cela va de soi qu'un prêtre de fabliau soit corrompu, glouton ou dévergondé et qu'ainsi, les marqueurs d'identité ne soient pas nécessaires. Toutefois, certains fabliaux soulignent l'aspect physique des clercs et, plus souvent, leur tempérament.

Tableau 3 : Analyse pour les personnages principaux et les clercs

Nombre des personnages (tous)	Personnages masculins avec les marqueurs d'identité pour l'aspect physique	Personnages masculins avec les marqueurs d'identité pour le tempérament	Personnages masculins avec un métier déterminé ²
32	4	10	15
15 femmes, 17 hommes	Personnages féminins avec les marqueurs d'identité pour l'aspect physique	Personnages féminins avec les marqueurs d'identité pour le tempérament	Personnages féminins avec un métier déterminé
	6	9	2*

Commentaire : Si nous ajoutons les clercs à nos premiers résultats, la comparaison des chiffres des identités entre les sexes deviennent moins pertinentes étant donné que cela résulte en un chiffre plus élevé de personnages masculins que féminins. La différence entre les hommes caractérisés par un métier et les femmes qui ne le sont pas est encore plus évidente.

Malgré le fait que les auteurs des fabliaux négligent presque complètement les professions des leurs personnages féminins principaux, ils les nomment plus souvent quand elles jouent les rôles des personnages secondaires. Dans nos fabliaux choisis, nous trouvons plusieurs servantes, une chambrière et une bonne (bonniche). Dans le *Bouquier d'Abeville* nous rencontrons une prêtresse. Une telle identification apparaît dans les fabliaux (hors de ceux que nous avons choisis), les femmes portent la forme féminine du métier que leur mari exerce. Le cas de prêtresse semble intéressant, car la femme est la concubine du clerc. Les personnages secondaires masculins sont également marqués par leurs métiers, nous pouvons citer les métiers suivants : pastoureau, serviteur, métayer, veilleur, brigand et aubergiste.

CONCLUSION

Dans la présente recherche nous avons essayé de vérifier l'hypothèse selon laquelle les hommes dans les fabliaux sont identifiés par ce qu'ils font, par le métier qu'ils exercent et moins souvent par leurs caractéristiques physiques, et que les femmes sont soit identifiées par leur mari, soit par leurs propres caractéristiques. Les conclusions sont les suivantes :

2 J'ai pris en compte les trois aveugles (*Des trois aveugles de Compiègne*) et trois malfaiteurs (*De Haimet et de Barât*) étant donné qu'ils fonctionnent comme un collectif. Comme métiers, en outre, j'ai pris en considération les paysans (vilains) et un cas de chevalier (pour le différencier de l'identification générale - homme).

- 1) Il n'existe pas de système, de règle selon laquelle les auteurs des fabliaux caractérisent leurs personnages. La quantité des informations que le lecteur obtient sur l'identité d'un personnage des fabliaux varie, l'écrivain décide à chaque fois comment et avec combien de marqueurs d'identité il va définir son personnage. Cette absence de règle générale s'accorde avec la richesse rendue possible par la diversité des fabliaux, ce qui représentait un problème aux historiens de la littérature quand ils définissaient le genre.
- 2) L'analyse quantitative de dix-huit fabliaux a prouvé que les auteurs ne différencient pas les genres selon la quantité de marqueurs d'identité. L'analyse a montré que les auteurs décrivent presque aussi souvent les caractéristiques des personnages masculins et féminins. Les prêtres sont moins souvent sujets à une caractérisation explicite que les laïcs.
- 3) L'analyse a montré aussi que les personnages masculins principaux sont souvent caractérisés selon leur métier alors que les personnages féminins, dans la grande majorité des cas, ne portent pas de marqueur du métier. C'est différent pour les personnages secondaires où les hommes et les femmes sont aussi souvent caractérisés avec un métier les uns que les autres.

La recherche a partiellement confirmé notre hypothèse. Il est vrai que les hommes dans les fabliaux sont identifiés par ce qu'ils font, mais ils sont également caractérisés par leur aspect physique et leur tempérament. Les femmes qui font partie des personnages principaux sont aussi caractérisées par le physique et le tempérament, très rarement par un métier. La caractérisation des personnages secondaires est plus « égalitaire », car les hommes et les femmes sont nommés par un métier. Il est difficile d'affirmer que les constatations tirées de l'analyse de dix-huit fabliaux soient valables pour l'ensemble des fabliaux, bien que nous ayons sélectionné des fabliaux particulièrement diversifiés pour notre recherche. On sera toujours surpris de trouver, au plus profond du Moyen âge, des événements et des personnages qui tranchent totalement sur ce que l'on a appris de cette époque-là. Il est si facile d'oublier que l'on a appris de la littérature et étudié des livres et de vieux documents poussiéreux d'où on tire, chaque fois de nouveau, un Moyen âge recréé où l'on se reconnaît dans ce que l'on en sait, pas moins que dans ses lacunes et, finalement, dans la confabulation qui les remet en rapport (réciproque) et leur confère un sens. Le mot (*con*)*fabulatio* comprend *fabula*, l'afr. *fable*... qui n'est pas loin du *fablel*, « fabliau ». Avec le temps, nous devenons notre imagination, force imaginatrice dématérialisée qui se traduit dans l'espace par la parole. Le corps, signe imaginé, lacéré de saint, ou cet autre, perverti et débauché. Confabulation, parole imaginaire, lacune et manque de vie, là précisément où elle devrait se montrer comme la vie elle-même. Dans toute sa fragilité, et du moins pour sauvegarder les apparences, la valeur de celle-ci ne dépend-elle pas, alors, de la confabulation elle-même ?

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Urh Ferlež

Université de Ljubljana
ferlez.urh@gmail.com

Miha Pintarič

Université de Ljubljana
Miha.Pintaric@ff.uni-lj.si



Identifikacijska znamenja moških in ženskih likov v fabliauih

Članek obravnava identifikacijska znamenja moških in žensk v fabliauih. Preverja hipotezo, po kateri naj bi bili moški liki v fabliauih indentificirani po tistem, kar počnejo, tj. po poklicu ki ga opravljajo, redkeje pa po svojih telesnih in karakternih značilnostih. Po drugi strani naj bi bili ženski liki indentificirani bodisi po zakonskih možeh bodisi po telesnih značilnostih in značaju. Kvalitativna in kvantitativna analiza osemnajstih izbranih fabliaujev sta pokazali, da se količina informacij, ki jo lahko bralec dobi o identiteti nekega lika, spreminja od fabliauja do fabliauja, tudi znotraj opusov enega pisca (npr. Rutebeufa). Pokazalo se je tudi, da pisci ne razlikujejo spolov glede na to, kako in koliko opisujejo njihovo zunanost in značaj. Po drugi strani so moški liki pogosto označeni s poklicem, ženski pa v veliki večini primerov to niso. Ženske stranske osebe so pogosteje označene s poklicem kot glavne.

Ključne besede: fabliaui, identifikacijska znamenja, ženske in moški v srednjem veku, Rutebeuf, Jean Bodel.

Maurice Barrès et l'icône de l'art moderne

Boštjan Marko Turk

L'auteur dédie cet article à la mémoire d'Ante Glibota, vice-président de L'Académie Européenne des Sciences, des Arts et des Lettres.

Synopsis

La peinture d'El Greco remplissait Barrès d'étonnement et d'admiration parce qu'elle répondait à la manière dont l'écrivain appréhendait le culte du fort et de l'exceptionnel. C'est la quête de l'absolu qui perfectionne les êtres dominés par l'unique tendance – vivre dans l'exaltation du moi jusqu'à ce qu'ils ne fusionnent avec l'absolu. Pour cette raison Barrès était capable de saisir le génie multifonctionnel du peintre grec et de transmettre son message à la postérité. Barrès approchait le peintre d'une perspective multilatérale : il s'apercevait des traits maniéristes. Ceux-ci sont devenus élément intégral de la peinture moderne, notamment chez Pablo Picasso. Les périodes bleue et rose n'auraient pas été possibles sans la rencontre d'El Greco.

Mots-clefs : El Greco, Maurice Barrès, Tolède, les saints, le culte du moi, les déracinés, le maniérisme, l'orthodoxie, les icônes, la théophanie, Pablo Picasso.

Interest in his work returned, sporadically at first with nineteenth century Romanticism : and in the present century as a widespread, enthusiastic taste, stimulate with modern art with its great freedom and intensity. The writings of the Spanish scholar Cossio,¹ the German critic Meier-Graefe² and the French novelist and essayist Barrès were influential at El Greco's revival (Matthews, 1953, 14).

John F. Matthews, dans la prestigieuse édition « Library of Great Art », évoqua Maurice Barrès comme un des promoteurs de l'artiste dont l'influence aurait été prépondérante chez des artistes comme Picasso (et Pollock).³

Les sources de l'affinité qui mettraient le peintre et l'écrivain dans la même « communauté de l'être » (Jousset, 2009, 122) se dévoilent *per se*. L'explication s'offrirait par le biais de la prédilection que Maurice Barrès, lors de son adhérence au beylisme, vouait aux consciences fortes, parmi lesquelles étaient des saints, surtout dans leur rapport au *Vivant éternel*. En fait, on les admire puisqu'ils effectuaient la convenance *nec plus ultra* de la volonté à la loi morale.

Les héros de ce genre se font remarquer par l'énergie particulière qui exalte la tendance personnelle à s'affirmer indépendamment des autres. Ils se dépassent en repoussant leurs limites. Leur conscience tend vers un niveau supérieur de la réalité où ils s'approchent de l'inconcevable tout en demeurant dans la finitude du corps et de la pensée.

Barrès cultivait une préférence pour les caractères hors du commun. De là, sa prédilection pour Stendhal et l'expression qu'il a lui-même forgée, l'égotisme.⁴ L'égotisme fait la partie indélébile de la première étape de sa création où l'écrivain se voue à une méditation qui aboutit à la trilogie *Le Culte du Moi*. La triade se

1 Cossio, Manuel. *El Greco*. Madrid : Victoriano Suarez, 1908.

2 Meier-Graefe, Julius. *Spanische Reise*. Berlin : Fischer Verlag, 1910.

3 On donne la chronologie des rencontres entre Maurice Barrès et l'objet de son livre. À voir le texte cité d'après « L'Introduction » (Rimbaud, 1994) à *El Greco ou le Secret de Tolède* (Barrès, 1994), on remarquera que Barrès commença tôt à s'intéresser au peintre et que ses écrits sur le sujet coïncident avec la monographie publiée par Manuel B. Cossio en 1908 (Cossio, 1908) à qui on accorde volontiers le primat de la remise à jour de l'œuvre recouverte de l'ombre. Ce n'est qu'après une lecture approfondie qu'on voit que les lumières que jette Maurice Barrès sur le phénomène plus qu'opaque pénètrent plus en profondeur que ne le font les textes de Cossio (Cossio, 1908) et de Meier-Graefe (Meier-Graefe, 1910). Ainsi : « *La passion de Barrès pour Tolède date de son premier séjour en Espagne en 1892 (...) La première mention du Greco dans Mes cahiers date seulement du printemps 1899. Dès 1901, en revanche, il annonce une « étude sur Greco », alors que ce n'est qu'au cours d'un séjour à Tolède qu'il découvrira, en compagnie du peintre espagnol Beruete, les principaux tableaux de l'élève de Tintoret. D'avril à septembre 1909, il publie en tout cas une série d'articles qui compose déjà l'essentiel de Greco ou le Secret de Tolède. Dans Greco ou le Secret de Tolède qui suivra en 1912 et comprendra le seul texte de Barrès, on peut lire : « Je n'ai que trop attendu ! » » (Rimbaud, 1994, 511-512).*

4 Le mot est composé du pronom personnel latin de la première personne du singulier, *ego*, et le suffixe indiquant la généralisation.

compose des romans : *Sous l'œil de Barbares*, *Un Homme libre* et *Le Jardin de Bérénice* (Barrès, 1994).

Barrès cherchait en lui-même le principe de l'épanouissement et cultivait méthodiquement les sensations. Puis à un moment donné, il a renoncé à l'attitude individualiste : il s'est jeté dans les luttes « du moment » exaltant l'énergie nationale, la force de l'État et de l'Église.

Ceux que Barrès considérait comme les plus forts étaient les saints. Un saint qui n'est pas capable de résister à la nature qui demande sa disparition serait une antinomie, une contradiction. Il n'y a pas de saints qui soient morts dans le sens le plus commun du mot. Conformément à la tradition ceux qui revêtirent le caractère sacré avaient dû au préalable passer par un entraînement dur et tenir compte de la discipline, de l'hygiène spirituelle : ils se sont livrés à un apprentissage par l'habitude qui consistait en « cultivation » et en « transformation » du « moi », celui-ci est devenu, à force de discipline, une entité invincible, ouverte aux arcanes de l'éternel. Le « moi » n'est donc « égotique » que dans la mesure où il tend à échapper à la tiédeur – « *Ainsi, parce que tu es tiède, et que tu n'es ni froid ni bouillant, je te vomirai de ma bouche* » (Apocalypse 3 :16) –, au gris, au manque de fièvre.

Le « moi » aurait l'ambition de laisser derrière tout ce qui l'empêche d'embrasser l'enthousiasme de l'éternel. Ainsi :

Les ordres religieux ont créé une hygiène de l'âme qui se propose d'aimer parfaitement Dieu ; une hygiène analogue nous avancera dans l'adoration du Moi. C'est ici, à Saint-Germain, un institut pour le développement et la possession de toutes nos facultés de sentir ; c'est ici un laboratoire de l'enthousiasme. Et non moins énergiquement que firent les grands saints du christianisme proscrivons le péché qui est la tiédeur, le gris, le manque de fièvre, c'est-à-dire tout ce qui contrarie l'amour (Barrès, 1922, 39).

La peinture d'El Greco remplissait Barrès d'étonnement et d'admiration parce qu'elle répondait aux appréhensions par lesquelles l'écrivain jugeait le culte du fort et de l'exceptionnel. C'est la quête de l'absolu qui perfectionne les êtres dominés par l'unique tendance – vivre dans l'exaltation de leur moi et jusqu'à ce qu'ils ne fusionnent avec l'absolu. El Greco, notamment s'identifie aux figures qu'il peint : « *Avec un magnifique sang-froid, il élimine tout ce qui n'est pas l'essentiel, et il s'élance violemment vers ce qui et pour lui l'absolu* » (Barrès, 1994, 544). La façon dont il peignait fut à l'échelle de son intention : il tendait à adapter les personnages aux postures qui traduisaient leur passage de l'espace humain à la communion du Christ. Cela demanda une technique appropriée.

Maurice Barrès s'en est aperçu. A lire attentivement les passages où il décrit le répertoire dans lequel puisait le Grec, on voit qu'il est bien conscient des formules dont se servait le peintre afin de mettre en œuvre son ambition.

Qui croirait que Domenico Greco esquissât ses ouvrages, les retouchât à maintes reprises, afin de séparer et désunir les teintes, pour donner ainsi à ses toiles leur aspect de cruelles ébauches, et pour simuler une plus grande liberté de fracture, une plus grande puissance. (...) El Greco se préoccupait d'éviter le rondouillard et cherchait l'expression crue. (Barrès, 1994, 526).

Le passage cité pourrait être corroboré par un autre visant la même idée : « *Ses sculptures aux formes sveltes, parfois même quintessenciées et subtiles, témoignaient d'une passion concentrée* » (Barrès, 1994, 522-523).

Maurice Barrès s'étonnait de la force par laquelle Le Grec disposait les formes humaines afin de trouver une expression qui aurait satisfait son désir de se libérer en écartant les limites de l'ordinaire. Le Crétois était en quête singulière d'une « *plus grande puissance* », « *d'une plus grande liberté de fracture* ». ⁵ L'écrivain s'est aperçu que le chemin qu'empruntait El Greco passait par la tendance d'amener ses objets au plus haut point de subtilité ; qu'il les raffinait avec un soin particulier ; que ses couleurs étaient troubles et obscures, à vrai dire « *crues* » ; que l'espace dans lequel il replaçait les narratifs de ses tableaux était désuni pour ne pas dire indéfini et que finalement ses figures subissaient la torsion du corps, réduites à « *l'état du spasme qui nous surprend et nous anime* » (Barrès, 1994, 544). Le jeu artistique dont prenait conscience Barrès est synonyme du style maniériste : c'est un outil qui – combiné aux autres – définit l'identité du peintre.

En fait, à l'égard de l'œuvre picturale d'El Greco, on reconnaît les formes serpentine aux aspects légers et élancés, les flammes bondissantes qu'adoptent les martyrs et les saints lorsque, soutenus par le prodige surnaturel, ils rejoignent l'au-delà chrétien qui devient leur demeure ultime. Ils subissent l'altération de la figure humaine : l'architecture qui détermine le corps du vivant se perd.

Dans ces travaux des années 1580, le peintre rejette de plus en plus les lois de la perspective et des proportions énoncées par la Renaissance. Ses personnages perdent leur relief, s'allongent et s'amincissent. Pacheco nous apprend qu'El Greco ne préparait pas ses compositions avec des modèles vivants, comme Tintoret, mais avec des figures en argile (Michael Scholz-Halsen, 2004, 38).

Le tableau auquel Maurice Barrès vouait une particulière admiration est *L'Enterrement du Comte Orgaz*. L'engouement n'était pas sans raisons : « *Greco, ajustant mieux son but, allait, au lendemain de cette demi-réussite, ⁶ atteindre son point de perfection dans le fameux Enterrement du comte d'Orgaz. Voilà son chef d'œuvre populaire. C'est la gloire* » (Barrès, 1994, 522). En fait, tout Greco où l'allongement du corps

5 Cf. *supra*.

6 La toile qu'il a effectuée précédemment, *Le Martyre de saint Maurice*, ne semblait pas pleinement contenter le commanditaire, Philippe II.

est en fonction de la médiation qui relie l'immanent au transcendent, est là. En plus, afin de peindre le passage au Ciel, l'artiste devait se servir du chromatisme qui ne semble pas appartenir au coloris terrestre :

Au même moment l'âme de Seigneur d'Orgaz reçoit audience de la Cour céleste. Cette audience nous la voyons. Elle occupe le ciel du tableau. Le seigneur d'Orgaz s'y présente tout nu devant le Christ, la Vierge et le cercle des Bienheureux. La scène fait un contraste absolu avec la belle peinture réaliste du bas. Des tons livides et restreints jusqu'à l'indigence, des formes prodigieusement allongées, amincies et tourmentées, lui donnent un caractère spectral qui nous inquiète, nous scandalise et nous attire (Barrès, 1944, 518).

C'est l'élite de la race humaine, tel le seigneur Orgaz, qui passe immédiatement au royaume des cieux et participe à l'existence pérenne : Maurice Barrès ne s'est jamais intéressé qu'aux couches « les plus considérées » où résident les élus, les génies du corps ou maîtres sans limite ne faisant aucune concession aux facultés intellectuelles et spirituelles. Il faut prendre cette constatation à la lettre : qu'un individu se soit anobli ou enrichi ne comptait en rien aux yeux de Barrès. Il avait une ambition supérieure : « l'univers réaliste du bas » ne l'intéressa que dans la mesure où il pourrait permettre la traversée vers l'éternité.

C'est en plein accord avec le tempérament d'un autre auteur qui exprima le même état d'âme par les alexandrins suivants :

J'ai de l'ambition, mais plus noble et plus belle : Cette grandeur périt, j'en veux une immortelle, Un bonheur assuré, sans mesure et sans fin, au-dessus de l'envie, au-dessus du destin. Est-ce trop l'acheter que d'une triste vie qui tantôt, qui soudain me peut être ravie ; Qui ne me fait jouir que d'un instant qui fuit, Et ne peut m'assurer de celui qui le suit ? (Corneille, 1963, 306-307).

Les vers du dramaturge sont synonymes à « *la conquête de Dieu* » (Doubrovsky, 1963, 222) dont la manifestation sont les toiles que Barrès admirait lors de ses séjours tolédans. En fait, Polyeucte témoigne de l'identité qui caractérise la famille d'esprit particulière, celle qui vise les objectifs élevés dans l'emploi absolu du terme. Le dénominateur commun qui les réunit relève de « *la passion chrétienne. C'est cette querelle immense entre les amours de la terre et les amours du Ciel, que Corneille a peinte* » (Chateaubriand, 1901, 281). C'est notamment l'état intellectuel, violent et puissant avec lequel El Greco a formé l'ensemble de *l'Enterrement du comte Orgaz*.

La mission qui a été accordée au personnage du premier plan est l'une des plus prestigieuses possibles. Le comte, par rapport à ses dispositions à faire du bien, voit au moment de sa sépulture apparaître saint Étienne et saint Augustin. Les

deux sont les figures de proue de « l'Église militante », le premier représentant la tragédie de la chair qu'expriment les martyrs lorsque, sachant qu'aucun compromis n'est possible avec Dieu, ils passent au sacrifice absolu de leur nature, c'est-à-dire, à la mort. Saint Étienne a notamment obéi à la voix que Polyeucte avait entendue par les paroles de Néarque. De son côté, l'évêque d'Hippone connote le magistère de l'autorité spirituelle s'imposant de façon absolue. Leur rôle médiateur contribue à former un défilé ininterrompu où disposé en file, le drame de l'invocation de « *l'être infini du verbe parfait* » (Bruaire, 1964, 163) S'accomplit dans l'éternité anagogique, rendue concevable par les formes de cette « ininscriptible » peinture.

L'univers de Barrès se plie à la loi du plus fort, du Saint des saints, *solus Sanctus*, de l'origine et de l'ineffable finalité qui réside au cœur du présent :

Aux yeux d'un contemporain de sainte Thérèse, les amis d'Orgaz sont des âmes assujetties à des corps. Elles s'échappent de leurs gaines, flottent dans l'air, montent vers la gloire. C'est le geste du Christ, si doux, si élégant, qui les attire. Elles vont à lui comme les cœurs accourent à un mot sublime de poésie. Ainsi le génie du Greco parvient à nous rendre sensible la métaphysique qui enchante ses modèles (Barrès, 1994, 545-546).

Inspiré par la loi du plus fort, l'œuvre d'El Greco s'ouvre à la synthèse du maniérisme et de l'art byzantin. El Greco ne professait pas un simplissime catholicisme « unilatéral ». C'était un espace trop exclusif pour devenir source de son inspiration. Il était a priori un déraciné,⁷ considérant le terme d'un certain point de vue du roman qui annonce les idées de la trilogie *Le Culte du moi*.

Un moi devient idole, dans le sens étymologique, de tout ce qui existe et doit s'affirmer contre ce qui n'est pas lui-même. Il doit se « généraliser ». En poursuivant le plus général, il progresse vers la « nation » qui est un terme équivalent de l'objectivité de la culture « générale » (c'est-à-dire nationale) dans laquelle il s'enracine de nouveau. Pourtant la « culture » la plus générale, c'est celle qui provient de la notion la plus générale, qui est l'être. Dans l'ensemble de ses rapports dans le domaine de l'humain elle s'appelle la religion. Parce que l'homme n'ayant part à l'être qu'imparfaitement, monte vers le « nom substantiel »⁸, vers Dieu qui est l'être subsistant, puisqu'étant par soi : « *Sum qui sum* » (Exodus 3, 14). En face de l'être le plus général l'individu éprouve une présence plus qu'aidante étant donné que celle-ci lui permet de s'épanouir intégralement. Plus l'homme est seul et plus il se sent jeté dans le milieu métaphysique où il habite, plus fort devient le lien qui le relie à la source de son être. Les individus déracinés sont particulièrement invités à le faire en pleine liberté parce qu'il n'y a rien qui pourrait les retenir.

7 Cf. : Barrès, Maurice. *Les Déracinés*. Paris : Charpentier, 1897.

8 L'expression est de saint Augustin.

« Si nous en croyons Meier-Graefe, El Greco aurait puisé sa force dans le fait qu'il a été dépourvu de sa patrie » (Michael Scholz-Hansel, 2014, 88).⁹ Être un « déraciné » dans le sens dans lequel Barrès comprenait le vocable, sous-entendait un point de vue élevé sur les paradigmes qui, à l'époque, déterminaient l'art de la peinture et les différentes formes de la confession à la fois. Le credo d'El Greco était orthodoxe ce qui ne l'empêchait pas de devenir zélate catholique, dont l'ardeur était d'avantage accrue par la Contre-Réforme. Il admirait les docteurs de l'Eglise, tel sainte Thérèse d'Avila.

Tout simplement, c'est un catholique espagnol ; je veux dire qu'il réalise une certaine qualité de sublime, que peuvent produire toutes les nations catholiques, mais auquel l'espagnol attache son nom. Ses toiles complètent les traités de sainte Thérèse et de saint Jean de la Croix (Barrès, 1994, 548).

Les tendances artistiques et spirituelles coexistaient dans son travail, sans entrer en contradiction mutuelle. Ce qui pourrait être conçu comme une aporie se révèle être la source fructueuse d'inspiration. Il s'agit d'une synthèse : elle s'est – à l'insu de l'auteur – portée garant de l'actualité de sa création, nonobstant les quatre siècles pendant lesquelles son art fut oublié.

El Greco ne fut ressuscité qu'à l'aube des temps modernes, ce qui a permis aux éléments maniéristes de sa peinture de renouer avec les tendances les plus audacieuses de l'avant-garde. Il y a deux périodes, bleue et rose dans l'œuvre du peintre majeur en ce qui concerne l'identité de l'art visuel au 20^e siècle, inconcevable en dehors du contexte du Greco, tellement évidentes sont les analogies entre l'un et l'autre. Picasso et El Greco furent, les deux, étrangers. Ils ont été déracinés des cultures originaires de l'espace méditerranéen. L'état français a rejeté, après la guerre civile espagnole, la demande de passeport que Picasso lui avait adressée. Mal reçu à la Capitale, il allait s'installer sur la Côte d'Azur qui lui rappelait les paysages de son enfance passée en Espagne. Ce qui plus est :

Pablo Picasso a vécu lui-même aussi bien à Madrid qu'à Barcelone ce nouvel engouement pour El Greco. Et il se réfère sans cesse à ce dernier dans sa première phase artistique importante, la « période bleue » ce qui ne saurait nous surprendre. L'Enterrement de Casagemas ne serait pas pensable sans L'Enterrement du comte d'Orgaz. Le titre d'un de ses dessins de l'époque, Yo El Greco (Moi El Greco) nous dit à quel point il s'identifie lui-même au peintre grec (Michael Scholz-Hansel, 2014, 88).

9 Maurice Barrès, appuyé sur un talent imparable a fourni une explication de l'itinéraire d'El Greco d'une façon encore plus complète : « *Homme étrange, qui double d'un personnage énigmatique le mystère de son art. Une vie et des œuvres submergées par les ténèbres, tel est le sort du Greco* » (Barrès, 1994, 523).

Si extraordinaires que les parallélismes entre Picasso et le Grec paraissent, ils ne sont pas invraisemblables. Ayant fait connaissance de l'univers pictural de son prédécesseur, Pablo Picasso aurait sans doute remarqué les possibilités expressives frappantes des figures allongées non naturalistes. Il aurait vu comment El Greco a adapté l'échelle et la perspective à ses propres fins. Il aurait ressenti l'intensité et le cadrage claustrophobe de l'image. On pourrait aussi recourir à une autre explication du phénomène :

One of the early examples from Picasso's Blue Period, Burial of Casegamas mirrors the split composition of The Burial of Count Orgaz, as well as its palette. Paintings Picasso produced in this period all display expressive mannerisms, distortion of the body, and swirling dynamic compositions » (Demiray, 2012, 10).

Dans la période rose il y a deux toiles qui ne seraient pas nées si la peinture tolédane n'avait pas existé, au préalable. Ce sont *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* et *L'Ouverture du cinquième Sceau de l'Apocalypse*. Les deux sont précurseurs de la modernité : les analogies avec la peinture d'El Greco sont de nouveau surprenantes. Picasso, notamment aurait également vu comment les figures nues presque monochromes en arrière-plan, qui s'efforcent également de prendre leurs robes, dans la scène de *L'Apocalypse*, complétaient Saint Jean et aidaient à répandre l'énergie du moment sur la toile. Il est possible aussi que les robes de la Vision de Saint Jean et le jeu de lumière sur elles trouvent leur écho chez Picasso dans les rideaux contre lesquels les prostituées des *Demoiselles d'Avignon* posent.

Le réseau des ressemblances ne semble, à vrai dire, avoir de limites puisque le style d'El Greco est particulièrement ouvert et accueillant. Il se rend distinct par les images troubles et obscures qui échappent à la réalité. Il se caractérise davantage par un espace où la complétude des éléments constitutifs est suspendue, dissoute. C'est cela qui a permis à Picasso d'en faire une certaine imitation sans en fait être un imitateur. Le style d'El Greco a constitué un courant – invisible pour une certaine période – qui impliquait plus tard les solutions apportées par le modernisme et l'avant-garde du 20^e siècle. Le maniérisme surtout ne se voulait pas être conforme à la réalité. Il était donc loin du pragmatisme réaliste et de la réalité ordinaire. Il était stendhalien, dans le sens particulier du mot.

C'est son style (et ses effets) qui a permis à Greco d'être idole en (de) soi : « *On sait qu'El Greco se faisait de son art une haute idée* » (Barrès, 1994, 526). Et :

Defying all the accepted beliefs and painting techniques with his visual language and arrogant personality, El Greco was completely unlike any other painter of his time (Demiray, 2012, 6).

On retiendra surtout le jugement présomptueux par lequel El Greco expliquait le « talent apparent » de Michel-Ange. Il est vraiment surprenant de lire le passage suivant :

Un peintre et critique sévillan, nommé Pacheco demanda encore au Greco ce qui doit l'emporter du dessin ou de la couleur. Le vieux maître répondit que c'était la couleur, puis il déclara que « Michel-Ange était un bon homme, mais qu'il ne savait pas peindre. Ce qu'il faut entendre, je crois : « Michel-Ange est un véritable homme (au sens où Napoléon dit à Goethe : Vous êtes un homme, monsieur de Goethe), mais il ne fait pas proprement de la peinture, il dessine des groupes statuariques (Barrès, 1994, 526).

Une telle audace n'a pas réussi à mettre en question l'œuvre du Florentin ; pourtant, elle a retenti à travers les siècles.

El Greco joignait les expériences qu'il recevait aux écoles italiennes de l'époque aux leçons qu'il s'était vu donner lors de son apprentissage en Crète. Celui-ci avait consisté en peinture des icônes dans la tradition byzantine orthodoxe. Il est à rappeler que dans la tradition du christianisme oriental les icônes sont des objets théophanes.¹⁰ Cela signifie que l'icône est transparente dans le sens de devenir reflet de la toute-puissance divine. Les icônes sont sacrées : elles transmettent une réalité théologique et expriment une pensée exégétique. Elles s'identifient alors aux saints qu'elles dépeignent. Toute icône devient nécessairement un objet de la *transfiguration* : par le biais de celle-ci elle est autre chose que ce qu'on voit puisqu'elle se réfère à l'invisible et à l'ineffable (à l'indicible), c'est-à-dire à l'actualité mystique des saints et de Dieu.

Une icône présuppose bien plus qu'un simple art pictural réalisé sur les panneaux de bois. Sa fonction est *générale* en ce qui concerne l'orthodoxie : elle est destinée à la dévotion dans les cercles fermés du clergé orthodoxe ou à l'exposition sur des cloisons ornées qui séparent la nef du sanctuaire. L'œuvre d'El Greco témoigne de la *theophanie* : ses figures disparaissent dans les cieux lorsque leurs corps prennent les formes serpentines, pareilles aux flammes. Il se peut que le peintre grec soit allé encore un pas plus loin, vers le maniérisme *connène*, c'est-à-dire, vers une variante de ce style sophistiqué qui est né dans l'empire byzantin au 12^e siècle et dont l'archétype serait *La Vierge de Vladimir*. In *ultima analysi* : le style *connène* présente un aspect du maniérisme où tout n'est que le reflet approfondi d'une spiritualité austère et intégriste.

Quoi qu'il en soit au début du 17^e siècle la peinture d'El Greco semblait être destinée à l'oubli. Après la disparition physique de *Domenikos Theotokopoulos* ses œuvres sont passées à la trappe. Ce n'est qu'au début du 20^e siècle que des artistes et des critiques commencèrent à s'intéresser à son art très personnel.

10 Le mot vient du grec : il est composé de *theos* et de *phanien* qui signifient « apparition de Dieu ».

Ce sont les cartographes, les artistes, les ecclésiastiques, les humanistes, etc. qui avaient soutenu le peintre, et non les princes et leur cour, et ce furent les écrivains, les critiques d'art et une avant-garde artistique déjà internationale vers 1900 qui initièrent sa découverte – et non les historiens d'art (Michael Scholz-Hansel, 2014, 87).

Celui pourtant, dont l'influence quant à la propagation du Grec fut décisive, était Maurice Barrès. On doit à ces textes le respect de la lecture intégrale. *Greco ou le secret de Tolède* est – dans ce sens – un texte révélateur et moderne. Il est multiculturel *avant la lettre* : son auteur parle du superbe dialogue entre la culture chrétienne et arabe. C'est une leçon pluriethnique qui au temps de Barrès ne se faisait sentir que rarement. Ainsi :

*Au milieu d'un pays immobile, elle forme aujourd'hui encore une énorme grappe, une ascension composite d'églises, de couvents, de maisons gothiques, de couloirs arabes haussés et rétrécis. Et ses pierres continuent de dire les mêmes choses qu'avait entendues El Greco et qu'il fortifie du discours abondant de ses tableaux dans les chapelles délabrées. Les raisons de Tolède ! C'est un superbe dialogue entre la culture chrétienne et l'arabe qui s'assailent et puis se confondent (Maurice Barrès, « Greco ou le secret de Tolède », in *Romans et Voyages*, Robert Laffont, Paris, 1994, p. 529).*

Il est à rappeler que la rencontre entre Le Greco et Picasso était elle-aussi une rencontre multiculturelle, dans le sens complet du mot.

Les textes de Maurice Barrès sont pénétrés par l'esprit de la modernité puisqu'ils tiennent (*Greco ou le secret de Tolède*) compte des postulats qui régissent la coexistence multiethnique dans le monde globalisé d'aujourd'hui. Pourtant, l'écrivain, semble-t-il, a fait un effort plus que visible afin de délivrer un message plus général. La propension naturelle qu'il vouait à El Greco était parallèle à un des instincts primordiaux, à la révolte contre la mort. El Greco a peint – sauf à quelques exceptions près – les êtres qui ont vaincu la mort ou s'apprentent à le faire.

Xavier Bichat, un des pères de la médecine moderne, a défini l'essentiel de l'existence par la formule suivante : « *La vie, c'est l'ensemble des fonctions qui s'opposent à la mort* ». ¹¹ Maurice Barrès, le peintre qui l'a inspiré et l'art en général répondent au sentiment de l'angoisse qui est depuis l'éveil de la conscience la grande hantise de l'humanité. Nous sommes nés et nous disparaîtrons. C'est un fait accompli. Pourtant, dans le temps qui est à notre disposition nous profitons de nos avantages. Nous admirons l'art et les artistes. Nous sommes sensibles à leurs messages. C'est notre pérennité.

11 Cf. : <https://dicocitations.lemonde.fr/citations/citation-2341.php>, consulté le 20 septembre 2020.

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Boštjan Marko Turk,
Université de Ljubljana
Bostjan-marko.turk@guest.arnes.si



Maurice Barrès in ikona sodobne umetnosti

Maurice Barrès je bil med prvimi, ki je Evropi in svetu posredoval spoznanje o razsežnosti dela manierističnega slikarja El Greca. Dejansko je bil ta štiri stoletja v pozabi. Barrès je pri Grku pritegoval kult jaza in kult moči, kot se je v francoski književnosti oblikoval od Stendhala naprej. Francoski avtor je v svoji viziji Grecove umetnosti kult jaza spajal s kultom svetnikov, zmagovalcev nad smrtjo in absolutnimi favoriti življenja

kot transcendenčne danosti. Zato je bil tudi bistveno motiviran sporočilo o umetniškem formatu slikarja posredovati dalje, vse do avantgarde, kjer je njegova slikarska vizija prišla polno do izraza. Modre in vijolične periode pri Pablu Picassu si namreč ne morem misliti brez El Greca.

Ključne besede: El Greco, Maurice Barrès, Toledo, svetniki, kult jaza, »ptički brez gnezda«, manierizem, pravoslavje, ikone, teofanija, Pablo Picasso.

Maurice Barrès and the Icon of Modern Art

El Greco's painting filled Barrès with astonishment and admiration because it responded to the writer's apprehensions regarding the cult of the strong and the exceptional. It is the quest for the absolute that perfects beings dominated by the only one tendency - to live in exaltation of their selves until they merge with the absolute. For this reason Maurice Barrès was able to grasp the multifunctional genius of the Greek painter and to transmit his message to posterity. Barrès approached the painter from a multilateral perspective: he saw the mannerist traits. These have become an element of modern painting, especially in Pablo Picasso. The blue and pink period would not have been possible without the encounter of El Greco.

Key words: El Greco, Maurice Barrès, Toledo, saints, worship of the self, mannerism, uprootedness, orthodoxy, icons, theophany, Pablo Picasso,

Les Plaisirs et les Jours et Le Mystérieux Correspondant: quelques réflexions sur l'œuvre de jeunesse de Marcel Proust

Katarina Marinčič

Résumé

Partant d'une comparaison entre le recueil *Les Plaisirs et les Jours* (1896) et les textes retrouvés par Bernard de Fallois, publiés en 2019 sous le titre *Le Mystérieux Correspondant et autres nouvelles inédites*, l'article aborde quelques aspects de l'œuvre de jeunesse de Marcel Proust. Les nouvelles, les réflexions et les poèmes que le jeune Proust inclut dans son premier livre témoignent de l'influence esthétique de Robert de Montesquiou, ainsi que d'une morale catholique conventionnelle. Par contre, les écrits divers rassemblés par Bernard de Fallois ne sont pas seulement « plus parlants », plus osés du point de vue moral (cf. Proust 2019, 5) ; ils sont déjà marqués par l'esprit d'analyse typique de l'auteur de *La Recherche*, imprégnés de l'ironie proustienne qui transformera Montesquiou le « Professeur de Beauté » en Charlus.

Mots-clés: littérature française du XXe siècle, Marcel Proust, œuvre de jeunesse, *Les Plaisirs et les Jours*, *Le Mystérieux Correspondant*, amour, homosexualité, morale

À L'OMBRE DE MAMAN, CUEILLANT DES FLEURS AVEC LE PROFESSEUR DE BEAUTÉ

Marcel Proust publie son premier livre en 1896, à l'âge de 25 ans. Le recueil intitulé *Les Plaisirs et les Jours* paraît chez Calmann-Lévy, mais à compte d'auteur. Pour les contemporains, ce petit livre est avant tout une source d'amusement, la préciosité stylistique du débutant allant de pair avec la somptuosité prétentieuse de l'édition. Pour la postérité, cependant, pour les lecteurs et les historiens de la littérature qui avaient depuis longtemps cessé de considérer Marcel Proust comme *un mondain amateur* (cf. Assouline 9), cet opuscule de jeunesse est – une source tout court.

Certes, les textes que le jeune Proust compose à l'ombre, voire parfois à l'aide de *maman*, présentent un intérêt biographique. À part une psychologie d'amour largement héritée de Stendhal¹, on peut y discerner les germes d'une grande partie des thèmes et des motifs proustiens (i.e. des thèmes et des motifs de *La Recherche*). Leur présence dans un texte qui, par sa qualité littéraire, n'est pas encore un texte proustien proprement dit, donne preuve, semble-t-il, de leur provenance autobiographique. Pour le jeune écrivain, comme plus tard pour l'auteur de *La Recherche*, la passion amoureuse n'est que le produit de notre imagination incitée par la jalousie. Le jeune Proust, tout comme plus tard l'auteur de *La Recherche*, est fasciné par les toilettes et les pédigrées des grandes dames. Il ironise sur le snobisme tout en le partageant. Il connaît la force évocatrice de la musique. Il est profondément troublé par la perte de conscience pendant le sommeil, profondément déçu par la reprise des sens au moment du réveil²...

Pourtant, ces ressemblances indéniables sont, dans un certain sens au moins, trompeuses: nous ne les découvrons qu'à postériori, parce que nous les cherchons. D'un autre point de vue, ce qu'il y a de plus étonnant dans l'écriture du jeune Proust, c'est le fait qu'elle promet si peu, qu'elle imite de si près, et si gauchement, le style précieux de Robert de Montesquiou.

1 Dans *Les Plaisirs et les Jours*, l'amour occupait des nouvelles et des « études » précieuses rédigées en prose poétique qui méritaient à leur jeune auteur le sobriquet de « Petrone ingénu » et qui étaient avant tout une manifestation, mal déguisée d'ailleurs, de ses déboires sentimentaux. Dans *Jean Santeuil*, au contraire, cette passion ne sert plus simplement de véhicule d'expression aux confidences ou aux épanchements de l'auteur, mais est devenue plutôt l'objet d'une étude réfléchie. Cela est surtout évident dans les pages baptisées « De l'Amour » par Bernard de Fallois, et dans lesquelles la critique n'a pas tardé à reconnaître comme des notes marginales du célèbre traité de Stendhal. Car si d'une part Proust a résolument refusé de faire de Jean un Fabrice ou un Julien, il a tout aussi résolument rédigé ces pages sur l'amour dans le but d'illustrer à travers ce personnage ses propres réflexions sur les théories stendhaliennes. (Saraydar 5)

2 Cf. Marinčič 103.

/.../ le bonheur, est-ce rien d'autre chose que de l'espérer, sur un théâtre qui l'embellirait, et dont l'impatience va jusqu'à donner de l'âme aux objets, de la vie aux choses? (Jumeau-Lafond 23)

Ainsi Robert de Montesquiou dans la réflexion intitulée *Les Hortensias bleus*. Et le jeune Marcel à répondre, en écho de son « Professeur de Beauté »:

A peine une heure à venir nous devient-elle le présent qu'elle se dépouille de ses charmes, pour les retrouver, il est vrai, su notre âme est un peu vaste et en *perspectives* bien ménagées, quand nous l'aurons laissée loin derrière nous, sur les routes de la mémoire. (Proust 1924, 219)

Il n'y a jamais trop de fleurs – mais il y en a vraiment beaucoup dans *Les Plaisirs et les Jours*. L'idée de « donner de l'âme aux objets, de la vie aux choses », le jeune Proust la prend à la lettre.

La pendule bat fiévreusement, les parfums des roses s'inquiètent et les orchidées tourmentées se penchent anxieusement vers Honoré; une a l'air méchant. Sa plume inerte le considère avec la tristesse de ne pouvoir bouger. Les livres n'interrompent point leur grave murmure. (Ibid. 80)

LA LIBERTÉ DU TON

L'admirateur de la *Recherche* qui feuillètera *Les Plaisirs et les Jours* pour y trouver l'empreinte du génie sera probablement déçu par la faiblesse artistique du jeune écrivain. De même, un familier du monde proustien sera surpris par la morale qui imprègne une partie considérable du recueil: une morale catholique étrangement conventionnelle, en désaccord avec le bavardage quasi mondain auquel l'auteur se livre à d'autres endroits du texte. Du point de vue biographique, l'impression que l'on gagne est celle d'un jeune homme qui voudrait passer pour sage, pieux et, à la fois, désabusé et cynique.

La préface dédicatoire aux *Plaisirs et les Jours* est très illustrative à cet égard. L'auteur dédie le recueil à la mémoire de son ami Willie Heath, mort en 1893. Peu est connu sur la personnalité du jeune Anglais, encore moins sur la nature de son amitié avec Proust. Nous pouvons pourtant supposer qu'au moment où il fait la connaissance de Marcel, Willie rayonne une foi de néophyte : né dans une famille protestante, il vient de se convertir au catholicisme. Ce rayonnement, auquel s'ajoute le charme de sa personne, semble avoir fait une impression profonde sur le jeune Proust. Si profonde, en effet, qu'il se sent obligé de demander pardon, implicitement au moins, à son ami – ou bien à ses mânes – pour « la liberté du ton » adopté dans le livre qu'il lui dédie.

J'ai au moins la confiance que nulle part la liberté du ton ne vous y eût choqué. Je n'ai jamais peint l'immoralité que chez des êtres d'une conscience délicate. Aussi, trop faibles pour vouloir le bien, trop nobles pour jouir pleinement dans le mal, ne connaissant que la souffrance, je n'ai pu parler d'eux qu'avec une pitié trop sincère pour qu'elle ne purifie pas ces petits essais. (Proust 1924, 13)

Pour quoi exactement demande-t-il pardon? Certes, pour avoir peint des portraits psychologiques de toute une série de jeunes filles vaines et sensuelles. (Il ne faut pas être trop enclin au biographisme pour voir, dans ces faibles créatures qui succombent aux tentations seulement pour se laisser dévorer par les regrets, des autoportraits à peine voilés de l'auteur.) Quant aux hommes qui peuplent *Les Plaisirs et les Jours*, leur plaisir le plus vif n'est pas celui d'une sensualité partagée, mais celui de la conversation, préférablement accompagnée d'une tasse de thé. Ainsi Baldassare Silvande, protagoniste de la première nouvelle du recueil:

Surnaturelle comme une madone, douce comme une nourrice, je vous ai adorée et vous m'avez bercé. Je vous aimais d'une affection dont aucune espérance de plaisir charnel ne venait concerter la sagacité sensible. Ne m'apportiez-vous pas en échange une amitié incomparable, un thé exquis, une conversation naturellement ornée, et combien de touffes de roses fraîches. (Ibid. 31)

Le protagoniste de la dernière nouvelle (*La fin de la jalousie*) trouve l'apaisement final de ses souffrances amoureuses à l'approche de la mort, dans la conscience que l'amour qu'il avait ressenti pour sa maîtresse est en train de se sublimer en l'amour pour se « frères humains » :

En pleurs, au pied du lit, elle murmurait les plus beaux mots d'autrefois: « Mon pays, mon frère. » Mais lui, n'ayant ni le vouloir ni la force de la détromper, souriait en pensant que son « pays » plus en elle mais dans le ciel et sur toute la terre. Il répétait dans son cœur : « Mes frères », et s'il la regardait plus que les autres, c'était par pitié seulement /.../. Mais il ne l'aimait pas plus et pas autrement que le médecin, que les vieilles parentes, que les domestiques. Et c'était là la fin de sa jalousie. (Ibid. 260)

Pour paraphraser le héros du premier grand roman de Proust: *tout cela pour une femme qui n'était peut-être même pas son genre!*

La scène la plus osée, la description la plus érotique du livre, le lecteur des *Plaisirs et les Jours* ne la trouvera pas là où le jeune Proust « peint l'immoralité chez des êtres d'une conscience délicate », mais dans la préface dédicataire. Voilà le portrait que Marcel peint de Willie :

C'est au Bois que je vous retrouvais souvent le matin, m'ayant aperçu et m'attendant sous les arbres, debout, mais reposé, semblable à un de ces seigneurs qu'a peints Van Dyck et dont vous aviez l'élégance pensive. Leur élégance, en effet, comme la vôtre, réside moins dans les vêtements que dans le corps, et leur corps lui-même semble l'avoir reçue et continuer sans cesse à la recevoir de leur âme : c'est une élégance morale. Tout d'ailleurs contribuait à accentuer cette mélancolique ressemblance, jusqu'à ce fond de feuillages à l'ombre desquels Van Dyck a souvent arrêté la promenade d'un roi ; comme tant d'entre ceux qui furent ses modèles, vous deviez bientôt mourir, et dans vos yeux comme dans les leurs, on voyait alterner les ombres du pressentiment et la douce lumière de la résignation. Mais si la grâce de votre fierté appartenait de droit à l'art d'un Van Dyck, vous releviez plutôt du Vinci par la mystérieuse intensité de votre vie spirituelle. Souvent le doigt levé, les yeux impénétrables et souriants en face de l'énigme que vous taisiez, vous m'êtes apparu comme le saint Jean-Baptiste de Léonard. (Ibid. 10)

UN POST-SCRIPTUM FRAGMENTAIRE

En octobre 2019, cent vingt-trois ans après la parution des *Plaisirs et les Jours*, les Editions de Fallois publient, sous le titre *Le Mystérieux Correspondant et autres nouvelles inédites*, neuf textes rédigés à l'époque où Proust préparait son premier livre. Selon Bernard de Fallois (qui les a redécouvertes), ces nouvelles auraient dû figurer dans *Les Plaisirs et les Jours*; si le jeune auteur les a laissées inachevées, ou bien, dans d'autres cas, ne les a pas incluses dans le recueil, c'était principalement pour éviter le scandale.

Ces nouvelles trop parlantes, sans doute en ce temps trop scandaleuses, leur jeune auteur a choisi de les garder secrètes. Mais il avait éprouvé le besoin de les écrire. Elles constituent, presque lisibles à claire-voie, ce *journal intime* que l'écrivain n'a confié à personne. (Proust 2019, 5)

Ainsi Luc Fraisse dans l'introduction au recueil.

Mot clé journal intime. En 1964, le romancier anglais E.M. Forster, d'ailleurs un grand admirateur de Proust³, écrit dans son journal une phrase à la fois lucide et énigmatique:

I should have been a more famous writer if I had written or rather published more, but sex has prevented the latter. (cit. Moffat 319)

3 /.../ no novelist anywhere has analysed the modern consciousness as successfully as Marcel Proust. (Forster 26)

Le même vaut-il pour le jeune Marcel Proust? La gloire littéraire serait-elle venue plus tôt pour lui si ce n'était pour la crainte d'offenser la morale publique (ou bien d'offenser *maman*)?

Oui et non.

Si le recueil fragmentaire *Le Mystérieux Correspondant* peut être considéré, entre autre, comme une source biographique, il l'est dans la même mesure que *Les Plaisirs et les Jours*. Si l'intérêt de ces textes n'est pas dans leur valeur littéraire, il n'est non plus dans leur indiscretion. Pour citer encore une fois Luc Fraisse:

.../ ces nouvelles ne renferment rien de scabreux, qui susciterait le voyeurisme. Elles approfondissent, par des chemins extraordinairement variés on le verra, le problème psychologique et moral de l'homosexualité. Elles exposent une psychologie essentiellement souffrante. Elles n'introduisent pas par effraction dans l'intimité de Proust ; elles donnent à comprendre une expérience humaine. (Proust 2019, 5)

Une psychologie souffrante, certes. Pourtant, ce qui distingue *Le Mystérieux Correspondant* des *Plaisirs et les Jours* n'est pas le surplus de souffrance. En effet, c'est juste le contraire. Les « êtres d'une conscience délicate » que le jeune Proust nous présente dans son premier livre, même ceux qui n'ont d'autre maladie que le snobisme, souffrent démesurément, car ils (et elles) souffrent aveuglement. Dans *Le Mystérieux Correspondant*, par contre, la souffrance est déjà essentiellement proustienne, c'est à dire éminemment lucide. L'audace que le jeune Proust démontre dans quelques-uns de ces fragments est déjà celle de Proust à son apogée: la volonté inexorable d'analyser.

Deux exemples illustratifs.

Les quelques *scènes de la vie militaire* que Proust inclut dans les *Plaisirs et les Jours* ne dépassent guère le registre des anecdotes nostalgiques, « tableaux du genre du souvenir ».

Nous avons certains souvenirs qui sont comme la peinture hollandaise de notre mémoire, tableaux de genre où les personnages sont souvent de condition médiocre, pris à un moment bien simple de leur existence, sans événements solennels, parfois sans événements du tout, dans un cadre nullement extraordinaire et sans grandeur. Le naturel des caractères et l'innocence de la scène en font l'agrément, l'éloignement met entre elle et nous une lumière douce qui la baigne de beauté. Ma vie de régiment est pleine de scènes de ce genre que je vécus naturellement, sans joie bien vive et sans grand chagrin, et dont je me souviens avec beaucoup de douceur. Le caractère agreste des lieux, la simplicité de quelques-uns de mes camarades paysans, dont le corps était resté plus beau, plus agile, l'esprit plus original, le cœur plus spontané, le caractère plus naturel que chez les jeunes gens que j'avais fréquentés auparavant et que je fréquentai

dans la suite, le calme d'une vie où les occupations sont plus réglées et l'imagination moins asservie que dans toute autre, où le plaisir nous accompagne d'autant plus continuellement que nous n'avons jamais le temps de le fuir en courant à sa recherche, tout concourt à faire aujourd'hui de cette époque de ma vie comme une suite, coupée de lacunes, il est vrai, de petits tableaux pleins de vérité heureuse et de charme sur lesquels le temps a répandu sa tristesse douce et sa poésie. (Proust 1924, 207)

Honni soit qui mal y pense.

Dans la nouvelle *Souvenir d'un capitaine* (incluse dans *Le mystérieux correspondant*) la courte visite du protagoniste « en cette petite ville où il fut un an lieutenant » ne tourne pas à l'idylle. La ville provinciale donne lieu à une rencontre qui le marquera pour toujours. En comprenant intuitivement l'essence troublante de cette rencontre, il l'analyse implicitement, mais sans pruderie.

Je sentis que le brigadier m'écoutait, et il avait levé sur nous d'exquis yeux calmes, qu'il baissa vers son journal quand je le regardai. Passionnément désireux (pourquoi ?) qu'il me regardât je mis mon monocle et affectai de regarder partout, évitant de regarder dans sa direction. L'heure avançait, il fallait partir. Je ne pouvais plus prolonger l'entretien avec mon ordonnance. Je lui dis au revoir avec une amitié tempérée tout exprès de fierté à cause du brigadier et regardant une seconde le brigadier qui rassis sur sa borne tenait levés vers nous ses exquis yeux calmes, je [le] saluai du chapeau et de la tête, en lui souriant un peu. Il se leva tout debout et tint sans plus la laisser retomber, comme on fait au bout d'une seconde pour le salut militaire, sa main droite ouverte contre la visière de son képi, me regardant fixement, comme c'est le règlement, avec un trouble extraordinaire. Alors tout en faisant partir mon cheval je le saluai tout à fait et c'était comme déjà à un ancien ami que je lui disais dans mon regard et dans mon sourire des choses infiniment affectueuses. Et oubliant la réalité, par cet enchantement mystérieux des regards qui sont comme des âmes et nous transportent dans leur mystique royaume où toutes les impossibilités sont abolies, je restai nu-tête déjà emporté assez loin par le cheval la tête tournée vers lui jusqu'à ce que je ne le vis[se] plus du tout. Lui saluait toujours et vraiment deux regards d'amitié, comme en dehors du temps et de l'espace, d'amitié déjà confiante et posée, s'étaient croisés.

Je dînai tristement, et restai deux jours vraiment angoissé, avec dans mes rêves cette figure qui tout à coup m'apparaissait, me secouant de frissons. Naturellement je ne l'ai jamais revu et je ne le reverrai jamais. Mais d'ailleurs maintenant vous voyez je ne me rappelle plus très bien la figure, et cela m'apparaît seulement comme très doux dans cette place toute chaude et blonde de la lumière du soir, un peu triste pourtant, à cause de son mystère et de son inachèvement. (Proust 2019, 52-53)

Le personnage peu convaincant de Baldassare Silvande, amateur du « thé exquis » et de la « conversation naturellement ornée » (cf. supra) obtient de la profondeur dès qu'on le soustrait au contexte des relations hétérosexuelles. Dans le dialogue intitulé *Aux Enfers*, le plus osé parmi les textes inclus dans *Le Mystérieux Correspondant*, un des interlocuteurs s'exprime sur les femmes d'une façon qui, au niveau stylistique, rappelle la façon de parler du vicomte de Sylvanie (présenté dans le récit comme un homme hétérosexuel dont le plus grand amour, cependant, reste platonique). Preuve irréfutable que le style n'est pas toujours l'homme même.

J'ai quelque rancune contre les hommes, mais j'ai toujours infiniment apprécié les femmes. J'ai écrit sur elles des pages qu'on a bien voulu traiter de délicates et qui furent du moins sincères et vécues. J'ai compté parmi elles de sûres amies. Leur grâce, leur faiblesse, leur beauté, leur esprit m'ont souvent enivré d'une joie qui pour ne rien devoir aux sens n'en fut pas moins intense si elle en fut plus durable et plus pure. J'allais me consoler auprès d'elles des trahisons de mes amants et il y a quelque douceur à pleurer longuement et sans désir contre un sein parfait. Les femmes me furent à la fois madones et nourrices. Je les adorais et elles me berçaient. Elles me donnaient d'autant plus que je leur demandais moins. Je fis à plusieurs une cour empreinte d'une sagacité que les bourrasques du désir ne venaient point déconcerter. Elles me donnaient en échange un thé exquis, une conversation ornée, une amitié désintéressée et gracieuse. À peine puis-je en vouloir à celles qui par un jeu cruel et un peu niais voulurent en s'offrant me faire avouer que je ne me sentais nul goût pour elles. Mais à défaut d'un orgueil bien légitime, la plus élémentaire coquetterie, la peur de compromettre leur charme auprès d'un admirateur aussi véritable, un peu de bonté et de largeur d'esprit déconseillèrent cette attitude aux meilleures d'entre elles. (Proust 2019, 65-66)

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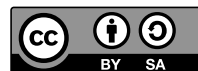
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Katarina Marinčič

Université de Ljubljana, Slovénie

katarina.marincic@ff.uni-lj.si



Radosti in dnevi in Skrivnostni korespondent, nekaj razmišljanj o mladostnem delu Marcela Prousta

Članek obravnava nekatere vidike mladostnega dela Marcela Prousta, izhajajoč iz primerjave med zbirko *Radosti in dnevi* (*Les Plaisirs et les Jours*, 1896) ter večinoma neobjavljenimi, deloma fragmentarnimi besedili, ki jih je v svojem arhivu hranil Bernard de Fallois in so leta 2019 izšla pod naslovom *Skrivnostni korespondent in druge neobjavljene novele* (*Le Mystérieux Correspondant et autres nouvelles inédites*). V zgodbah, refleksijah in pesmih, ki jih mladi Proust vključi v svojo prvo knjigo, je čutiti močan vpliv Roberta de Montesquiouja, ki ga je mladi Proust štel za svojega « profesorja lepote ». V idejnem pogledu zbirko zaznamuje konvencionalna katoliška morala. Besedila, ki jih je zbral Bernard de Fallois, niso le odkritejša, moralno drznejša, ampak je v njih poleg natančne psihološke analize, značilne za zrelega Prousta, že zaznati tudi proustovsko ironijo, ki bo « profesorja lepote » spremenila v barona Charlusa.

Ključne besede: francoska književnost 19. stoletja, Marcel Proust, mladostno delo, *Radosti in dnevi*, *Skrivnostni korespondent*, ljubezen, homoseksualnost, morala

Verosimilitud novelesca y falsedad histórica: el prólogo autoral a *Cornelia Bororquia*

Ignac Fock

Resumen

Este artículo trata de *Cornelia Bororquia o La víctima de la Inquisición* (1801), una novela epistolar española que, criticando la superstición y el abuso de las instituciones eclesiásticas, llama a la tolerancia religiosa. La novela, escrita por Luis Gutiérrez, se publicó con un prólogo editorial que en la segunda edición fue sustituido por un prólogo autoral, la función principal de ambos siendo la autenticación de la fábula. Sin embargo, Gutiérrez como prologuista no recurrió al tópico del manuscrito encontrado, que era la táctica más corriente en la novela epistolar, sino que en vez de crear la impresión de verosimilitud de la ficción, trató de crear la impresión de documentalismo, falsificando los hechos históricos para que se adecuaran a la fábula novelesca y a su fondo doctrinal. Consecuentemente, el “aparato prologal” de la novela en cuestión, funciona en un sentido diametralmente opuesto a los usos narrativos dieciochescos.

Palabras clave: prólogo, novela, verosimilitud, *Cornelia Bororquia*, tolerancia religiosa

INTRODUCCIÓN

Cornelia Bororquia o *La víctima de la Inquisición* es una novela epistolar española escrita por Luis Gutiérrez y publicada en 1801. Como todas las novelas de aquel tiempo, se publicó acompañada de un prólogo editorial, sustituido en la segunda edición por un prólogo autoral; pero ambos anticipan las líneas temáticas y doctrinales de la novela¹ y, sobre todo, autentifican la fábula de acuerdo con el rol que el prólogo solía asumir en la estructura narrativa de la novela dieciochesca.

La novela moderna se articuló en el siglo XVIII y es consecuencia de una subversión que trasciende los límites del ámbito literario: Todorov constata que la esencia de la novela coincide con la esencia del espíritu del Siglo de las Luces. Pero los cambios que se produjeron en el pensamiento de la Europa dieciochesca influyeron en las expectativas de los lectores, así que el relato ficcional en prosa necesitaba distanciarse de lo que hubiera representado en la época anterior —el mundo caballeresco, las historias amorosas y pastoriles, el mundo fabuloso e inverosímil— para ir reflejando la cotidianidad contemporánea y los valores de la sociedad burguesa ilustrada.

Esta transformación fue acompañada por un cambio de terminología. William Congreve² fue el primero en diferenciar entre “romance” (ingl.), antiguo relato en prosa, y “novel”, novela (literalmente) nueva. Clara Reeve siguió su terminología, elaborando ambos conceptos en la obra teórica *The Progress of Romance*:

The Romance, in lofty and elevated language, describes what never happened nor is likely to happen. The Novel gives a familiar relation of such things as pass every day before our eyes, such as may happen to our friend, or to ourselves; and the perfection of it is to represent every scene in so easy and natural a manner, and to make them appear so probable, as to deceive us into a persuasion (at least while we are reading) that all is real, until we are affected by the joys or distresses of the persons in the story as if they were our own. (Reeve 111)

Como la exigencia principal del nuevo género narrativo, *Novel*, era la verosimilitud, el prólogo, gracias al lugar privilegiado que ocupa en el libro, sirviendo de umbral entre los mundos empírico y ficcional, era la herramienta más apropiada y eficaz para asegurarla.

En el caso de *Cornelia Bororquia*, llama la atención el hecho de que el empeño de imprimirle un sello de autenticidad al relato ficcional empieza a mezclarse —por culpa de (o gracias a) este mismo aparato prologal— con la verdad histórica, que el autor llega a falsificar para sustituir por ella a la verosimilitud. La ley de la ficción

1 Característica que Porqueras Mayo (100) denominó *permeabilidad*.

2 En el prólogo a su novela *Incognita, Or, love and Duty Reconil'd* (1692).

hubiera previsto lo contrario: lo que en el mundo empírico es verdad, en el ficcional, es la verosimilitud, de ahí que el “doble truco” que trataremos de exponer y analizar, resulte insólito y original. Pero asimismo demostraremos que este oxímoron termina dándole firmeza al discurso doctrinal del que consiste el prólogo autoral.

EL MARCO DE LECTURA: LA TOLERANCIA RELIGIOSA Y LA LUCHA CONTRA LA SUPERSTICIÓN

Cornelia Bororquia o La víctima de la Inquisición se publicó en 1801 y se reimprimió veinticinco veces a lo largo del siglo XIX. Gérard Dufour (2005) estudia detalladamente la historia de la publicación de esta novela que, como otras muchas en España, no hubiera pasado la censura, por lo cual tuvo que imprimirse en Bayona para ser importada clandestinamente a España dos años más tarde. Despertó el interés del Santo Oficio debido a su título original, que pronto pasó a ser simplemente *Cornelia Bororquia* aunque esto no impidió que fuera incluida en el *Índice de los libros prohibidos*. Hasta el año 1881, se fue publicando anónimamente y tan solo un siglo más tarde, en 1989, cuando la historia literaria³ le adjudicó un puesto entre los clásicos, apareció en la portada el nombre del autor. Se trata de Luis Gutiérrez, un fraile trinitario apóstata que huyó a Francia, empezó a trabajar como redactor de la *Gaceta de Comercio, literatura y política de Bayona* y que durante la Guerra de la independencia española fue sentenciado a muerte por espionaje. Pero en vida nunca fue conectado con su novela, ni por la Inquisición ni por el público (cf. Dufour “Andanzas”).

Esta novela epistolar polifónica ubicada a finales del siglo XVI narra la historia de la joven Cornelia, hija del gobernador de Valencia, de la que se enamora el arzobispo de Sevilla. Como la muchacha no corresponde a sus pretensiones, él la secuestra y la hace encerrar en la cárcel de la Inquisición en Sevilla para que cambie de opinión. El novio de Cornelia, Vargas, un amigo de la familia, llamado Meneses, y el propio gobernador, su padre, se empeñan en rescatarla, pero sin éxito, puesto que han topado con una institución hermética, poderosa y omnipresente. Cuando un día el arzobispo trata de abusar sexualmente de Cornelia, esta, en un acto de legítima defensa, lo mata con un clavo, marcando también su propio destino: ni la confesión del arzobispo en sus últimos instantes ni la defensa ante el Tribunal del Santo Oficio la pueden salvar de la hoguera.

Según Juan Ignacio Perreras, *Cornelia Bororquia* es la primera novela anticlerical en España (en Mancho y Pérez Pacheco 86). Pero a pesar de su evidente

3 P. ej. Álvarez Barrientos, García de la Concha. En cambio, Pedraza Jiménez, solo unos años antes del descubrimiento de la autoría, menciona la obra como “un aburrido relato en forma epistolar que en 1804 fue prohibido por el Santo oficio” (198).

crítica de la Inquisición, “[m]ás que una novela anticlerical, que lo es, *Cornelia Borrorquia* [...] hace un llamamiento a la tolerancia y la pluralidad religiosa (y vital) apoyándose en la contingencia del ataque a la institución inquisitorial, que sería la representación emblemática de todas las instituciones represoras” (Carnero en García de la Concha 978). El anticlericalismo, entonces, es antiinstitucional, pero sin ser una muestra del ateísmo. Aunque el lector liberal de los mediados del siglo XIX apreciaría la obra por su lucha contra la Inquisición y la religión en sí, el público ilustrado, la acogió de acuerdo con la intencionalidad del autor, esto es, como “el claro alegato de denuncia del fanatismo religioso y la intolerancia” (Mancho y Pérez Pacheco 86).⁴

“UN SUCESO VERDADERO”: EL PRÓLOGO EDITORIAL

La primera edición de *Cornelia Borrorquia* está precedida de un prólogo firmado por el “Editor”: “Quien haya leído con atención la historia conoce bien a Borrorquia, sabe sus virtudes, está enterado de sus penas y sufrimientos y no puede menos de aborrecer a sus implacables perseguidores” (Gutiérrez 73). Al comienzo parece que con “historia” el editor se refiere a la trama de la novela, lo cual no solo demostraría la posterioridad del prólogo con respecto al relato novelesco, sino que también implicaría que el prologuista se refiriera al lector cuando este ya hubiera leído la obra entera. Por lo consiguiente, “historia” no puede significar otra cosa que el conjunto de acontecimientos pasados, lo que se hace evidente a continuación: “El fin trágico de esta noble doncella es un hecho cierto e incontrastable, acaecido en los siglos de barbarie e ignorancia” (*ibíd.*). Además, el editor defiende explícitamente la autenticidad histórica diciendo que el autor escribió una historia basada en eventos reales: “[E]l Autor de este pequeño Romance no ha hecho sino embelesar y adornar con los encantos de la Poesía un suceso verdadero en el fondo” (*ibíd.*). El editor entonces nos asegura que la presente obra es una historia verdadera (¡no verosímil!), aunque embellecida, y la mejor prueba es la propia heroína, personaje histórico que todo lector instruido conocerá, y la historia de su vida realmente es tal y como nos la presenta el autor.

En su estudio *Seuils (Umbrales)*, Gérard Genette define el concepto del paratexto, dentro del cual cabe también el prólogo, que según él es “toute espèce de texte liminaire (préliminaire ou postliminaire), auctorial ou allographe, consistant en un discours produit à propos du texte qui suit ou qui précède” (164). Es un texto auxiliar, destinado a prestar servicio al que es su causa primaria: el texto. Genette propone una división de los prólogos según el rol y el régimen de la

4 Sebold, por su parte, se centra más en el personaje de Cornelia, atribuyendo dimensiones alegóricas a sus acciones (77).

instancia prologal, a saber, la figura narrante del prólogo. Con respecto al papel del prologuista, el prólogo puede ser *autoral* —cuando el presunto autor del prólogo también es el autor, real o presunto, de la obra—, *actorial* —cuando él es un personaje de la obra— o *alógrafo* —si se trata de un tercero. En cuanto al régimen del prologuista, el prólogo puede ser *auténtico* —cuando la autoría del prólogo es confirmada por los todos indicios paratextuales— o, de manera análoga, *apócrifo* o *ficticio* (*Ibid.* 181-186).

De esta manera, Genette fija diez tipos de prólogos, y el arriba mencionado en teoría cabría dentro de la categoría B —*prólogo alógrafo auténtico*—, ya que el único criterio aceptado por Genette es el formal, a saber, los indicios (para)textuales: habrá casos de advertencias editoriales cuya autenticidad parezca dudosa, pero la duda en sí no es una justificación suficiente como para poder negar la atribución de la autoría (*Ibid.* 191). Además de la tipificación, Genette determinó a todos los tipos sus respectivas funciones; esta, desde luego, es la parte de su teoría que trataremos de aplicar a nuestro caso.

En su prólogo, el editor sigue llamando “romance” a la novela,⁵ aunque, por supuesto, esta denominación anacrónica se la podríamos atribuir al hecho de que los acontecimientos de la fábula se ubican en el siglo XVI. La literatura, arte de la expresión verbal, para él sigue siendo “poesía”, a la aristotélica, y también sus comentarios del contenido suenan obsoletos: “esta noble doncella”, “los siglos de barbarie”. Sin embargo, más que al azar, se lo atribuiríamos al palimpsesto: el prólogo editorial sugiere la actualización, que es deducible tanto del estilo como del contenido: “[L]os siglos de barbarie, en los cuales se quemaba un hombre con la misma facilidad que hoy asamos una perdiz o una polla” (*Ibid.*). La alusión a Voltaire subraya todavía más esa actualización:

Si alguno le vituperare [al autor] el haber hecho sus esfuerzos por rehabilitar la memoria de esta joven virtuosa e infortunada, el ejemplo de Voltaire, que se mereció el elogio de sus contemporáneos por haber arrancado la memoria de Calas de las manos asquerosas de la iniquidad, le podrá servir de indemnización, y es cuanto se puede esperar. (*Ibid.*)

El caso de Jean Calas, un calvinista torturado y llevado a la hoguera, se había convertido en el ejemplo más emblemático de la lucha por la tolerancia religiosa y dio motivo a Voltaire para escribir en 1763 el famoso *Tratado de tolerancia*. Por lo consiguiente, la comparación del autor, por entonces anónimo, con Voltaire, nos permite ver a las claras el empeño doctrinal del editor. Este, por cierto, no explica exactamente en qué sentido el autor habría adornado con “encantos de la poesía” a la historia verdadera de Cornelia Bororquia: ¿solo habrá teñido de unos

5 Cf. *supra*, “Introducción”.

detalles góticos la fábula? O bien, ¿habrá “encontrado” él mismo la correspondencia? Aunque se trata de una novela epistolar, el prologuista no se sirve del tópico del manuscrito encontrado, técnica de autenticación más común y corriente en aquel tiempo. Prácticamente no existe una novela ilustrada que se presente como novela: para dotar de un aire verosímil a la obra, todas se publican como “diarios”, “correspondencias”, “manuscritos”, “legajos”, “diarios de viaje” etc., en fin, como textos cuya existencia depende de un prototexto supuestamente auténtico que alguien “da a la luz”.⁶

FALSIFICACIÓN EN VEZ DE AUTENTICACIÓN: EL PRÓLOGO AUTORAL

Del primer prólogo se puede deducir que vamos a leer una historia verdadera y real, aunque literaturizada, y desde el punto de vista narratológico, ese carácter real y documentario no es cuestionable (*cf. supra*). No obstante, en la segunda edición de la novela, el prólogo editorial fue sustituido por otro, mucho más extenso, intitolado “Advertencia”. Visto que no es firmado por el editor, tenemos que suponer que es *autoral auténtico*, y en la tipología de Genette, este tipo de prólogo conoce una subdivisión. El primer subtipo es el prólogo *autoral auténtico asuntivo*, llamado también *prólogo original*, y es escrito por el propio autor de la novela quien implícita o explícitamente asume la autoría del texto novelesco. El segundo, en cambio, es *autoral auténtico denegatorio*, porque su autor también es el autor de la novela, pero usa el prólogo para negar la autoría; por eso, Genette propone dos sinónimos: *prólogo criptoautoral* o *seudoalógrafo* (188).

Esta división representa uno de los puntos de flexión en la teoría del prólogo porque coincide con otra, más general, pero al mismo tiempo crucial para comprender las funciones del prólogo. En la teoría de Genette, los prólogos se polarizan entre los *serios* y los *ficcionales*, en otras palabras, entre los que dicen (o implican) la verdad sobre la relación entre el autor y el texto novelesco, y los que proponen una atribución de la autoría del texto (y del mismo prólogo) que es falsa, ya que los datos tanto exteriores como posteriores a su situación oficial nos obligan a considerarlos como autorales (280–281). Evidentemente, todo prólogo original es un prólogo serio por excelencia, mientras que el prólogo seudoalógrafo es típicamente ficcional. Sin embargo, la “Advertencia”, prólogo autoral auténtico, aunque ulterior, que sustituye al prólogo alógrafo auténtico original, no deja claro —mediante alusiones o tópicos narrativos bien conocidos, como por ejemplo el del manuscrito encontrado— su carácter sea asuntivo sea denegatorio, lo cual

6 *Cf. Angelet.*

hubiera condicionado irremediabilmente la lectura de la novela, sino que deja la puerta abierta a la ambigüedad y cede el paso a un debate doctrinal que pondrá en marcha un dinamismo narrativo completamente inesperado.

El comienzo de la “Advertencia” se adecúa a las observaciones de Genette en cuanto a los prólogos ulteriores (*préface ultérieure*). Por regla general, se trata de un prólogo añadido a una edición posterior, circunstancia que le otorga un valor pragmático especial: en él se deja vislumbrar la recepción de la primera edición (177). El prologuista explica que gracias al éxito que ha tenido la novela (prohibida), esta se publica en una versión ampliada: “[R]esolvimos desde entonces componerla sobre un plan más regular y extendido, según todo el mundo lo deseaba” (Gutiérrez 73). Aun manteniendo la ambigüedad relativa al carácter ficcional o serio del prólogo, usa el término “novela” —ya no “romance”— y deja bien claro que la obra que sigue es literatura: “[E]sta especie de obras pide mucho espacio y mucha imaginación de parte del que las emprende, pues las dos mejores novelas que conocemos costaron a sus autores muchos años de meditación” (*Ibid.*).⁷ En fin, podríamos decir que los primeros dos párrafos de la “Advertencia” parafrasean el prólogo del editor, pero con una excepción de suma importancia: a *Cornelia Bororquia* le otorgan un lugar entre las novelas modernas.

Una de las funciones principales del prólogo original —constatadas y descritas por Genette (200), aunque ancladas en el concepto del prólogo a partir de sus inicios en el teatro griego— es asegurarle al texto una buena lectura, a saber: asegurarle la lectura y asegurar que esta lectura sea buena, eso es, acorde con las intenciones del autor y con la naturaleza del texto. De ahí se desprende el así llamado contrato de ficción, del que forma parte también la atribución del texto primario al género literario. En este marco, un prólogo serio desempeña su rol primordial del umbral entre los mundos empírico y literario, imprimiéndole a este una clara señal de lo ficcional para impedir que el lector busque a personajes y sucesos verdaderos en los que son inventados; fenómeno que Genette (219) llama “aplicación”. Un prólogo ficcional, en cambio, es engañoso en cuanto a la autoría del texto principal. Su ficcionalidad proviene de una atribución falsa de la autoría, pero a este tipo de engaño, a nadie le interesa ponerlo en evidencia puesto que, en tales casos, aquel pabellón del contrato de ficción se amplía para abrigar también al prólogo. La ficcionalidad no solo es una característica sino también la función esencial de todo prólogo ficcional, que tiene que adscribir a la ficción la obra a la que precede. La atmósfera ficcional la va construyendo mediante unos detalles convincentes y la manera más eficiente de hacerlo es la imitación de un prólogo serio.

7 Una nota a pie de página —original, añadida por el prologuista— aclara que “las dos mejores novelas” son “*La Clarisa*, y la *Heloísa*” (*Ibid.*).

Ahora bien, la verosimilitud es la realidad, o la verdad, aplicada al mundo ficcional. Por eso, es sorprendente el “error” que comete el prologuista cuando en la “Advertencia” parece mezclar estos dos conceptos: lo verosímil con lo históricamente verídico. Desmiente la afirmación siguiente: “Se ha dicho que Cornelia Bororquia era un ser fantástico o de nuestra invención”, para pasar a alegar fuentes históricas:

[P]ero los que quisieren enterarse de lo contrario podrán leer a Boulanger, Langle, y la Historia de la Inquisición de Limborch y la de Marsollier, y allí verán que aquella joven, hija del Marqués de Bororquia, Gobernador de Valencia, extremamante linda, discreta y virtuosa, fue públicamente quemada en la plaza de Sevilla, y que su principal delito fue, según se discurre con fundamento, el no haber condescendido con los impuros deseos del Arzobispo de Sevilla que la amaba ciegamente. (Gutiérrez 75)

Así desaparece por completo aquella distancia pseudoeditorial que hemos visto al comienzo. Además, al haber desplegado sus pruebas, el prologuista se deja llevar por el afecto e incluso pasa a la narración en primera persona:

Y yo no sé por qué se ha tenido por una negra invectiva este negro acontecimiento, cuando es sabido que ha habido un tiempo en que el tribunal del Santo Oficio ha cometido libremente toda suerte de excesos y atrocidades. Vendría bien una invectiva a falta de hechos; pero cuando éstos sobran, ¿a qué al caso son aquéllas? (*Ibíd.* 75–76)

En las notas originales constan las obras de ambos autores mencionados: *De la cruauté religieuse* (1768) de Boulanger —cuyo verdadero autor de hecho es el barón de Holbach— y *Voyage de Figaro en Espagne* (1784), que es una sátira de las costumbres españolas escrita por el marqués de Langle. En efecto, en la obra de Holbach aparece el nombre *Bohorquia*, que probablemente se españolizó como *Bororquia*, pero el caso de la mujer con este nombre —pues se trata de un nombre y no de un apellido— no tiene nada que ver con la historia del personaje de la novela escrita por Gutiérrez (Dufour 47–49, 74–75).

El supuesto carácter documental de la novela, tuvo una interesante repercusión. Juan Antonio Llorente, comisario de la Inquisición, censor literario en el Consejo de Castilla durante la revolución francesa y el último inquisidor general antes de la disolución del Santo Oficio, también fue uno de los principales historiadores de la Inquisición. En París, adonde tuvo que exiliarse como afrancesado, redactó la obra *Anales de la Inquisición española* y en ella protestó contra la supuesta historicidad de *Cornelia Bororquia*. Constató que si el autor —cuya identidad por entonces no se conocía— se hubiera contentado con la afirmación de haber escrito *una novela*,

él, en calidad de censor, lo habría tolerado. Pero como el autor se había atrevido a decir que se trataba de unos sucesos reales, Llorente, como historiador, le debía al público una explicación. Y así, con el objetivo demostrar que se trataba de pura ficción, enumeró una serie de inexactitudes en la novela; la más pugnante entre ellas es la que le desacredita directamente al prologuista, y además, por su propia culpa, porque ha sido redundante. Llorente descubrió la fuente del supuesto documentalismo de la novela: Philippe Van Limborch, teólogo holandés, destinatario de las cartas de Locke sobre la tolerancia, escribió en 1692 la famosa *Historia Inquisitionis*, que leerían tanto Holbach como Langle. En ella aparecen los nombres *Cornelia* y *Bohorquia*, o sea, *Bororquia*; sin embargo, pertenecen a dos personas diferentes. Esta revelación es confirmada por Gérard Dufour quien añade que también Langle simplemente enumeró varios nombres omitiendo la coma, y que no se trataba de un nombre y apellido (49).

UNA PARADOJA: EL PRÓLOGO LITERARIO Y LA “DELITERATURIZACIÓN”

A primera vista, al tratarse de un prólogo literario, el tema de los hechos históricos parece irrelevante, puesto que, como ya hemos aclarado, la verosimilitud desempeña en la ficción el rol de la verdad. Pero considerando las convenciones tanto del prólogo como de la novela moderna, género entonces recién articulado, resulta muy insólito que el autor hubiera sustituido el realismo literario por la historia apócrifa, en forma de unos hechos históricos falsificados. En vez de recurrir a una estrategia narrativa bien conocida y corriente en la novela epistolar, tópico del manuscrito encontrado, prefirió combinar dos extremos: esto *es* una novela, pero la historia es *verdadera*. El tópico literario del manuscrito encontrado hubiera entrado una autenticación doble porque el concepto de verosimilitud generalmente atañe dos cosas, el hallazgo del manuscrito y su contenido, o sea, según Versini, “après l’authenticité des lettres, celle des faits” (52).

En el prólogo autoral de Gutiérrez, en cambio, la obra es proclamada por literaria a pesar de que la fábula es históricamente verídica; las cartas, aparentemente, no son sino la forma escogida por el autor para transmitirla. Por lo tanto, aunque en el “Prólogo” original del editor hubiéramos podido ver una convencional maniobra narrativa, la “Advertencia” del autor resulta ya demasiado perfeccionada. En otras palabras: la afirmación del editor, de que se tratara de una historia verdadera, la hubiéramos podido tomar por una herramienta de autenticación e incluso por una mentira inconvincente —“ficción oficial” según Genette— que perteneciera al mundo ficcional. Pero las referencias engañosas del autor a unas fuentes históricas o mal citadas o apócrifas, de hecho no son sino una mentira

poco convincente — pero que pertenece al mundo empírico y que ya no se puede calificar de “ficción oficial” que a nadie le importa desvelar.

Las polémicas en torno a la autenticidad del personaje de Cornelia Bororquia y de su historia incluso las podríamos entender como una posibilidad de lectura en clave.⁸ En nuestro caso, el carácter apócrifo de la historia deja de ser una maniobra literaria para convertirse en un tipo de pretexto, en una elaboración a tesis que termina por “deliteraturizar” el prólogo. Lo podemos afirmar con todavía más certeza al darnos cuenta que algunas estrategias convencionales de autenticación Gutiérrez sí que las había usado: por ejemplo, anonimizó al Conde ***, uno de los corresponsales.

Al fin y al cabo, *Cornelia Bororquia* no es una novela histórica ni tampoco un relato histórico novelado. La historia es una metáfora para la contemporaneidad y no un anacronismo escapista, típico de los viejos “romances”. El cronotopo en ningún momento es portador del mensaje o de la estética, el nivel ideológico es el que prevalece. Gutiérrez hace numerosas referencias directas e indirectas al “hombre ilustrado” cuyas acciones son marcadas por la razón, el humanismo y la tolerancia. Los dos personajes masculinos principales no son nobles sino burgueses; sus gestos no son caballerosos sino filantrópicos. Y si el editor en su “Prólogo” meramente insinuó a una posibilidad de actualización de la historia de Cornelia, el autor en su “Advertencia” lo justificó sobradamente:

Es verdad que se nos dice que ya desaparecieron para siempre jamás aquellos funestos siglos de barbarie, y que este tribunal es hoy día un mero fantasma, representado por unos cocos que espantan sin hacer daño. Pero los que así hablan, ¿conocen por ventura el espíritu de la Inquisición? He aquí lo que es necesario averiguar antes de dar crédito a estas voces vagas. Sin duda que el Santo Oficio no quema hoy públicamente a nadie, porque la opinión no se lo permite. Pero ¿deja por eso de hacer de las suyas con el triste que tiene la desgracia de caer en sus garras? (Gutiérrez 76)

Evidentemente, el autor no pudo ganarse mucha simpatía por parte del Santo Oficio al hablar de “unos cocos que espantan sin hacer daño”, aun notando su ineficacia en los albores del siglo XIX. Pero algo ha quedado claro: la Inquisición, mucho más que temática, es una metáfora del fanatismo religioso y del abuso de las instituciones eclesiásticas.

De este modo, resulta más fácil entender el cambio de *romance* a *novela* que se produjo en los prólogos editorial y autorial a la primera y a la segunda edición,

8 Es justamente lo que sostienen Ricardo Rodrigo Mancho y Pilar Pérez Pacheco, quienes proponen un tipo de lectura “colectiva” en clave. Vargas, Meneses y el Conde *** representarían un grupo de ilustrados reunidos en los años 90 del siglo XVIII en Bayona: José Marchena, Miguel Rubín de Celis, José de Hevia y Miranda, Vicente María Santiviáñez, Juan Antonio Carrese y José María Lanz.

respectivamente. Desde el momento en el que el autor se involucra en primera persona en el prólogo, este cambia de modo y de inclinación, por razones temáticas —¿ya que se conocen las prácticas de la Inquisición, a qué viene ahora tanto escándalo?—, pero también estilísticas, gracias al uso de primera persona, como si al autor le hubiera caído el disfraz bajo el que siempre se esconde en tal “ficción oficial”. El prólogo, que tradicionalmente hubiera sido una convención, va convirtiéndose en un tratado sobre la tolerancia, lo cual confirma todo lo que la historia literaria ha podido averiguar sobre el autor y sobre su actitud hacia la religión, la iglesia y el estado.

Un gobierno debe permitir y proteger todos los cultos en su territorio, así como Dios los tolera a todos en la tierra. El derecho de la Tolerancia es propio y peculiar de la Divinidad, mediante que la tolerancia supone supremacía, y la supremacía en materia de culto no puede pertenecer sino a aquel solo que es su objeto. [...] La moral de todas las religiones es buena, más o menos perfecta. Si el cristianismo sólo ha dicho, haced bien a los que os persiguen, tampoco hay ninguna secta que haya dicho, haced a otro lo que no queráis que os hagan a vosotros. Todo lo demás debe ser indiferente a los gobiernos, pues lo que más les importa es que al proteger todos los cultos, se mantengan todos ellos recíprocamente. (Gutiérrez 77-78)

En fin, el prologuista, antes disfrazado y engañador, falsificador de hechos históricos, incluso se volvió un narrador fiable (*reliable narrator*), en términos de Booth (211), por lo cual el prólogo terminó perdiendo su carácter manipulador.

A MODO DE CONCLUSIÓN

Al establecer la tipología de prólogos y sus respectivas funciones, Genette supuso que los prólogos ficcionales imitaban las funciones de los prólogos serios, particularmente las del prólogo autoral auténtico asuntivo. Por no entrar en digresiones, no nos hemos detenido en ciertos aspectos problemáticos de la teoría de Genette,⁹ pero debemos señalar que el caso de *Cornelia Bororquia* revela al menos uno. La división general que establece Genette entre los prólogos “serios” y los “ficcionales” resulta, ya de por sí, relativamente “intuitiva” si la comparamos con el rigor estructuralista del resto de su teoría. En el apartado anterior hemos apuntado al carácter dudoso de la “Advertencia” desde el punto de vista narratológico. Este prólogo autoral defiende la veracidad de la fábula, pero admite que su elaboración es literaria y adscribe el texto al género novelesco. No obstante, ¿a qué conclusión nos lleva esta situación paradójica? ¿El autor asume la autoría de la novela o la niega?

9 Cf. Del Lungo.

Podríamos suponer que la “Advertencia” es un prólogo autoral *denegatorio*, pero “poco hábil”, y que al autor se le olvidó mencionar que había encontrado un manuscrito (etc.). O bien, su trabajo era el de un típico seudoeeditor. El morisco aljamiado había traducido los cartapacios con la historia escrita por Cide Hamete Benengeli, y de la misma manera que Cervantes se limitó a transcribirla para poder continuar su novela, Gutiérrez se limitó a adornar una historia verdadera, transcribiéndola en forma de cartas — pero podría haber escogido también la epopeya, el romance o la tragedia. En fin, creó unas circunstancias en las que se sobreentiende un marco extradiegético: dentro de él, no hay ningún manuscrito, pero sí hay un prototexto y hay un autor verdadero, porque un personaje inventado difícilmente pudiera hablar sobre verdades históricas. Asimismo hemos vacilado al determinar el tipo al que pertenece el prólogo editorial a *Cornelia Bororquia*. Pero una vez analizados el contenido y el efecto de la “Advertencia”, prólogo autoral ulterior, resulta irrelevante si el original es ficticio o auténtico.

Las funciones de los prólogos ficcionales no solo se basan en la imitación de los auténticos, sino en la imitación de cualquier prólogo “menos” ficcional. El prólogo alógrafo ficticio —al que podría corresponder el primer prólogo a *Cornelia Bororquia*— también imita al prólogo autoral denegatorio, destacando su función de comentario moral porque establece, o bien, aumenta la distancia entre el autor disfrazado que pretende no ser el autor y el texto que él supuestamente solo publica. Desde esta distancia, todo juicio ético y moral debe parecer mucho más objetivo. En *Cornelia Bororquia*, sucede lo contrario: el prólogo del editor fue sustituido por el prólogo del autor. Visto que esta sustitución supuso un menoscabo para la objetividad del autor, este lo compensó de otra manera, apoyándose en hechos históricos que tuvo que falsificar para que correspondieran a sus propósitos. Preciso es admitir que la impersonalidad editorial es muy conveniente para anticipar la recepción de la obra o para captar la buena voluntad del lector; el compromiso social y la reflexión filosófica, en cambio, requieren al “ser humano” en su totalidad. El editor —sea ficticio o verdadero— bien podrá hablar del “fin trágico de esta noble doncella”, y podrá e incluso deberá defender al autor ante posibles críticas, pero solo a este último le incumbe decir: “El derecho de la Tolerancia es propio y peculiar de la Divinidad.” (Gutiérrez 76). Lo clave es que esta maniobra —que lo literario ha cedido el paso a lo doctrinal— da no disminuye en absoluto la eficacia de su exposición filosófica. Al fin y al cabo, es lógico que cuando se apela a la tolerancia religiosa, el público le presta mucha más atención a las palabras del autor que a las de un pobre editor. Y teniendo en cuenta las circunstancias históricas, los valores que Gutiérrez defendió y la institución que atacó, tenemos que admitir que su manipulación narrativa, además de astuta y artísticamente convincente, fue justificada.

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Ignac Fock

Universidad de Liubliana, Eslovenia
ignac.fock@ff.uni-lj.si



Romaneska verodostojnost in potvarjanje zgodovine: avtorski predgovor h *Cornelii Bororquii*

Pričujoči članek se ukvarja s španskim pisemskim romanom *Cornelia Bororquia ali Žrtev inkvizicije* (1801), ki kritizira praznoverje in zlorabo cerkvenih institucij ter kliče k verski toleranci. Roman, katerega avtor je Luis Gutiérrez, je prvotno izšel z uredniškim predgovorom, ki ga je v naslednji izdaji nadomestil daljši avtorski predgovor, pomembna vloga obeh pa je bilo ustvariti vtis verodostojnosti. Toda Gutiérrez se kot prologist ni zatekel k ustaljeni taktiki v pisemskem romanu — toposu najdenega rokopisa —, marveč je namesto vtisa o verodostojnosti fikcije skušal ustvariti vtis dokumentarnosti, pri tem pa potvoril zgodovinska dejstva, da bi se skladala z romaneskno fabulo in njenim doktrinalnim ozadjem. “Predgovorni aparat” obravnavanega romana torej deluje ravno obratno, kot bi šlo pričakovati glede na pripovedne konvencije tistega časa.

Ključne besede: predgovor, roman, verodostojnost, *Cornelia Bororquia*, verska toleranca

La prise de la parole dans *Les Contes philosophiques* de Diderot

Primož Vitez

Résumé

Tous les contes de Diderot, et la plupart de ses romans, fonctionnent comme du théâtre latent. En outre, Diderot se lit comme un auteur qui a réussi à unir en sa personne le don de dire de la philosophie et celui de raconter des histoires. Il y a plus d'une voie pour un humaniste de parvenir à une interprétation du monde social. Certains textes de Diderot sont explicitement le fruit d'une réflexion philosophique, d'autres excellent en un artisme authentique – ce qui a valu à Diderot la réputation de l'un des écrivains les plus dialogiques du dix-huitième siècle européen. Les deux énergies créatrices se trouvent réunies dans ses courtes histoires, écrites entre 1768 et 1774. Ces textes s'entendent comme philosophiques parce qu'ils s'ouvrent sur des dilemmes éthiques fondamentaux: ils se destinent à donner la parole à l'individu quand celui-ci se trouve confronté à l'arbitraire de la loi ou à celui de l'opinion publique.

Mots-clés: prise de la parole, Diderot, éthique de la parole, dialogue, voix littéraire

Le conte, pour Diderot, est un spectacle narratif. Faire des contes, en français classique, relève de l'omniprésente culture conversationnelle, soigneusement élaborée parmi les intellectuels, c'est-à-dire surtout dans des salons de l'aristocratie et de la haute bourgeoisie ou se forgeait, à partir du début du XVII^e siècle, la norme écrite et parlée de la langue française. Pour lire les contes de Diderot,¹ il est indispensable de comprendre le contexte de leur dimension parlée; ce qui n'est pas difficile, puisque ces textes, en général, sont écrits comme des transcriptions de dialogues que l'auteur prétend avoir réellement vécu (Attali 2012: 356). Son coup de génie, c'est de présenter ces dialogues comme s'ils étaient proférés par des gens de théâtre, par des comédiens. Cela ne devrait étonner personne: Diderot est l'auteur-clé à qui voudrait comprendre la nature du théâtre français au dix-huitième siècle. Ses textes explicitement dramatiques n'ont plus, à vrai dire, le potentiel scénique qui attirerait souvent les gens de théâtre à les réaliser; mais ses contes philosophiques, écrits sous forme de dialogues, sont imprégnés d'une irrécusable sensibilité dramatique formant des situations et des conflits psychologiques qu'il vaudrait absolument la peine, aujourd'hui, de réaliser sur scène. L'intention littéraire, chez Diderot, vibre en pulsions orales.² Du reste, il a déployé le meilleur de son effort littéraire pour écrire de la parole.

Son premier conte sous forme de récit bref, plus ou moins anecdotique, *Mystification*, Diderot l'a écrit à l'âge de cinquante-six ans. Sa sensibilité philosophique et artistique était donc bien élaborée; à l'époque il avait déjà écrit la plupart des ouvrages qui ont illustré son nom: trois romans, les principaux traités philosophiques, mais il avait surtout terminé, en duo avec d'Alembert, l'exploit de sa vie, la monumentale *Encyclopédie* (1747–1766) qui a résumé les Lumières à l'usage de toute l'Europe et établi de nouveaux standards dans la formulation et organisation de la connaissance. Cela peut paraître surprenant, mais Diderot, comme Voltaire³ avant lui, s'est d'abord attaqué aux grandes formes littéraires et philosophiques pour passer enfin à la moins prestigieuse, celle du court récit en prose.

Diderot est un auteur qui développe soigneusement la complexité de son énonciation littéraire. Non seulement il déploie devant le lecteur le dynamisme des couches narratives de ses récits, il n'hésite pas de lui fournir au fur et à mesure

1 Toutes les notes citant les extraits des contes de Diderot, sauf exception notée, se référeront à l'excellente édition critique, publiée par Laurent Versini: Diderot, *Oeuvres*, tome II, *Contes*, Paris: Robert Laffont, 1994.

2 Dans la *Lettre sur les sourds et muets*, Diderot spéculé sur l'origine de la parole mettant en valeur l'absence des fonctions phonatoires, car 'un sourd-muet de naissance est sans préjugé sur la manière de communiquer sa pensée.' Par ce biais privatif, il postule implicitement que la phonation se trouve à la source des conventions sociales, la Lettre étant adressée 'à l'usage de ceux qui entendent & qui parlent'.

3 Voltaire publie *Candide* en 1759, à l'âge de soixante-cinq ans, après avoir écrit des dizaines de tragédies en alexandrins.

des explications poétologiques de son activité littéraire. Dans *Les deux amis de Bourbonne* (1770), il dévoile son approche poétique dans le corps même du conte. Au moment du dénouement de l'histoire, Diderot explique qu'il classe ses écrits brefs sous le genre de *conte historique* qu'il définit minutieusement :

[L'auteur] se propose de vous tromper; il est assis au coin de votre âtre; il a pour objet la vérité rigoureuse; il veut être cru; il veut intéresser, toucher, entraîner, émouvoir, faire frissonner la peau et couler les larmes; effet qu'on n'obtient point sans éloquence et sans poésie. Mais l'éloquence est une sorte de mensonge, et rien de plus contraire à l'illusion que la poésie; l'une et l'autre exagèrent, surfont, amplifient, inspirent la méfiance: comment s'y prendra donc ce conteur-ci pour vous tromper? Le voici. Il parsèmera son récit de petites circonstances si liées à la chose, de traits si simples, si naturels, et toutefois si difficiles à imaginer, que vous serez forcé de vous dire en vous-même: Ma foi, cela est vrai: on n'invente pas ces choses-là. C'est ainsi qu'il sauvera l'exagération de l'éloquence et de la poésie; que la vérité de la nature couvrira le prestige de l'art; et qu'il satisfera à deux conditions qui semblent contradictoires, d'être en même temps historien et poète, véridique et menteur.⁴

Diderot, connaisseur et admirateur des beaux-arts, précise sa position en ajoutant un exemple, issu de la peinture. La réalité,⁵ dit-il, se laisse provoquer par le détail: l'artiste peut idéaliser ses motifs de façon à ce qu'on n'y découvrirait que des projections de la nature, parce qu'il les réalise en formes symétriques. S'il applique, en revanche, à cet idéal quelques petits signes de réalité, il en résultera une image que le spectateur pourra référer à son expérience personnelle. L'inaccessible effigie d'une divine Vénus, à qui on a ajouté une petite irrégularité de la peau, deviendra subitement le visage d'une belle voisine. Une image idéalisée se métamorphose ainsi en ce que le spectateur reconnaîtra comme naturel. Il cite à ce propos son ami Caillot, comédien:

Un peu de poussière sur mes souliers et je ne sors pas de ma loge, je reviens de la campagne.⁶

La dénomination poétique qu'adopte Diderot pour ses récits brefs, *conte historique*, ne signifie pas que le conteur choisit de parler d'une époque ou de personnages historiques particuliers. Le terme renvoie plutôt à l'intérêt que porte l'auteur

4 *Les deux amis de Bourbonne*, p. 480.

5 C'est, du point de vue analytique de l'*Encyclopédie*, le sens que prend la réflexion de Beauzée à propos de la langue en général, citée dans Sylvain Auroux, *L'Encyclopédie: Grammaire et langue au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Mame, 1973), p. 95: "Tout est usage dans les langues; le matériel et la signification des mots, l'analogie et l'anomalie des terminaisons, la servitude ou la liberté des constructions, le purisme ou le barbarisme des ensembles. [...] L'usage n'est donc pas le tyran des langues, il en est le législateur naturel, nécessaire, et exclusif."

6 *Les deux amis de Bourbonne*, p. 481.

pour les événements et détails réels dans une histoire, c'est-à-dire cette réalité foncièrement dissymétrique et véridique qui devrait pourtant bien intéresser l'historiographe quand il écrit de l'Histoire. Diderot, en racontant ce qui l'intéresse, historise l'événement sans intention de tailler des monuments.

Il ne s'agit pas de reproduire des échantillons formels que l'observateur est généralement capable d'extraire de son environnement, mais de développer le principe du détail qui produira la réalité de la fiction, qui s'adressera à celui qui écoute ou qui lit et qui traduira, dans le récit, l'imperfection, la fautivité, l'instabilité – mais aussi la beauté de la nature et de l'homme. D'ailleurs, Mornet a bien esquissé l'esthétique littéraire chez Diderot:

Ce qu'il y a, si l'on veut, de réalisme dans ces contes de Diderot, c'est ce qu'on pourrait appeler le réalisme pittoresque. Nous n'y trouvons pas seulement des aventures, les actions et les réactions des caractères. Nous voyons les personnages s'y mouvoir, trahir leurs caractères par leurs gestes et leurs physionomies. (Mornet 1966: 135)

L'observation des faits naturels se concentre souvent au fonctionnement de la nature humaine ce qui amène nécessairement l'observateur à s'observer et à s'analyser lui-même. Son dévouement à la pensée n'entraîne pas de préjugés idéologiques: ses analyses n'imposent aucun parti pris interprétatif, au contraire, elles se proposent d'ouvrir, à la vue du lecteur, l'accès au problème traité. Par son expérience intellectuelle et quotidienne, il construit sans moraliser cet unique laboratoire moral qu'est son conte historique.

Le titre du texte central parmi ces contes, *Ceci n'est pas un conte*, se lit sous quelques aspects apparemment divergents. L'énoncé 'ceci n'est pas un conte' est d'abord une explication de l'auteur qui prétend n'avoir rien inventé; que les choses racontées sont, ni plus ni moins, celles qu'il avait réellement vécues et qu'il a l'intention de rendre telles quelles. C'est bien dans la rendition présumée des histoires 'telles quelles' qu'est forgée la finesse dramaturgique de Diderot. C'est une question de technique. D'un autre côté, l'auteur se propose d'expliquer que ses historiettes ne sont pas des contes conventionnels que le lecteur aurait pris l'habitude de lire. Diderot a consacré beaucoup de son énergie créatrice à élaborer soigneusement des couches narratives dans ses récits ce qui lui a valu, à juste titre, la réputation de novateur dans la formulation de la raison en philosophie et en fiction. Enfin, en refusant de confirmer les attentes du lecteur, Diderot propose à son public une troisième interprétation, implicitement énoncée comme un avis ou conseil: lisez attentivement, car les conteurs aiment bien 'faire semblant' de raconter des fantaisies, alors qu'ils se servent en cachette de leur art littéraire pour créer l'illusion dans laquelle il semble devenir clair que

leurs histoires sont les seules possibles, c'est-à-dire réelles. Il faut lire, paraît-il, ces contes dans les trois sens.

Pendant longtemps, jusqu'en 1954, quand il a été publié pour la première fois en France, le premier conte à compter aujourd'hui parmi ces traités fictionnels sur la morale, *Mystification*, était considéré comme une simple ébauche, comme un tronc littéraire, indigne de publication accomplie. Du point de vue du développement de l'histoire, c'est un texte qui peut paraître inachevé, puisque les événements s'arrêtent brusquement en privant le lecteur du dénouement narratif: l'histoire n'a pas de suite parce que le héros central, se mettant en scène comme un médecin turc pour duper une demoiselle crédule, selon le narrateur, s'est tiré réellement deux balles dans le cerveau ce qui laissait l'impression d'incomplétude de l'intrigue, autrement dit, de la mystification racontée. *Mystification* en tant que corps textuel, écrit par une majuscule, comporte tous les éléments essentiels de la littérature de Diderot: documentarité, donc référence à des événements réels et surtout le dialogue captant, marque ineffable de cette écriture théâtrale – malgré son apparence prosaïque; et puis le positionnement philosophique de Diderot qui savait mettre la même force argumentative dans les deux côtés de la controverse. Il donne la parole à chaque individu pour en tirer, sans prendre parti, des conséquences synthétiques relevant de la justice raisonnée.

Les textes littéraires de Diderot cherchaient des voies atypiques pour arriver à leur public. Les contes *Deux amis de Bourbonne* et *Entretien d'un père avec ses enfants* ont été écrits en quelques semaines en 1770, puis remis à un ami, nommé Melchior Grimm, éditeur de la *Correspondance littéraire*, fascicule périodique qui à l'époque n'avait qu'une quinzaine d'abonnées dont aucun en France. Cette publication était destinée aux princes et aristocrates des différentes cours européennes, désireux d'être au courant de ce qui se passait à Paris, en littérature française. Les textes, qui y étaient publiés, n'avaient certainement pas de public classique. Ces deux contes ont d'abord été publiés en 1772 à Zurich, incorporés dans un recueil de contes qu'écrivait Salomon Gessner, écrivain suisse. Ce n'est que l'année d'après que les deux textes étaient sortis en France. Ce détail rappelle fortement le destin du *Neveu de Rameau* qui a été publié pour la première fois en Allemagne, en 1805, donc longtemps après la mort de Diderot, et en traduction de Goethe, pour enfin paraître en France en 1821 – d'abord en traduction de l'allemand.

Entretien d'un père avec ses enfants est un conte typique de Diderot, dialogué et basé sur une soirée que Diderot, en compagnie de son frère Didier (qui était prêtre), de sa 'soeurette' et de quelques visiteurs, avait passée avec son père. Le conte thématise les rapports que l'homme établit avec les principes de réglementation sociale et civile: l'individu peut les formuler à travers son penchant pour l'intérêt personnel, ou bien à travers son sens intime de la justice, de la responsabilité sociale et du bien commun. D'ailleurs, le conte est sous-titré *Du danger de se*

mettre au-dessus des lois et ouvre par là le débat entre le bon sens et les lois civiles, surtout quand celles-ci produisent de l'iniquité, des effets nuisibles ou injustes à la sensibilité du bien. Diderot, sous dénomination fictionnelle cette fois-ci de *Philosophe* ou *Moi*, se réclame de la culture du cœur et de la probité du jugement personnel, fondé sur l'expérience sociale, sur la loi morale intérieure et sur une certaine sagesse qui devrait, c'est son avis, s'imposer sur certains usages critiquables dans la société qui, dans leurs généralisations, sont souvent insensibles aux réalités sociales. Le père défend son légalisme en arguant que le jugement intime est corruptible et enclin à l'erreur, puisqu'il se fonde sur l'expérience particulière, étant ainsi sujet à l'intérêt particulier. En terminant le récit sur la soirée familiale, le personnage *Moi* se penche à l'oreille de son géniteur:

- Mon père, c'est qu'à la rigueur il n'y a point de loi pour le sage.
- Parlez plus bas.
- Toutes étant sujettes à des exceptions, c'est à lui qu'il appartient de juger des cas où il faut s'y soumettre ou s'en affranchir.
- Je ne serais pas trop fâché, me répondit-il, qu'il y eût dans la ville un ou deux citoyens comme toi, mais je n'y habiterais pas, s'ils pensaient tous de même.⁷

C'est le père qui a le droit au dernier mot et ce n'est pas un hasard. Le conte appartient au cycle que Diderot avait écrit lors du voyage à Langres pour retrouver l'attachement à la tradition de la parole paternelle. Et puis, bien sûr, la composante centrale de l'art de Diderot (ainsi que de sa puissance philosophique), c'est de savoir concilier, dans une très solide culture conversationnelle, des disputes apparemment inconciliables, en formulant les antagonismes par une même vigueur argumentative et stylistique. L'antagonisme idéologique peut être un processus efficace dans la formation du positionnement politique du locuteur, mais n'a d'habitude rien à voir avec la vérité des lieux-communs concernant la réalité, parce qu'en l'observant d'un peu plus près, on n'y découvre que du parti pris.

Dans la fiction documentaire de Diderot, *Ceci n'est pas un conte*, *Madame de la Carlière* et *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville* constituent le bloc central, ayant acquis par la critique littéraire le dénominateur commun de *cycle parisien*. Il y est ostentativement question du temps estival, sans doute parce que ces trois contes ont été écrit pendant l'été 1772. Le discours météorologique, d'ailleurs, est une intervention originale de Diderot, non seulement parce qu'il exploite à merveille sa fonction phatique qui remplit les répliques de ceux qui au début de la conversation semblent tâtonner le sujet, mais surtout parce que ce discours est élevé au niveau scientifique – voire encyclopédique. Le temps qu'il fait n'est pas simplement

7 *Entretien d'un père avec ses enfants*, p. 502.

beau ou mauvais: les personnages parlent de la dissolution des nébuleuses qui laissent entrevoir des éclaircies dans un ciel nuageux, de la condensation des micro-gouttes dans les vapeurs atmosphériques, de l'équilibre entre les pressions aériennes qui deviennent peu à peu des *métaphores* pour les rapports émotionnels entre les hommes et les femmes qui se construisent ou se défont par des altérations psycho-physiques, emportés par les vents de la passion, saturés par le bien ou le mal dans les températures changeantes pour se dénouer dans des tempêtes affectives ou des stagnations d'indifférence.

Le thème central de ces contes étant les relations (matrimoniales) entre homme et femme, Diderot est encore ici le 'traducteur' de sa propre vie: il mariait en 1772 sa fille unique, la bien-aimée Angélique, et c'est un mariage qui a profondément occupé ses soins et son esprit. Il avait élevé la jeune fille en une femme talentueuse, consciente de ses talents, intelligente et noblement sensible, habile en conversation intellectuelle, ses lectures allant bien au-delà du catéchisme de l'après-midi. *Ceci n'est pas un conte* est une combinaison de deux histoires parallèles où la tragédie amoureuse est tour à tour provoquée par une femme moralement corrompue ou par un homme sans vertu, leurs partenaires étant victimes de leur propre naïveté et bonté inconditionnelle. Comme nous avons déjà pu le constater par rapport aux textes précédents, l'auteur ne porte de jugement schématique sur aucun des profils moraux et psychologiques de ses personnages; il préfère élaborer une certaine ambivalence qui seule reconstruit l'image exacte du caractère. Les personnages sont écrits de façon à ce que leur (im)moralité soit lue dans la lumière des réactions caractérielles qui apparaissent au fur et à mesure du déroulement de l'histoire. Ainsi, on ne sait pas très bien si le pauvre Tanié est irréparablement bon ou tout simplement ridicule; on a du mal à décider si la terrible Reymer n'est qu'un monstre calculateur ou bien une femme réaliste qui avait appris à écarter toute indulgence par rapport au sexe privilégié. La gracieuse Mademoiselle de la Chaux qui court à sa perdition en vouant complètement ses talents à un amant, n'est peut-être qu'une fille crédule, et l'orgueilleux Gardeil risque d'apparaître comme un bonvivant habile qui sait parfaitement organiser son entourage et créer l'impression que les efforts de ses proches n'arrangent pas seulement son bien, mais en même temps celui de l'intérêt commun. Diderot ne moralise pas: les nuances psychologiques, selon lesquelles il fait parler ses personnages, se tissent au fur et à mesure de l'emprise des dilemmes interprétatifs, comparables aux dichotomies sémantiques où l'on a parfois du mal à poser la distinction entre avarice et économie, générosité et gaspillage, stupidité et confiance. Jouant les échelles de la vieille terminologie moraliste, l'auteur est assez intelligent pour ne pas imposer de jugements de valeur: il propose plutôt au lecteur, par son réflexe profondément humaniste, de résoudre tout seul le choix interprétatif et de lui entr'ouvrir la porte vers la relativité du jugement moral.

Au moment du mariage d'Angélique, Diderot approfondit sa réflexion par rapport au statut social de la femme. La Reymer, Mademoiselle de la Chau, mais surtout Madame de la Carlière, ne ressemblent nullement à la frivole Dornet de la *Mystification*, qui, deux ans auparavant sautillait d'amant à amant, et s'abandonnait à la superstition. Dans le monde masculin, la femme doit se constituer comme une intégrité psychologique et morale: elle doit devenir philosophe. Elle doit faire preuve d'une infinie débrouillardise dans la recherche d'un équilibre entre la stabilité prescrite par les lois civiles et religieuses et le dynamisme psychique et corporel – tel qu'il découle des réalités biologiques de la loi naturelle – et, si on veut – de l'inconstance du temps. Elle doit éviter les extrêmes et trouver son chemin entre le comique d'une bonté exagérée et la tragique manipulation, car, selon les exemples qu'on a pu vivre et lire, les deux sont garants de sa perte sociale et individuelle. Entre la légèreté débridée et une léthargie immuable, la femme mariée doit s'aventurer sur ce qu'on appellerait la voie alternative qui, par le recours à la solidité des arguments moraux, lui garantirait le droit à la dignité humaine, le droit à la raison. Bref, elle doit apprendre à parler. Les sociétés oublient facilement que l'égalité est un droit de départ et non un objectif lointain que devrait poursuivre un antagoniste social dans sa lutte inégale. Le problème de la femme se range ainsi au centre de la réflexion morale de Diderot et devient prototypique de ses résolutions philosophiques: les extrêmes sont insuffisants, sans égard à leur sens, le fanatisme est inadmissible.

Le *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville* approfondit d'un nouvel aspect ces considérations morales. S'ajoutant à l'épisode tahitien de l'aventure du fameux explorateur français qui avait publié en 1771 son *Voyage autour du monde*, il met au centre de la réflexion diderotienne la collision entre les moeurs naturelles d'un peuple dit sauvage que la civilisation n'a pas pu corrompre, et le triple code moral de l'occident, gouverné par les lois civiles et religieuses, auxquelles risque de s'opposer la nature humaine profonde, inhérente à la subsistance du corps physique. Le texte dialogique déploie le conflit entre ces deux visions du monde: le bon sauvage vit en contact avec la source de l'humanité, tandis que la civilisation européenne est en train de vivre son déclin moral. Les auteurs des Lumières, en général, aimaient bien formuler leur matière à pensée sous forme d'utopie. L'histoire insulaire sur Tahiti, avec ses moeurs sociaux et sexuels ouvertement 'libertins', est assez éloignée pour qu'elle soit lue comme du matériel abstrait, comme une curiosité. Elle a la résonance d'une fiction, même si elle est indubitablement le récit d'une expérience réelle. Voilà encore l'art narratif de Diderot à son mieux: poétisation, dramatisation du vécu.

Orou, le Tahitien, est le porte-parole d'une sévère critique, énoncée par Diderot, par rapport à l'apparente coïncidence des trois systèmes régulateurs, trois lois différentes qui sont censées régir le comportement de l'homme, encadrer

sa morale intime et fixer une éthique générale. Orou dissèque avec une grande simplicité la société dite incivilisée des sauvages et leur bonheur (Hartmann 2003: 259) en harmonie avec la loi naturelle en y opposant l'impossible symbiose européenne des codes civil, ecclésiastique et naturel; la collision de ces trois principes profondément hétérogènes produit nécessairement une incohérence morale:

Et où en serais-tu réduit, si tes trois maîtres, peu d'accord entre eux, s'avisent de te permettre, de t'enjoindre et de te défendre la même chose, comme je pense qu'il arrive souvent? Alors, pour plaire au prêtre, il faudra que tu te brouilles avec le magistrat; pour satisfaire le magistrat, il faudra que tu mécontentes le grand ouvrier; et pour te rendre agréable au grand ouvrier, il faudra que tu renonces à la nature. Et sais-tu ce qui en arrivera? C'est que tu les mépriseras tous les trois, et que tu ne seras ni homme, ni citoyen, ni pieux; que tu ne seras rien; que tu seras mal avec toutes les sortes d'autorité; mal avec toi-même; méchant, tourmenté par ton coeur; persécuté par tes maîtres insensés.⁸

Voici le noyau de la chose: la hiérarchie sociale, le rôle disciplinaire du grand ouvrier, Dieu, l'établissement d'une autorité étatique qui devrait non seulement instaurer le fonctionnement raisonnable de la justice, mais surtout fournir au citoyen la possibilité d'une réalisation sociale qui ne serait jamais privée de dignité personnelle. Diderot propose ici un fragment de philosophie politique proto-socialiste qui laisse découvrir la nature du pouvoir⁹ et la conception de la démocratie qui développe ses ébauches justement dans les décennies avant la Révolution de 1789. Ce fragment, comme le suivant, ouvre une analyse percutante des conséquences dévastatrices que provoque la démocratie quand elle est réduite à un simple alibi. Diderot discute ainsi la condition du citoyen:

Si vous vous proposez d'en être le tyran, civilisez-le: empoisonnez-le de votre mieux d'une morale contraire à la nature; faites-lui des entraves de toute espèce; embarrassez ses mouvements de mille obstacles; attachez-lui des fantômes qui l'effraient; éternisez la guerre dans la caverne, et que l'homme naturel y soit toujours enchaîné sous les pieds de l'homme moral. Le voulez-vous heureux et libre? ne vous mêlez pas de ses affaires: assez d'incidents imprévus le conduiront à la lumière et à la dépravation; et demeurez à jamais convaincu que ce n'est pas pour vous, mais pour eux, que ces sages législateurs vous ont pétri et maniéré comme vous l'êtes.¹⁰

8 *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*, p. 556.

9 On lira ici un écho lointain de l'essai de La Boétie sur l'incapacité des peuples de se défendre contre les tyrans, *Discours de la servitude volontaire* (1554).

10 *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*, p. 575.

La portée philosophique de l'écriture de Diderot est réalisée dans sa capacité exacte d'analyser les enjeux humains et sociaux, ainsi que dans les conséquences réflexives, basées sur la cohérence de la raison orientée vers le bien commun. Il reconnaît avec une acuité accomplie les lacunes et les imperfections des systèmes mentaux et sociaux en les démasquant et en évaluant en même temps le potentiel dynamique de leur mutisme. Diderot comprend que le changement d'un système dépend de la variation de son usage, c'est-à-dire de la réalité sociale, dans laquelle ce système devrait tracer les cadres éthiques d'une communication supportable entre les gens. Il est loin de négliger la composante temporelle de ces processus: une altération systémique n'est réalisable qu'à long terme, ce qui demande un certain degré de tolérance de la part des usagers critiques – surtout si leurs tendances sont raisonnablement évolutives. La conclusion de Diderot est conciliante, légaliste, intraitable:

Nous parlerons contre les lois insensées jusqu'à ce qu'on les réforme, et en attendant nous nous y soumettrons.¹¹

Certains textes de Diderot sont explicitement issus d'une considération philosophique (voire scientifique, dans le sens classiciste), d'autres sont empreints d'un artisme authentique. Souvent, les deux énergies créatrices se trouvent réunies en un même texte; voilà pourquoi ses courtes histoires, pour la plupart dialoguées, sont perçues comme des récits philosophiques. Le court dialogue ayant pour titre *Entretien d'un philosophe avec Madame la Maréchale de **** en est un exemple élaboré. Il est souvent considéré comme de la fiction philosophique ou philosophie fictionnelle, mais il serait plus justifié d'affirmer que Diderot y combine ses attitudes philosophiques et artifices narratifs avec un tel naturel que le tout se présente comme une philosophie véridique, tissée dans les dialogues entre personnages réels. Leur potentiel communicatif est réalisé de façon à ce que ces locuteurs littéraires soient entendus comme des porteurs d'antagonismes métaphysiques.

L'entretien du personnage Diderot (par Diderot) avec la Maréchale de Broglie est une confrontation de deux visions du monde, radicalement différentes: l'épouse du Maréchal, *belle comme un ange*, mère de six enfants, jouit d'une vie heureuse, pragmatiquement enracinée dans la lettre des lois civiles, mais surtout religieuses; de l'autre côté un philosophe athée, réputé pour ses idées *hors-piste*, très critique envers les tendances moralistes du cléricanisme, et dont le bonheur consiste à soigner les vertus inhérentes afin de poursuivre le bien commun (on dirait aussi: *publique*) et l'impératif moral intérieur. La Maréchale, étonnée devant la stabilité intellectuelle du narrateur, questionne celui-ci comme il suit:

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 577.

- N'êtes-vous pas monsieur Crudeli?
- Oui, madame.
- C'est donc vous qui ne croyez rien?
- Moi-même.
- Cependant votre morale est d'un croyant.
- Pourquoi non, quand il est honnête homme?
- Et cette morale-là, vous la pratiquez?
- De mon mieux.
- Quoi! vous ne volez point, vous ne tuez point, vous ne pillez point?
- Très rarement.¹²

L'athéisme, pour Diderot, est une attitude intellectuelle qui n'ampute à personne le droit de croire ou ne pas croire, mais dénonce vigoureusement tout exclusivisme religieux quand celui-ci se mystifie à l'exagération et se réclame, au nom du *mystère de la foi*, d'être le seul possesseur de la vérité, réservée ainsi aux seuls receveurs d'une grâce suffisante – même si souvent inefficace. La force du philosophe, et celle de son esprit, c'est de s'opposer à la position catholique dominante en avançant que l'exclusivisme religieux n'est pas uniquement pointé vers l'extérieur, c'est-à-dire qu'il n'exclut pas seulement les non-croyants du cercle communicatif, mais que l'exclusion vise aussi bien le monde intérieur du croyant qui se voit ainsi privé de quelques éléments substantiels dans la compréhension du monde: le doute, le risque, l'ironie, le rire, le goût de la différence.

L'impératif moral intérieur, menant l'individu réfléchi vers la formulation du sens de la justice et du bien commun, Diderot le formule nettement quand il parle *Du danger de se mettre au-dessus des lois*:

Est-ce que l'homme n'est pas antérieur à l'homme de loi? Est-ce que la raison de l'espèce humaine n'est pas tout autrement sacrée que la raison d'un législateur? Nous nous appelons civilisés, et nous sommes pires que des sauvages. Il semble qu'il nous faille encore tournoyer pendant des siècles, d'extravagances en extravagances et d'erreurs en erreurs, pour arriver où la première étincelle de jugement, l'instinct seul, nous eût menés tout droit.¹³

Le rapport qu'une personne entretient avec sa voix intérieure, son *daimon* socratique, détermine le choix de l'homme soit de s'établir en tant qu'individu libre et

12 *Entretien d'un philosophe avec la Maréchale de ****, Diderot, *Oeuvres*, coll. La Pléiade, Paris: Gallimard, 1996, p. 1171.

13 *Entretien d'un père avec ses enfants*, p. 498.

moralement autonome, soit d'obéir inconditionnellement à n'importe laquelle des prescriptions systémiques qui lui semblent socialement pertinentes ou, tout simplement, opportunes. La conscience a une voix, tout comme l'homme à qui la phonation permet essentiellement de communiquer avec autrui et avec soi-même, c'est-à-dire de se former comme un être social. La voix de la conscience, pour Diderot, c'est la voix de l'humanité; c'est pourquoi la sonorité de la conscience est gravée sur la membrane métaphysique de la voix humaine: que celle-ci amplifie du mépris brutal, de l'indifférence fatale ou de la compréhension bienveillante, cela n'y change rien. Voilà pourquoi les contes philosophiques de Diderot n'arrêtent pas de produire des voix.

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Primož Vitez
 Université de Ljubljana
 primoz.vitez@ff.uni-lj.si



Govorna izmenjava v Diderotovih filozofskih zgodbah

Diderotove filozofske zgodbe, kakor tudi večina njegovih romanov, delujejo kot latentno gledališče, ker je premi govor njihova ključna sestavina. Diderot v svojih proznih besedilih združuje oralne sestavine literarne pripovedi s formulacijo filozofske misli. Za humanista ni nič presenetljivo, če skuša do svoje interpretacije sveta priti po dveh vzporednih poteh. Prav spricho svojstvene izpeljave te dvojnosti – reflektivne in narativne – se je Diderot uveljavil kot eden najbolj dialoških pisateljev in filozofov evropskega osemnajstega stoletja. Ti dve ustvarjalni energiji sta najizraziteje prepleteni v kratkih zgodbah, napisanih med letoma 1768 in 1774. Te literarne pripovedi določa močna filozofska komponenta, ker se vztrajno odpirajo k priobčevanju temeljnih etičnih dilem: kadar se je treba soočiti z arbitrarnostjo zakonov ali poljubnostjo javnega mnenja, besedo dajejo posamezniku.

Ključne besede: govorna izmenjava, Diderot, etika govora, dialog, literarni glas

Speech Exchange in Short Philosophical Stories by Diderot

Diderot's philosophical stories, as most his novels, work as potential theatre, since dialogue is their main narrative structure. In his prose works, Diderot produces a fusion of speech mechanisms and philosophical arguments: there is more than one way for a humanist to formulate the interpretations of what he perceives as critical. The singularity of his narrative (reflective and story-telling) makes of Diderot one of the most accomplished dialogue writers in the 18th century. These two creative energies are the real tissue of Diderot's short stories, written from 1768 to 1774. The stories are defined by their philosophical component, communicating persistently the ethical dilemmas: when it comes to confronting legal arbitrariness or public opinion, the word is always given to the individual.

Keywords: speech exchange, Diderot, speech ethics, dialogue, literary voice

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