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INTRODUCTION

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This issue of *Folia* is the product of the international conference that took place at the University of Montenegro in June 2016. The conference had the same title and was deliberately broad because we wanted to encourage discussion across different disciplines and specialisms. The conference explored questions relating to location, space and environment in all genres, from travel writing and memoir to poetry and fiction. The concept of place is understood as open to a multiplicity of interpretations – geographical, political, cultural – and both real and imaginary places have inspired, informed and been represented in texts of all kinds. We aimed to explore what we mean by the word “place” or by those words frequently associated with it, such as “home,” “abroad,” “belonging,” “displacement,” “foreign,” “remote”; how writers explored these concepts in their work and what strategies they adopted; how the textual versions of particular places define them; what might be the ethical and ideological issues arising.

Peter Robinson (University of Reading, UK) opened the conference. In his discussion “At Home from Home: A Poet’s Experience of Country and Migration,” Robinson explores, by readings of seven of his own poems, different ways of using the writing of poetry to help feel at home in the world. The premise of such work must be that the writer has already felt somehow not at home, that the surroundings are under-responsive for some reason – which may be psychological, but may also be some aspect or condition or history of the place itself. He looks at both the individual response and what it is a response to. Robinson is particularly interested in three distinct experiences of home connected to his own migratory transits and looks at a few poems on each of these three states, all of which are familiar in the current condition of the migratory and transitory world in which we live. They are (1) the attempt to feel at home in a primal landscape that has failed to sustain a secured sense of belonging; (2) the attempt to feel at home in a place to which one has migrated, but where one is treated by definition as a foreigner or alien; and (3) the attempt to feel at home in a place where one is assumed or taken to be at home, but where one continues, for different reasons, to find oneself isolated and displaced.

In his paper “Deep Space: Problems of Vertical Travel,” Tom Phillips (University of Bath Spa) examines the conceptualisation of place in relation to notions of depth – and its corollary, surface – and of movement as travel both

through and into space. Phillips asks what is meant by phrases such as “deepest Suffolk,” the “depths of the jungle” or, indeed, “deep space.” He continues that, in travel writing, depth is often associated, not so much with remoteness, but with getting beneath the surface or to the heart/soul/spirit of a place – with travelling vertically into it rather than horizontally through it. Phillips examines if getting beneath the surface or to the heart of anywhere is achievable when, of necessity, what we encounter in any place is a variety of interlocking surfaces much like the interlocking planes of paint on a canvas. Referring to a range of writings on place, the paper asks whether a myth of depth constitutes part of a conceptual framework which restricts travelling encounters to the projection of fixed and stable meanings onto a contingent and dwelt-in world.

In his paper “Dichotomy of Personal and Empirical Experiencing of Environment and Language,” Dalibor Kesić (University of Banja Luka, BiH) aims to highlight the points of convergence and divergence between the personal and empirical experiencing of environment and language. He commences by assuming that we always understand each other if the apparatus that analyses our sensations is the same. It is no longer about the “quality” of the sensation – what becomes more important is how it can be organized in the same way in a common system so that it can be classified the same way. Every living being has its own world impervious to the worlds of others. If experiences of human kind were all different, the meanings of their symbols would also be different, but they are not (Sanders Peirce 1935: 86). It is therefore difficult to hypothesize about the existence of objective experiential meaning without having a clear, sound and axiomatic position. And yet, the notions of objective truths, axiomatic positions or objective experience are extremely relative. Thinking is not based on experiential data alone. It is also wrought with different purposes, organizations, conceptualizations and anticipations. This again reinforces the notion of dualism between the empiric and contemplative. If traditional notions presented us with a vision of a human speaker originating the meanings contained in his or her chosen words, then modern linguistics replaces that vision with the recognition that all acts of communication stem from choices made within a system which pre-exists any speaker. If a language sign expresses neither immediate nor indirect objective experience it is unintelligible and, consequently, cannot perform its communicational function. That further implies that any symbol or language sign that has a certain meaning expresses an objective experience of a certain group of people, and can therefore be deemed communicable and able to convey meaningful content from one person to another.

“Travelling Real and Imaginary Places in Jeanette Winterson’s *Sexing the Cherry*” by Dijana Tica (University of Banja Luka, BiH) examines Winterson’s novel about the Dog Woman and her adopted son Jordan who live in seventeenth-century London. After meeting a famous botanist and gardener, John Tradescant, Jordan, who has been found in the Thames and named after the Jordan river,

becomes obsessed with travelling, exploration and discovery. He accompanies Tradescant on his journeys across the world in search of unknown exotic plants. At the same time, Jordan does a lot of daydreaming and travels in his mind. On these journeys, which he finds equally realistic and important, he visits magical cities and meets fairy-tale characters. His main purpose is to find Fortunata, a mysterious dancer he has fallen in love with, and in order to make this quest easier he puts on women's clothes. Thus he becomes a traveller across gender boundaries and learns many female secrets. In addition, this search for the beloved girl and love in general turns into his personal quest. Besides, Jordan and his mother have their twentieth-century counterparts, a naval cadet, Nicolas Jordan, and a nameless female environmentalist; this element of the story could be interpreted as time travel. Tica's research explores the different ways of travelling described in this novel with the purpose of discovering to what extent it follows the conventions of the travel genre in general. It also examines travelling in the context of the Enlightenment period and colonial expansion of the British Empire. In addition, since one of the novel's most significant topics is gender roles, this paper also focuses on the differences between male and female travellers.

"Defining and Undefining Home and Family Space in Louis de Berniere's Novel *Birds Without Wings*" by Sandra Josipović (University of Belgrade, Serbia) relies on Derrida's concepts of the "arrivant" and hospitality. Derrida says that the absolute "arrivant" is not necessarily an intruder, an invader, or a colonizer and that the "arrivant" is hospitality itself. When it comes to this novel both Christians and Muslims live side by side in harmony in the town of Eskibahce until the war comes. They are both "arrivants" and they are both "guests" and "hosts" who show hospitality to each other by going to each other's homes: the wife of the imam is friendly with a Christian woman, a beautiful Christian girl is in love with a Muslim goat herder. But Derrida also argues that the "arrivant" can surprise the host enough to call into question the very border that determines a legitimate home, the door and threshold of one's home and that is what happens in the novel. Those who are both hosts and guests to each other become involved in the devastating conflict during the First World War which leads to the expulsion of Turkish Christians to Greece and the evacuation of Greek Muslims to Turkey. Before the war, the inhabitants of this small town lived in some kind of a liminal space, somewhere in between Turkish and Greek culture. Since the word "liminal" comes from the Latin word "limin" which means "threshold," it brings us back to Derrida's concept of the guest, i.e. the "arrivant" crossing the threshold of his host's home and jeopardizing the borders of that home, thus creating a conflict.

"Burying the Diplomat Father: Shifting Ex-Yugoslav Spaces in Yelena Franklin's *A Bowl of Sour Cherries*," by Tatjana Bijelić (University of Banja Luka, BiH) draws on recent research into East European diasporic and migrant writing by women and explores ex-Yugoslav spaces of memory as represented in *A Bowl of Sour Cherries* (1997), a semi-autobiographical novel authored by Yugoslav-born

US American writer Yelena Franklin. Following the narrative's transnational trajectories of displacement, return, and departure, the paper embarks on mapping thematic and political preoccupations that Franklin shares with other women writers who have migrated from the former Yugoslavia to the United States, where their works composed in English emerge as a strategy of self-translating, preserving, and challenging their experiences of Yugoslavia as a vanished land. Based on the identification of recurring themes in post-Yugoslav migrant prose that often deals with the traditional notions of "the Slav spirit," "brotherhood and unity," and "the magic word *abroad*," Bijelić offers an insight into women migrants' revisiting of stereotypical representations of their birth and adopted cultures. While the disintegration of the homeland coinciding with the death of the father figure seems to be the main focus of the novel, it may be argued that Franklin in her literary representations of ex-Yugoslav patriarchal family and society tends to invoke subversive yet powerful pathways of women's empowerment. The paper also juxtaposes the representations of shifting ex-Yugoslav and transnational spaces, as well as the notions of borders, transit visas, and nationalisms on the move.

"Home and Identity in Elif Shafak's *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*" is a paper by Sezen Ismail (International Balkan University, Skopje, Macedonia). In her debut English novel, Turkish author Elif Shafak follows the lives of three foreign students in Boston to explore community and alienation while playing with ideas about language, religion, and culture. Ismail focuses on the themes of "migrancy" and "trans-culturalism" as it interrogates and undermines the essentialized boundaries of "home," "nation" and "identity." Ismail shows how *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* revolves around the interactions of a group of international students in Boston, mainly the relationship between Ömer, a graduate student from Turkey, and Gail, his eccentric, manic-depressive Jewish-American girlfriend, who later becomes his wife but commits suicide by jumping from the Bosphorus Bridge, "the perfect place of inbetweenness" in her words. In the novel, through the multicultural experiences and interactions of her characters, Shafak explores migrant groups' or individuals' processes of coming to terms with their past and its marks upon their identity. Ismail looks at the ways in which the novel displays the variety and adaptability of identity, whose conception as such challenges monolithic, essentialist and totalizing discourses on nation, race and ethnicity. Like most of the characters in *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*, the author herself is a foreigner, not only to America where she is a professor at the University of Arizona, but also to her native Turkey. Having grown up in Western Europe for most of her life, she is innately coordinated to the notion of names, nationality, and racism – elements that are tied together under "identity," which she believes "sets barricades among humanity, dividing us into different flocks and sub-flocks."

In "Contested Spaces in Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* and Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*," Aleksandra Izgarjan (University of Novi Sad, Serbia)

shows how Kingston and Tan contrast the authority of institutionalized history with various stories of immigrants which serve as a counter-memory negating the vision of monolithic and unchangeable history and replacing it with the plurality and temporality of experience. This method of intricate design of the past points to the basic feature of historiography: imaginative reconstruction of the process of examination and analysis of the records and survivals of the past. This process of contestation takes place in sharply juxtaposed spaces of China and the United States, which reflect the dual position of Kingston and Tan's characters as Asian Americans. In the novels of both authors, China is not so much a physical space, as a construction the first generation immigrants create to blunt the pain of nostalgia that never ceases to gnaw at them. For the second generation of Asian Americans, China becomes an idealized space to which they return, searching for their roots. Equally importantly, the authors reveal blank spaces in the institutionalized histories of China and the United States by giving voices to various Others in both cultures. This is particularly evident in the Kweilin episode in *The Joy Luck Club* which is here analyzed in detail.

In "Chasing Home and Searching Identity: The Meaning of Place in Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine*," Sanja Čukić (University Union-Nikola Tesla, Belgrade, Serbia) also explores the issues that many immigrants in the diaspora struggle with in their search for identity, as well as the ways in which the transition from one place to another changes their attitudes and points of view. *Jasmine* is a novel about an Indian girl who comes to America to pursue her dream of freedom and a better life. However tempting the idea of the American dream might appear to Jasmine, her journey across the ocean results in many difficulties and problems regarding her adjustment to the new society. Jasmine is trying to find herself by constantly questioning her identity and cultural affiliation. She moves to different places, thus changing her identity. In order to re-invent herself and fit into American society, Jasmine constantly transforms her personality. This quest for the Self leads her to a realization that she is neither Indian nor American, but something in between.

In "Memory Space and Space Mythization – Space-perception of the Hungarian Literature in Vojvodina in the 1990s," Éva Hózsa, Erzsébet Csányi, and Hargita Horváth Futó point out several acute problems of the space poetics of migrant authors, who are often compelled to refer to their memory spaces. The authors discuss Ottó Tolnai's local texts, István Németh's mythicized spaces, Nándor Gion's and István Szathmári's memory spaces, and Erzsébet Juhász's historical spaces.

Mirjana Daničić (University of Belgrade, Serbia) contributes to the discussion with a paper on Toni Morrison's *Jazz City*, subtitled "A Locus of Black Pride and Trauma." Daničić assumes that space is never a neutral category, it carries with it a history (personal, political, national, or cultural) and thus is central to the comprehension of individual or collective identity. Daničić argues that Toni

Morrison determinedly uses enclosed spaces in order to achieve the connection between space and characters' identities (in *Beloved* it is the house at 124 Bluestone Road, in *Jazz* – Harlem, in *Paradise* – the town of Ruby, in *Tar Baby* – a Caribbean island). The novel *Jazz* can be viewed as a novel about a city: it explores the economic possibilities in the city, creates erotic images typical of urban areas, depicts transformation of individual consciousness and, more than anything, delineates the urban spirit of jazz. On the other hand, it "is a novel historicising racial trauma," portraying black people's attempt to release themselves from the grip of the past at the time when jazz music, deeply rooted in the black slave experience in the US, started to become widely popular among Harlem inhabitants. This is why in Morrison's Jazz City black pride entwines with black trauma, making the City one of the main characters in the novel. Daničić analyzes the networking of the City, jazz and the characters in Morrison's literary focus on the dehumanizing effect of the City illustrated in a *crime passionnel* – the murder of a young girl by her much older lover.

In their paper "The Translation of Multilingual Literature in a Migrant World. The case of Junot Diaz," Philippe Humblé and Lara De Wilder (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) argue that so-called Multilingual Literature is prone to become a phenomenon on the increase now that migrants are flooding majorly into countries where they speak a language these people seldom or never had any contact with before. However, whereas before writing exiles or other migrants used to either adapt their speech to the tongue of their new environment or have their work translated, many examples can now be found where the foreign language is left as such, as a testimony of the fact that the writer is not a native. An early example of this is Emine Sevgi Özdamar in the 90s, who mixed copious examples of her native Turkish with the German of her novels. Iranian author Kader Abdolah cites lengthy passages in Persian. In Junot Diaz's novels Spanish is legion. The same goes for Abdelkader Benali and Fouad Laroui and Arabic. The main question is "what do these passages mean?" Are they more than some "couleur locale," adding flavour to an otherwise homogeneous literary discourse? The authors claim that some kind of answer can be found while analysing the translations of these multilingual novels. They ask: What happens to Junot Diaz, often considered as an example of a Spanglish writer, when he is translated? Is anything getting lost, or is the text simply coming back to its homeland? Considering the case of *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Humblé and de Wilder investigate the consequences of the fact that the translation of a multilingual text is a real challenge to the translator, specifically in the case of a return to the original language of the author. At the same time, it allows viewing in a more critical way what the intentions, conscious or unconscious, of the author were in using two different languages.

In her paper "Merely Displaced, Not Disnationed or Dispirited," Željka Babić (University of Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina) argues that the Balkans as a

location inspires researchers with its concoction of nations, languages and cultures, so interwoven and intrinsically unique at the same time that it is almost impossible to separate the ingredients from the whole without losing its original taste and attraction. The exploration of the spatial area presented as one woman's voyage from her native Thessaloniki to Belgrade, with a dash of freshness from Croatian shores presented through the character of Stipe, makes Marija Knežević's *Ekaterini* (2013) an excellent challenge for pursuing the possibility of seeing whether it is plausible to feel the unequivocal inborn sense of longing in the translated text, the longing which the main character carries with her all the time during her displacement from Greece to Yugoslavia, the longing which presents the mythical characteristic of the Balkan peoples. By understanding the translated text as yet another transfer of culture, this time through the translator's understanding of Balkanness, Babić tries to track the line of longing for the place of origin through the senses, smells and language that the character possesses, in line with her claim that "[l]anguage is pure longing. Our first and final love, although we only discover it through its lack." Moreover, by investigating the target language text not as a product, but as a process, Babić's research applies the apparatus of cultural translation theories (from Bhabha, 1994, to Pym, 2014) in order to establish the presence (or absence) of the translator's self and examples of possible cultural borders or border zones, cultural hybridity and other issues which are the results of the material movement of the characters from one spatial point to the other.

In his paper "Uloga prostora u rediteljskoj poetici Živka Nikolića" ("The Function of Space in Živko Nikolić's Directorial Poetics"), Zoran Koprivica, from the University of Montenegro, discusses the space in the famous Montenegrin director's films not as a passive setting for variety of dramatic events, but as an active participant which imprints meanings on the dramas. To explain Nikolić's understanding of spatial and temporal relationships in film, Koprivica relies on Jean Mitry's discussion that there is no absolute space nor absolute time – spreading is always limited and the duration final.

Ljiljana Pajović Dujović (University of Montenegro) devotes her attention to Serbian author Simo Matavulj's *A Writer's Notes*, which she observes as an autopoiesis, a memoir, and a travel text. Typically of the epoch, he chooses places such as roads, square and cafés to search discrepancies between the burning issues of his contemporary world, and doing that he assumed a position of a humorist and satirist. He offered unforgettable portraits of Count Ilija Jankovic from Dalmatia, the Duke of Medun from Montenegro, Spiro Poznanovic of Herceg Novi, etc.

Jasmina Nikčević (University of Montenegro), deals with Alhambra as the affective place in Chateaubriand's literary work. Her attention is focused on Chateaubriand's last travel through Mediterranean and the East presented in his book *Travel From Paris to Jerusalem*. This book that visits both geographical and

spiritual spaces, Nikčević interprets as half-travel writing and half-autobiography. Chateaubriand's fascination with the natural and urban spaces of Alhambra made this the utmost aesthetic and affective topos.

The conference concluded with a short presentation by UK oral historian Mary Ingoldby, which featured recordings from a variety of oral history projects relating to ideas and feelings about identity and home. The presentation included members of Native American and Afro-Caribbean communities talking about their sense of place in both conversation and poetry, as well as with a piece written by Ingoldby herself about the city where she lives, Bristol. We include a brief description of the presentation together with transcriptions of some of the recordings.

Taken as a whole, then, the papers from the conference address the notion of “place” and “space” in a multiplicity of ways and in relation to the works of a wide range of writers. This produces the opportunity, not only to examine these central spatial and locational concepts from an equally wide range of theoretical, conceptual and cultural perspectives, but also to identify and examine the development of the interrelationships between place, identity, meaning, value, migration, memory, longing, ideology and so on. The papers also reflect the growing interest in diasporan literatures as well as the renewed urgency of questions pertaining to displacement, migration and relocation in the light of the so-called “migrant crisis” in Europe, increasing globalization and the re-emergence of nationalist ideologies.

AT HOME FROM HOME: A POET'S EXPERIENCE OF COUNTRY AND MIGRATION

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Abstract: In this lecture I want to explore, by reading seven of my own poems, different ways of using the writing of poetry to help feel at home in the world. The premise of such work must be that the writer has already felt somehow not at home, that the surroundings are under-responsive – for reasons which may be psychological, but may also involve some condition or history of the place itself, and, of course, both individual response, and what it is a response to, simultaneously; and the promise of such work is that the writing and reading of the poem will aid the responsiveness of the surroundings by finding them attributed with warmth through their evocation. I will be particularly interested in three distinct experiences of home connected to my own migratory transits, and will look at a poem or two on each of these three states, all of which experiences are familiar in the current condition of the intensely migratory world in which we live, one where the phrase ‘migrant crisis’ equivocates painfully between it being a crisis for the countries to which the migrants come, and one for the migrants themselves. My three distinct experiences are (1) the attempt to feel at home in a primal landscape that has failed, for reasons I explore, to sustain a secured sense of belonging; (2) the attempt to feel at home in a place to which you have migrated, but where you are treated by definition as a foreigner or alien; and (3) the attempt to feel at home in a place where you are assumed or taken to be at home, but where you continue, for different reasons, to feel isolated and displaced. In each case I will read the poem and talk about its inspiration in the light of these themes, drawing attention insofar as I can to features of their making that indicate both the premise and the promise outlined above.

Key Words: home, primal landscape, sense of belonging, migration, isolation, displacement.

1

The first poem, "The Interrupted Views," was written in early 1976 in the light of a visit home to Liverpool. I was then a twenty-two-year-old graduate student at Trinity College, Cambridge, and had been living away from the North of England, where I had spent my first twenty-one years, for less than twelve months. It's a response to the last part of a train journey from London to Liverpool, picking up the story, as it were, in rural Cheshire, in the vicinity of the Trent and Mersey Canal, crossing the Mersey estuary at Runcorn, and then running across the flat

plain of the eastern bank of the river from Widnes to Garston, where, at Christmas 1975, my father was still the Anglican vicar of the parish of St. Michael's:

THE INTERRUPTED VIEWS

"The world is full of home"
Adrian Stokes

Sunlight on the glass
blazes this temporary blindness,
the passenger's,
who gathers himself
to his thought of returning.
Moss on lock brickwork
and the almost still waters
are blurred out; they disappear.

So my coming back is like the sky.
No choice in that.
How weak sun's gilded
the cloud-grey wavelets.
Desire infuses regret.
A feeling for landscape
we call it.

But I didn't expect
the river's inimical chill.
The carriage window
reflects me so.
Then a latticework
of girder, flickering,
black on the water a long way beneath:
the train is crossing the rail bridge;
the view, interrupted,

of home, my old home –
a low shelf of alluvial deposit.
The airport control tower,
derelict gasworks,
these are the landmarks.
They put us in our place

and wanting it, I come
back to the ash heaps,
the car dumps,
each graffito
taken as a welcome.

Mute welcomes proliferate.

Home is the view I appropriate.
(Robinson 2017: 40-41)

The epigraph is from a poem by the art critic and psychoanalytic aesthete Adrian Stokes called "Home," whose first line of its first verse I borrowed: "The world is full of home: / An angry face beside me in the tube / Is home. A stench / A loving arm / Earn recognition for the stars at dawn." Other lines in the poem, as I read it now, also seem relevant to what "The Interrupted Views" attempts to do: "Anguish has returned to base," he writes, and "The lands are fitted to attentive shape," adding that there are "Oh so many messages and none," while in the last section he evokes how "nervous neighbourhoods / Squalid and sublime / Stand in for deeper pain."¹ My poem is written in a consciously interrupted syntax with short assertions breaking into, and being broken across by evocations of place and space. A couple of the phrases towards its end point to where it has reached: "They put us in our place / and wanting it, I come." To be "put in your place" is, of course, to be felt that you have presumed to rise above where you belong or come from, and to be reminded by its custodians that you don't and won't be allowed to fit where you have aspired to move.

These lines attempt to take that sense of being made to feel not at home in a place you have arrived, of being "put in your place," and to turn it, around the line endings, to a preferred state of homecoming. That is the poem's promise. But then the proliferation of the familiar dereliction, the North of England in the 1970s, in the light of the Stokes epigraph, also generates an ambivalence, its premise, about the scene: which doesn't actually welcome, because its welcomes are "mute"; but that muteness is taken to be a welcome by the traveller, and this recognition is achieved by means of a hidden pun (one not strictly audible), for "appropriate" as a verb, with its strong (rhymed) stress on the last syllable, is spelled, and so looks, exactly the same as the adjective "appropriate," which has a weaker terminal syllable. So by the most tacit of means, the poem asks about "our place," a place that we appropriate as home –

¹ Though editing Stokes' collected poems some five years later, I found this in *Penguin Modern Poets 23: Geoffrey Grigson, Edwin Muir, Adrian Stokes*, ed. Stephen Spender, 1973: 138-139.

but which we have no innate right to, except insofar as our appropriating may be thought appropriate. The poem was written, as I say, by someone approaching his twenty-third birthday, and it doesn't have an answer to its question – the question of what it is about an appropriating response that might make it an appropriate one. But I like to think it had asked the question, and to think that the poem also contains the hope of finding that, as Stokes' epigraph has it, the world *is* full of home, so that, a perhaps utopian aspiration, it might be possible to find ways of being at home anywhere.

One of the reasons why I may have felt that this landscape of south Liverpool was being appropriated as home is that I only moved there at the age of fourteen. My father, as I say, was an Anglican vicar. Although all his parishes were in the north west of England, we moved home when I was less than two, then three, then when I was nine, and then at fourteen. I went to university in York at the age of eighteen, and left the north of England just after my twenty-second birthday. Though revisiting it innumerable times over the years, I have never lived there since. A poem completed in 1988, one whose ekphrastic starting point is given in its title, attempts to render the faded reproduction of a famous painting into a form of transitional object:

ON VAN GOGH'S *LA CRAU*

Above mantelpieces, year after year,
 though walls or wallpapers
 or views from closed windows
 altered, it stayed there
 – blue ranged hills, the sky.

Achingly various stubble directions
 avoiding monotony, striated surfaces
 captured me early, a stay against absence,
 my own from those places
 to which I had just had to say goodbye.

That blue's not right, my father said
 and I saw through the glass
 no relief of paint touches, impasto
 or shading in its true colours,
 and must have wondered why

the painter himself made
 his marks against nothingness
 – hayrick, bean trellis,

blue cart, farm outbuilding; this was what stayed,
the man in a foreground of corn-stalks waist high.

Bought with donations when I was not four,
a *Thank You* on leaving, it's why your home
would not be home without that picture
which still gets the best of time,
a self continued, tempting me to try

because my unfixed life was your removals:
now you've come to leave again,
place it in a good light
over a fire grate, and, after upheavals,
it startles the distanced, the returning eye.
(Robinson 2017: 141-2)

My father retired from St Michael's, Garston, in 1987 and my parents moved about a twenty-five minutes walk away to the house in which they then remained. The reproduction of the painting, whose original is in the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, was one of the first works of art I became aware of as a child, and I owe a good deal of my interest in painting to its being given to my parents by the congregation in the Davyhulme, Manchester, parish where my father was a curate. I can remember the difficulty in completing this poem, which stalled for quite some time after the first two verses, in which there is that returning rhyme at the end of each verse. The way it eventually came out, in pursuit of further rhymes on the same sound, attempts to catch up its theme into complex sentences which are shaped fairly freely around the six-line stanza form with a rhymed pair within each verse, and the repeating final rhyme. Having the same terminal rhyme to a series of stanzas is a device I've used on a number of occasions, including a poem called "The Returning Sky," about coming back to England after my years in Japan about which I will speak in a moment. The syntax of "On Van Gogh's *La Crau*" also sounds notably precarious at various points, shaping the risk of a fall into absence and blankness, its premise, that the poem evokes and attempts, syntactically, to counteract as its promise. So it does have, as I read it now, the air of a rationalization; but it also serves the purpose of suggesting how art objects may be analogies to a self stabilized across the discontinuities of place and moving that is my theme here. They can thus help, I am claiming, to foster the feeling of being at home in the world.

The year after completing "On Van Gogh's *La Crau*," I became an economic migrant (having failed to find permanent employment in 1980s England) by taking up a visiting lectureship in Japan, where I was to continue to work for the next eighteen years. Most of those years were spent in Sendai, on the north-west coast some two-hours by bullet train beyond Tokyo; and I would like now to look at examples of poems made out of the associations that the place has in Western literature and art, combined with Japanese customs, as well as the look of the scenery there. The concept of "primal landscape" may also help to explain a condition that can come with migration to, and long residence in, a very different place: the landscape and look of the location become familiar, and signal "home," but the political structures of that space, and your place in it, combine with its not resembling the country you are from, and in which early memories are steeped, to mean that, however long you live there, it can never be yours. I was painfully reminded of this not long before leaving Sendai, after fourteen years, when a group of infant school children pointed at me in the street, and called out "Gaijin, gaijin" (foreigner, foreigner) – even though I had been living there long before they were born.

This next poem, "Coat Hanger," continues the painting theme, too, thanks to having come across reproductions of Jasper Johns' print "Coat Hanger," 1960, in the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the fact that as a GI he had been stationed in Sendai from December 1952 to May 1953, where he is reported to have made "posters to advertise movies and to educate soldiers on how to avoid sexually transmitted diseases" (Varnodoe 122). The poem was started off by my happening to catch sight of just such a bent-wire coat hanger caught in the branches of a tree outside the window of our flat in a compound reserved for foreign teachers at Tohoku University – the neighbour mentioned in the first verse being the native-speaker visiting professor of Chinese:

COAT HANGER

Pegging out shirts on my first-floor balcony,
I happen to notice a white, wire coat hanger
dangling from one low branch of the tree
right by our neighbour's garden.
What's it doing there?

*

Perhaps it's a homage to Jasper Johns
for six months here in the Korean War,

or in memory of the feelings of his friend
 who remembered a 'loneliness' from seven years before
 'drifting into my ears off Sendai in the snow ...'
 (but where he saw that whiteness during August '45
 I don't for the life of me know).

*

Well, yes, I suppose it could be mine,
 blown about by a wind
 that unhooks the things you can hang on a line
 or bough: an abandoned black plastic umbrella,
 the strips of white paper containing bad fortunes,
 tied in neat bows, transferred to the tree
 – which seems to have absorbed them;
 spirited away the luck; at any rate, survived.

*

Though camouflaged, now
 that one more layer of overlapping greens
 has painted out winter, some distant love's
 skin can still be glimpsed through freckled tones
 of bark, sap, chlorophyll; like a phantom limb,
 tanned patches come, pale down, a hand –
 and so much else that could depend
 on a coat hanger among the leaves.
 (Robinson 2017: 227-228)

The Japanese custom I mentioned appears in the third verse with the evocation of that tree where white strips of paper have been tied to it. This is a familiar sight in Shinto shrines in which visitors can purchase little fortune-cookie-like pieces of prediction. The custom, as the poem reports, is to tie the papers which contain bad fortunes that you don't want to happen to a nearby tree with the thought that you will thus transfer the ill luck to this natural object – which, as I also note, doesn't usually show any sign of suffering from such an overload of attributed bad-luck foliage. This poem was written during the spring and early summer of 1997 while alone in Sendai during the first months of our second daughter Giulia's life. Jasper Johns' friend is Frank O'Hara, and I quote from his poem "Ode to Michael Goldberg ('s Birth and Other Births)," (O'Hara 295) and you can perhaps sense in my poem the need felt for supports to being alone there in its associations with other artists and writers – which include

vague traces of allusion ("and so much else that could depend") to William Carlos Williams' red wheelbarrow, and the last lines of Charles Baudelaire's "Le cygne," the latter a classic poem about urban alienation and exile. What I may be doing here, and in the poem that follows, is to combine a sense of the local place (the premise), which I have experienced intensely in connection with my own states of mind as an economic migrant, with its wider significance in world culture – and especially those parts of the world to which I felt attached. In my fourteen years I had a perpetually precarious legal and employment status (on a one-year, annually renewable contract, with my right to residence strictly dependent on having employment). So my poem's promise is to invite a greater sense of connectedness at a time when missing my wife and young children.

In the next poem, whose title comes from James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, visits with our daughters to the city zoo, which was not far from the foreign teachers' residence, could be combined with associations between the existence of the animals in the zoo and our own situation there on a mountain in Japan. In *The Salt Companion to Peter Robinson* (2007), Miki Iwata offers the following note:

Fred H. Higginson's research on the textual differences of *Finnegans Wake* proves that the word "Sendai," substituted for "Sunday," first appeared in November 1927. [...] However, Robinson has noted the curious coincidence that Kouchi Doi, the first professor of English literature at Tohoku University, Sendai, was one of the earliest introducers of Joyce to Japan, publishing "Joyce's *Ulysses*" in the issue of the magazine *Kaizo* for February 1929. Roland McHugh interprets "Sendai" as the name of a river, though he never mentions what river it is [...]. In the Japanese translation of *Finnegans Wake* by Naoki Yanase, "Sendai" is transliterated into the two Chinese characters that read "sendai," but he does not particularly link the word with Sendai, Miyagi. (Iwata 202)

Invited to write something about this circumstance for *The James Joyce Broadsheet* (no. 98, June 2014, p. 3) by its editor Richard Brown, I offered some further explanations, noting that I first tried to write a poem about the zoo in Sendai in the early '90s, but it didn't convince me and I left it aside; not only did I take our daughters when they were toddlers to the zoo most Sundays to give their mother a break, but I would also walk past it most weekdays on my way to work, hearing the monkeys especially – and would associate them with the line in Ezra Pound's translation, "River Merchant's Wife: A Letter," in which "The monkeys make sorrowful noise overhead."

While in Italy one summer I found a trilingual copy of *Anna Livia Plurabelle*, which contained *en face* Joyce's text and Beckett's translation with,

as footnote-style sub-text, an Italian rendition – and that’s when and where I found the future epigraph, which brought to mind my regular Sundays with our girls at the zoo, and re-prompted the idea of a poem and the memories of that old failed draft. I also talked to Miki Iwata about this curious-seeming allusion to the place we both lived in (she was a student, and is now an assistant professor there) and I may have already heard from other professors about Doi and Joyce. When Miki wrote her chapter in *The Salt Companion* (c. 2005-6) she did some research to see if the scholarship she could find would confirm that the passage contains an allusion to Sendai, Miyagi, Japan, and whether the place being in *Finnegans Wake* is connected to Doi’s writing on *Ulysses*. If these had some basis in fact, then there is more than a serendipitous association of the epigraph from Joyce with the theme of my poem. Her research would appear to suggest that Joycean scholarship and the Japanese translation of the *Wake* do not confirm those ideas, though it would be interesting to know if Doi had written to Joyce while working on the essay that would appear in 1929.

The poem benefits, I hope, from its association with Joyce, even if the final scholarly answers are a negative. But Joyceans might be interested in the answers to those questions (and my guess is that Sendai and the punning would not have been in Joyce’s mind and then book if he hadn’t been somehow alerted to this relatively obscure place on the other side of the world – in Paris c. 1927). The idea that Sendai is a river because the word is in *ALP* is almost certainly a mistake. The river flowing through Sendai is, by the way, called the Hirosegawa. Also, if the city is alluded to, then the Japanese translation of the *Wake* needs amending. What’s more, Doi deserves to be remembered for introducing Joyce to Japan (and, as it happens, contributing to the circumstances that produced Elizabeth Smart’s *By Grand Central Station I Lay Down and Wept* – for he helped the British poet George Barker to leave Japan in 1940). And he may have also helped inspire that "Animal Sendai" portmanteau into the bargain. Though these matters do not figure directly in this poem, they may illustrate how my attempt to feel thus at home from home involved identifying with, and becoming to some extent familiar with, the cultural environment in which I was myself both lost and found:

ANIMAL SENDAI

"What was it he did a tail
at all on Animal Sendai?"
James Joyce

On a normal Sunday inside the zoo’s
fenced precincts families traipse
over crazed asphalt, collapsed curbs

down what seem suburbs' avenues;
have themselves snapped near brute
beasts, dumb animals, creatures
of our curiosity in cages, pens,
or smiling from behind the bars
of an unlocked cell marked: *homo sapiens* –
but only for a moment; there they are
a bit like Parma wallabies,
surviving though their seasons
come upside down, a polar bear
who just copes with the climate
and big cats basking in a winter sun's
fitful warmth; far shrieks, far cries –
I'm putting in a word for them.

I'm putting in a word
for glimpses of Miyagi bay's
swerving shore grown visible
through clearer air, the wind chill
round picnic spots and angled boughs
of cherry, plum, the cedar, pine;
for grass blades that two elephants uproot
or take out of each other's mouths;
a word for those crazed monkeys,
their sorrowful noises overhead;
for flakes of gravel, a mandril's gaze,
dog fox's stink; for the laughing hyena
in yet another humdrum dusk
where a smith's gazelle with broken horn
screams out against the isolation –
and by this prison house of their days,
its shabbiness, I'm putting in a
word for these things mute.
(Robinson 2017: 240-241)

In such a situation it would have been a falsehood to pretend that I was at home in a country where I had to carry an Alien Registration Card with my fingerprints on it at all times (which is also part of this poem's premise). Yet I lived there in the same flat for fourteen years, the longest I have been anywhere, and the place did become familiar to me. The poem expresses perhaps the equivocation in Stokes' lines: "neighbourhoods / Squalid and sublime / Stand in for deeper pain," in its analogy between the zoo and the

cracked pavements and shabbiness of the suburban scene that surrounded it. The detail of particular nondescript-ness, when concentrated on and given a rhythmic impetus, can promise a sense of being at home, even through its absence. I am also struck by how this poem too draws attention to "things mute," just as "The Interrupted Views" had done.

3

On 7 and 9 November 1874 an announcement appeared in *The Times* stating that "A PARISIAN (20), of high literary and linguistic attainments, excellent conversation, will be glad to ACCOMPANY a GENTLEMAN (artists preferred), or a family wishing to travel in southern or in eastern countries. Good references. – A. R., No. 165, King's-road, Reading" (Marcenaro and Boragina 119). Some one hundred and thirty-three years later, through a number of unpredictable circumstances, I found myself employed as a literature teacher in that same town at the University of Reading, and I located the house in which the poet had once worked as a teacher of French. Rimbaud lies about being a Parisian, and he has been confirmed as the author of this advert in *The Times* newspaper by the discovery of a manuscript of its wording, with revisions in another hand, among his papers:

165 KING'S ROAD

Equivocal days: the return of weather
like a further dice throw
takes us unawares;
neither one thing nor another,
the days dawn, slowly go
with a shopping list of skies, chores, and new cares.

Disorientated as ever
seeing as we're back,
back from our travels in Southern or in Eastern climes,
I'm staring at a cream façade
puzzled as to whether
this is the address Rimbaud gave in *The Times*.

Showers, sunbursts, deep leaf shadows
meet the passing hours
and not only, everything shrieks at me –
early May sunlight on swollen gooseberries,
tentacles of fronds vertiginously
swaying in a breeze.

What with graffiti rashes, it's like being in a daze
though I'm under no illusions
about skies' capricious changes, elongated afternoons
and drawn-out evenings,
extraordinary garden choruses
where a late bird sings.

Now swans, their cygnets, ducks, all types of pigeons
touch Kennet banks or Thames
and notwithstanding your attainments,
whatever, your good references,
I'm under no illusions.
It's as if some wheel of fortune had come round.
(Robinson 2017: 340-341)

It might be thought that this reference to Rimbaud is like my use of Jasper Johns or James Joyce in the poems we have just looked at; but on reflection I wonder if the poles haven't, as it were, been reversed to express the unexpectedness and the "equivocal" nature of what has happened. Equivocal and disorientated – by the latter word I can't help also meaning "removed from the orient," as well as having my directions confused – this poem conjoins my finding that I have arrived here with Rimbaud's attempt to get away, an attempt that, though he left the town soon after, failed, for no one appears to have answered the advertisement. More importantly, perhaps, the poem also attempts to evoke the strangeness of what might have been thought familiar, for I hadn't been in England in April for over fourteen years; and so the allusion to Rimbaud, as well as providing a little relevant psycho-geography, cues the sense of strangeness in being there, as it alludes to the oddness of the French poet's sojourn in that very same town.

In some ways our repatriation was an even more complex issue for my two daughters, who had been raised and educated in Japan. For them Reading, England, was more or less a foreign country and they responded to the challenge of finding a home there in slightly different ways. The elder, who had experienced two more years of schooling in Japanese, worked to retain the language and to preserve her identity as slightly different because of her childhood elsewhere, while the younger immediately adopted the local accent and all but forgot her Japanese, coming to feel that she had been somehow robbed of her own "primal landscape" – a term that, I might add, she provided for me, and which she discovered in her first year at university studying Geography. The next poem, "Like a Foreign Country," expresses its theme in the title, and the reference to a school report is exactly what was said of this British passport-holding younger daughter at the end of her first term in a Reading primary school:

LIKE A FOREIGN COUNTRY

That much would have to be explained:
how cloud-roofs at dawn
were burned off by a July sun
and showers washed out washing day,
how identity theft protection
or laundry would get done
when there was the tax disc to display.

It was time, time to cultivate our garden
where blades of whitened grass
hid creatures still alive
beneath their mossy stone
or in a creosoted shed
with ivy bursting through its boards –
still lives of paint cans, and so on.

That much had been left behind.
Cloud-diffused sunlight would soothe
my jangled nerves. You'd find
it was like our daughter's school report:
me too, I'm happy as can be
expected, coping well
with moving ... in a foreign country.

Days gone, terraces, terra incognita,
were like our faces redefined
at a bathroom mirror when it's cleaned;
for time had taken its advantage
over us, the gained
and lost perspectives realigned.
That much would have to be explained.
(Robinson 2017: 343-344)

A few years after writing it, I was lucky to have the unexpected experience of discussing this poem in HM Prison Reading (the "Reading Gaol" of Oscar Wilde's ballad). I was there as the guest of a reading group organized for the young offenders (all the prisoners by this date were aged between 18 and 21) and they had read the poem in advance. What I found reassuring was not only that they didn't have much difficulty understanding it, but that they actually identified with it – and suggested that the represented experience of

returning home from Japan after many years was not unlike what it felt like to go back home and try to adapt after have spent time in jail.

"Denmark is a prison," Hamlet remarks in his eponymous play, and I would like to finish off with a poem that takes us back to the Liverpool of my childhood. This poem is dated "17 February 2008" and was inspired by two things: the words that a student of creative writing said in a class soon after I started teaching at Reading, and one of the early visits we made back to my parents after returning to live in the country. The student had wanted to write a story about gun crime in a Los Angeles high school and when I recommended that she set it in her home part of the North of England she said: "I can't do that – England's shite!"² It made me laugh at the time, because I had spent so many years on the other side of the world wondering how I would ever return, only to hear this. Then I thought of Hamlet's words in the play, prompted by the possible rhyme of "shite" with his "O cursed spite," which I use as an epigraph:

OTTERSPOOL PROM

"O cursed spite"

William Shakespeare

There's a dazzle of sunlight on the low-tide river
and our far shore
has a silver-grey blur, bright as never, never,
ever before.

You see it's enough to bring tears to the eyes
by silhouetting trees,
winter boughs spidery on mist-like white skies
twitched in a breeze.

But then down the promenade its flyers release
their dragon-tailed kite;
frost on the pitches is shrinking by degrees;

a student's words return, her going 'England's shite!'
and I'm like 'Please
yourself' in sunshine born as if to set it right.
(Robinson 2017: 369)

² For a more detailed account of the poem's emergence, see 'Behind "Otterspool Prom"' in Peter Robinson, *The Draft Will* (Tokyo: Isobar Press, 2015), pp. 97-101.

The desire to set things to rights goes all the way back to the start of my poetry; but I only recently came across this challenging aphorism by William Hazlitt from his 1823 collection *Characteristics*, which reads: "Those who are fond of setting things to rights, have no great objection to seeing them wrong. There is often a good deal of spleen at the bottom of benevolence" (Howe 227). All the poems I have read and talked about today, then, can be imagined as being in transit between a premise and a promise, both of these very similar words as important as each other in the occasioning, and invitation to performance, of these poems' actions. "Otterspool Prom" also tries to make its form out of a tacit recognition that we don't have the power simply to set things to rights (for I am attributing that to the watery winter sunshine), and yet that the need to find home homely will remain strong. The reading of such poems will also remain, I hope, a promise of help in that project and trajectory. Thank you for your attention today.

23 June 2016

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KUĆI OD KUĆE: ISKUSTVO ZEMLJE I IMIGRACIJE JEDNOG PJESNIKA

U ovom obraćanju, čitajući sedam mojih pjesama, istražujem različite načine na koje stvaranje poezije može pomoći autoru da se u svijetu osjeti kao kod kuće. Pretpostavka ovakvog rada mora, dakle, biti da se pisac već osjetio da nekako nije kod kuće, da okruženje ne uzvraća dovoljno – iz razloga koji mogu biti psihološke prirode, ali koji također mogu da uključe i istorijski kontekst samog mjesta i, naravno, kako individualni odgovor tako, istovremeno, i ono na šta se isti odnosi. Ovaj rad, zatim, obećava da pisanje kao i čitanje poezije mogu podstaći odaziv okruženja time što će, evocirajući ista, pripisivati im toplinu. Posebno ću se baviti trima različitim iskustvovanjima doma u sprezi sa mojim ličnim migratornim tranzicijama, pa ću analizirati po par pjesama o svakoj od tri države, dok je svako ovo iskustvo blisko trenutnim uslovima intenzivno migratornog svijeta u kojem živimo, svijeta u kojem fraza "migrantska kriza" bolno se raznosi od značenja krize za zemlje u koje migranti dolaze i onog koje ima za same migrante. Moja tri različita iskustva odnose se na (1) pokušaj da se osjetim kod kuće u primarnom pejzažu prostora koji je izostavio, iz razloga koje namjeravam da ispitam, da podrži stabilan osjećaj pripadanja; (2) pokušaj da se osjetim kod kuće u prostoru u koji sam migrirao, ali gdje sam tretiran kroz određenje inozemca ili stranca; i (3) pokušaj da se osjetim kod kuće u prostoru u kojem se pretpostavljalo da sam kod kuće, ali u kojem sa me kontinuirano, iz različitih razloga, osjećao izolovanim ili izmještenim. Za svaku od ovih prilika pročitacu pjesmu i govoriti o inspiraciji za nju u svijetlu datih tema, pri tome pridajući pažnju osobinama njihovih nastajanja koje indiciraju i pretpostavku i obećanje navedene na početku.

Ključne riječi: dom, primarni pejzaž, osjećaj pripadanja, migracija, izolacija, izmještenost.

DEEP SPACE: PROBLEMS OF VERTICAL TRAVEL

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Abstract: Travel writers often claim that they have encountered and represented the “heart,” “soul” or “spirit” that lies beneath the seemingly incoherent surfaces of a place. This pre-supposes that places have both hearts and depth and that a diligent traveller can access them by going “beneath the surface.” This paper examines metaphors of vertical travel in three travel narratives on Albania – Eric Newby’s *On the Shores of the Mediterranean*, Dymphna Cusack’s *Illyria Reborn* and Robert Carver’s *The Accursed Mountains* – and suggests a connection with Romantic conceptualisations of place as made manifest in poems by Shelley and Wordsworth. Contrasting this with an alternative, more psychogeographical approach to place, the paper asks whether the idea that places have a coherent, even permanent “heart” or “soul” might in itself distort or even prevent successful travelling encounter.

Key words: travel, encounter, cultural template, symbolic economy, psychogeography, stereotyping, representation.

When discussing advertisements for soap powder and detergents, Roland Barthes observes that they endow these simple but useful products “with value-bearing states” – specifically, in the case of *Omo*, with “the deep and the foamy.” “To say,” he goes on,

that *Omo* cleans in depth [...] is to assume that linen is deep, which no one had previously thought, and this unquestionably results in exalting it, by establishing it as an object favourable to those obscure tendencies to enfold and caress which are found in every human body. (Barthes 37)

I suspect that this is a remark which, with very little adjustment, might also be applied to a great deal of writing about place. Travel writers in particular are fond of asserting that they have gone beyond mere surfaces and into the “heart” of a place – into, as it were, a core which somehow gives them access to a place’s “soul” or “spirit.” They are fond of asserting, in other words, that they have gone deep – travelling not only horizontally through places but also vertically into them – drilling down like so many cultural miners.

There’s certainly no shortage of travel narratives whose titles lay claim to representing the heart, soul or spirit of a place: Colin Thubron’s *The Lost Heart of Asia*, Tobias Jones’ *The Dark Heart of Italy*, Redmond O’Hanlon’s *Into the*

Heart of Borneo or Lawrence Durrell's *Spirit of Place*, Ivan Klima's *The Spirit of Prague* and Malise Ruthven's *The Divine Supermarket: Travels in Search of the Soul of America* (which isn't a book about either the Motown or Stax record label). Moreover, there are creative writing manuals like Linda Lappin's *The Soul of Place* – while the Lonely Planet travel guides announce that their “mission is to enable curious travellers to experience the world and to truly get to the heart of the places where they travel”.³

That this assumption that places have hearts, souls, spirits is reiterated much like the assumption that linen is deep isn't particularly surprising. Depth is, as Barthes says, a value-bearing state. Just as it adds value to linen, it also adds value to a place – not always a positive value: disdainful city-dwellers, after all, are prone to making patronising remarks about “deepest Somerset” or, indeed, the Deep South – but a value nonetheless and encountering a place's depths is perceived to be of more value than skating across its surfaces. This, perhaps, is also what lies behind – or indeed beneath – the oft-made assertion that there is a difference between a traveller and a tourist. The traveller is not one to be satisfied with mere surfaces whereas a tourist cares about little else.

Travel writers, in other words, can endow their own encounters with a place with value by asserting that they have got to its heart or discovered its spirit – which also, of course, means that their journey can be turned into a quest and fitted into a convenient narrative structure. At the same time, readers can endow *their* encounter with a travel narrative with value by accepting the premise that it is taking them beneath the surface. Indeed, just as we expect the likes of *Omo* to clean deeper, we rather expect writers to go deeper – to travel vertically, to submerge or embed themselves and through their writing enable us to encounter the heart and soul of somewhere for ourselves. We expect them to transform us from armchair tourists into armchair travellers.

The concept of vertical travel is indeed an attractive one, offering as it does a readymade metaphor that can be used to illuminate the differences we might perceive between writing which engages with a place successfully and writing which doesn't. I've deployed it myself to distinguish between travel narratives about South Eastern Europe which show evidence of an author's attempt to engage with something other than a predictable barrage of Balkanist stereotypes and generalisations and those which retreat into or never stray from the writer's own “bubble” of assumptions and preconceptions (Phillips 220). It is a way, in other words, of differentiating between narratives which at least travel some way *into* the symbolic economy of another culture and those which get no further than representing it as a relatively simple, fixed and self-contained template, a body of pre-existing knowledge which actual encounter with a place merely affirms or, at best, calls into question and then reinstates,

³ Lonely Planet, www.amazon.com/Lonely-Planet-World-Travellers-Guide. 3 May 2016

perhaps with a few minor adjustments. The concept of vertical travel, in short, provides a means of calibrating different kinds of actual and textual encounter and of assigning value to them accordingly.

Thus, for example, we might say that Eric Newby's depiction of communist-era Albania in *On the Shores of the Mediterranean* and Dymphna Cusack's in *Illyria Reborn*, although written from opposite ends of the ideological spectrum (Newby being overtly hostile to the regime, Cusack exhibiting an unshakeable faith in the system), occupy similar positions towards the "shallow end" of a spectrum of encounter.

Cusack's representation of Albania is underpinned by a basic binary model or template: the dominant characteristics of its culture are tradition and modernity – a dialectic which, in her account, resolves in a harmonious integration of the two. During her first walk through Tirana in the company of a man she refers to only as "the Poet," she initiates this trope with the observation that "Here, I was to find, Yesterday and To-day are always close together" and then reiterates it throughout the rest of her narrative. "A peasant followed two oxen drawing a wooden plough such as his Illyrian ancestors might have used three thousand years ago," she writes of a roadside scene in rural Albania before adding: "Overhead, the Cairo-Moscow Jet TU 104 roared in to land at Tirana airfield" (Cusack 8 & 25). Cusack, in other words, creates a version of communist-era Albania as socialist-realist pastoral in which the good – i.e. pre-capitalist – traditions of the past are preserved but are supplemented by good – i.e. communist – forms of progress. This, of course, may well be the overriding impression that Cusack had of Albania in the early 1960s. We cannot know with any degree of certainty what she actually saw or encountered, how and why she interpreted her experiences in this particular way or whether she omitted material which simply didn't fit the tradition/modernity pattern. Given the historical circumstances, however, we might reasonably speculate that, despite her assertions of independence and empirical trustworthiness (via, for example, episodes where she persuades her guide to adjust her official itinerary, seemingly spontaneously), what Cusack is reproducing is a micro-managed, utopian image. This image remains consistent throughout the book and is repeatedly reinforced by the guides and officials whom Cusack meets and often quotes at great length without question. The image she presents, in other words, is sanctioned by the regime. This party line, in fact, endured – albeit with an increasing emphasis on modernity and progress – into the 1980s. An English-language brochure produced by the Albanian state in 1986, for example, focuses on industrialisation and the mechanisation of agriculture, but also emphasises the preservation of Albanian folk and rural traditions through The Folk Song and Dance Ensemble and The National Folklore Festival in Gjirokastër. Photographs of factories, hospitals and agricultural machinery are interspersed with those of traditional architecture, costumes, dancing and craft.

In his chapter on Albania in *On the Shores of the Mediterranean*, meanwhile, Newby constructs an equally consistent and coherent, but very different image of the country. Like Cusack, he too asserts his empirical trustworthiness and independence as an observer. Although part of an officially sanctioned tour party, he repeatedly depicts himself chafing against or even running away from the guides, interpreters and drivers supplied by the state and, on one occasion, leaping over the counter of a bookshop in Shkodra in the name of getting a better look at the stock and receiving “a severe ticking off” as a result (Newby 124).

As its title – “Albania Stern and Wild” – suggests, however, Newby’s account revolves around a binary template and where tradition and modernity are the twin poles of Cusack’s description, it’s lack and excess which perform the same function for him: on the one hand, the lack of technology, consumer goods, freedom (and in particular freedom of religious expression) and, on the other, an excess of regulation, bureaucracy and surveillance. Amongst the many things that Newby notes a lack of in communist Albania are men working in the fields, cats and dogs, cars, meat, butchers’ shops, litter, overweight people, organised religion and bathplugs while his examples of the excessive include interference from border guards, tour guides, interpreters and bus drivers which Newby regards as going beyond the pale. The construction of this lack/excess binary culminates in an episode during which Newby is confronted by a bus driver who objects to him taking a photograph. Newby reacts with a polemic concerning what he regards as the “gross” – or excessive – “inequality” of Albania’s “purer, more primitive communism” in which he describes “the wives and girl friends of Party officials” whose “long, painted fingernails” suggest to him that “they have probably never worked what here in Albania is an official eight-hour day”, before abruptly cutting to an image of “a funeral procession of men wearing suits and the brown-stockinged women we had seen working in the fields” and detecting “an air of profound gloom among them rather than of grief for the dead person” (Newby, 133-134).

In these final pages, Newby’s evaluation of communist Albania as being profoundly imbalanced emerges as the narrative’s organising principle. The chapter’s apparently disparate details acquire coherence and meaning in relation to a conventionally binaristic cultural template. The disproportionately lengthy passage about the difficulties of entering communist Albania (which occupies more than a third of the twenty-six page chapter) and the abrupt digressions and transitions – a reference to Elbasan’s excessively polluted atmosphere interrupts a description of Shkodra; the conversation with the bus driver about photography and spying cuts to generalisations about “What was most disagreeable about Albania” – are retrospectively rendered coherent and accounted for by the critique of social inequality and the juxtaposed images of the Party officials’ holidaying wives and girl friends and the “profound gloom” of

the funeral procession. At these points, the thematic structure becomes clear. What looks to be an apparently naturalistic narrative, full of the vicissitudes and abrupt disjunctions which attend travel through unfamiliar territory, can now be re-read as the articulation of Newby's belief that communist Albania is fully explained – its “heart” or “spirit” rendered fully visible – by his lack/excess template.

Both of these writers, then, document the complex surfaces of Albanian culture but in such a way that these surface complexities are ironed out in a series of micro-managed images and spectacular tableaux. Rather than being described in what Heidegger might have referred to as their “thing-ness,” their existence in and for themselves, the diverse phenomena both Newby and Cusack encounter in Albania are attached to – reduced to – a relatively simplistic formula. They become evidence to support both the existence of such a formula and the writer's own implicit and explicit claims that in discovering it they have somehow penetrated to the very heart of Albanian culture.

As I have said, this fulfils what seems to be a common expectation: that travel writing somehow goes beneath the myriad and ostensibly incoherent surfaces encountered by ordinary mortals and returns with a coherent image which makes visible the core spirit of a place – an image which, in turn, serves to render coherent and make sense of the disparate surface phenomena encountered in the first place. On the face of it, this is straightforward deductive logic: a writer amasses evidence – in the form of surface details – which enables them to deduce the “truth” of a place before they close the case – much like Sherlock Holmes – by showing how the evidence can only be explained by the truth which they have deduced.

At the same time, however, this relies on two basic assumptions: that a place has a relatively fixed and stable core spirit – a depth which can explain its surfaces; and that relatively brief travelling encounters with a place can grant an appropriately sensitized writer access to it. It also relies, of course, on the assumption that writers are empirically trustworthy and that they aren't, as it were, putting the cart before the horse. That is, that they aren't mapping a pre-existing or hastily constructed conceptual framework onto the phenomena which they encounter in any given place and then mistaking what they've borrowed or constructed for something they've discovered. It assumes, in short, that their deductions are untroubled by preconceptions and assumptions. Or indeed solipsism.

Here, though, I should make it clear that my contention is *not* that places are all and only surface – a more-or-less incoherent jumble of things (walls, earth, faces, trees) which reel past us like a film or random glimpses of otherness through the windows of a railway carriage. Nor am I saying that there aren't different modes of encounter or a spectrum of engagement with places and their material culture. The places we encounter have histories whose traces

are more-or-less visible, more-or-less decipherable; the people we encounter are part of cultural narratives whose traces are also more-or-less visible, more-or-less decipherable. In some instances, these histories or narratives are publicly articulated – via inscriptions, tour guides, memorial plaques, guidebooks. In others, they're less prominent and only emerge after a more active form of engagement – the interpretation of architectural styles as a reflection of different eras of colonisation, say, or of undulations in the landscape as signs of trench warfare. Likewise the non-material culture of a place – by which I mean the contours of its inhabitants' symbolic economy – will be more or less visible in the behaviour of those inhabitants. Again, in some instances elements of that symbolic economy will be evident (in the way people dress, for example) while in others they will only become apparent through interpretative engagement.

Even allowing for the fact that the places we encounter have depths – if we're going to stick with that metaphor for the time being – my suspicion is that these depths don't add up to anything coherent enough or all-embracing enough to be called a "heart and soul." Partly that suspicion arises from personal experience. I have lived in Bristol for thirty years now and while I'd like to think I'm reasonably attentive to its material and non-material culture I'd be hard-pressed to put my finger on what constitutes the city's "heart and soul" (I'd be even more hard-pressed to do the same for Britain as a whole). Partly, though, that suspicion also arises from the thought that what's deemed to be a place's heart and soul is more often than not a projection – it's something we project onto a place rather than deduce from it (presumably as a means of restoring equilibrium and self-esteem in the face of culture shock).

In his travel narrative *The Accursed Mountains*, for example, Robert Carver sets out to find the "heart and soul" of Albania. After travelling through the south, he decides that this "heart and soul" must be found in the eponymous mountains in the far north – initially because he believes that the remoteness of this region means that it has been largely untouched by outside influences. Later he cites further evidence for his belief in the form of stories about blood feuds which he then associates with the endurance of the customs and laws described in the *Kanun of Leke Dukagjini*. Having also decided that the *Kanun* itself represents the quintessence of Albanian culture, he can now clinch his case – and claim that his own quest has been successful. In travelling through the Accursed Mountains, he has reached the "heart and soul" of Albania because that is where the *Kanun* endures. This claim, though, rests on the assumption that the *Kanun* really does represent the quintessence of Albanian culture and that the stories he hears in and around Bajram Curri prove that the *Kanun* continues to exert a direct and deep – that word again – influence on Albanian life. This, though, seems to be a case of a theoretical cart coming before an empirical horse. Once he's discovered and read the *Kanun*, Carver sees evidence of its survival everywhere (perhaps because that evidence

is precisely what he is looking for) – and yet the spectacular examples of so-say revenge killings he hears about in the Accursed Mountains owe little to the very specific procedures for the prosecution of blood feuds laid out in the *Kanun*. At the same time, he also seems to encounter evidence of the endurance of the *Kanun* throughout his travels in the rest of Albania too – which rather belies his other argument that the Accursed Mountains must be the “heart and soul” of the country because that is the *only* place where the *Kanun* persists (Carver *passim*).

Here, then, my point is that the problem isn't so much the idea that places have depth or that it's possible to travel vertically into them rather than horizontally through them. It's that depth is all too easily conflated with truth and essence and some kind of underlying objective reality which the surfaces of a place disguise, but which, when addressed from an appropriate perspective, can also be revealed. On the face of it, it's tempting to associate this problem with certain Romantic ideas about place – as manifested in the near-mystic engagements with landscape that Wordsworth describes in *The Prelude*, for example. Shelley, too, seems to want to engage with place on a similarly deep or essential level – to encounter, as he puts it in the opening line of the 1816 poem *Mont Blanc*, “the everlasting universe of things”, and to hear – as he puts it in an unadopted passage of the same poem – “a voice, not understood by all”.

Shelley, though, also seems to have been repeatedly frustrated in his engagements with place. “The everlasting universe of things” proves to be somewhat impenetrable and Mont Blanc itself remains “remote, serene and inaccessible” – something incontrovertibly other. For all his assertions that “The secret Strength of things” is to be found in places like the French Alps, Shelley can never quite put his finger on it. As he admits elsewhere, in *Prometheus Unbound*, “the deep truth is imageless,” and what we get in *Mont Blanc* is a hectic traverse of the mountain's visible attributes and a series of similes and metaphors which Shelley appears to be trying on for size before moving on to the next one. Mont Blanc's geometry – “dome, pyramid and pinnacle” – is, for a moment, “A city of death, distinct with many a tower/And wall impregnable of beaming ice” – and yet that immediately gives way to it being “a flood of ruin.” Solids become fluids and by the end of the poems it's perhaps not insignificant that the word which comes to his mind is “vacancy.” What Shelley appears to be doing here is wrestling with the inadequacies of language and image to express what he has experienced as the sublime. At the same time, however, it's also possible to read the poem as an expression of frustration at both the limitations of language *and* the impossibility of achieving a deep encounter with place – with a universe whose heart and soul appears to be concealed in or on Mont Blanc (Shelley 532 & 204).

It strikes me, then, that we might make a distinction between writing which exhibits evidence of the conceptualisation of place as a set of changeable

surfaces or layers beneath which lies a coherent and enduring core or heart or soul or spirit – and writing which acknowledges that while, of course, places have histories and cultural narratives attached to them and we can construct certain meanings and values for them – sometimes collectively, sometimes individually – these narratives, meanings and values aren't inherent and don't necessarily constitute an objective spirit of place, let alone one of Shelley's deep truths. Perceived from within this conceptual framework, the objective, material facts of a place – its buildings, its landscape, its inhabitants and so on – are open to multiple, negotiable interpretations. Narratives, meanings and values aren't inscribed in a place but ascribed to it. Theoretically, of course, this opens the way back to solipsism or on to anarchic nihilism. It certainly starts sounding dangerous if we apply it to places where atrocities have occurred in that it would seem to suggest that denying the occurrence of an atrocity would be an admissible interpretation. To say that interpretations are not fixed, though, is not the same as saying that all possible interpretations are equally valid. Or that encounters with place are not without an ethical component which requires us to make decisions about how we choose to interpret and indeed write about them.

In making this distinction between approaches too, I am not suggesting that it represents a firm boundary between two kinds of writing about place – or that individual texts can be slotted neatly into either one or the other. Rather I am suggesting that they represent different ends of a spectrum which might serve as a tool for describing different kinds of place-related writing. If at one end, we have the likes of Newby and Cusack with their certainties about the “spirit of Albania,” then at the other we might have something like Andrzej Stasiuk's travel narrative *On the Road to Babadag* with its restless jump-cuts from one part of Eastern and South Eastern Europe to another, numerous digressions and reflections on time, travel and memory. It's not, it has to be said, the easiest book to read and while Stasiuk states that it is a book about “the heart of my Europe”, the textual surface is disorienting and throughout we're constantly reminded that everything he says is provisional and open to renegotiation.

Here too, though, we might also consider that body of work which is sometimes defined as psychogeography. I say “defined,” even though its proponents have trouble defining what it means. For some, it is simply a set of tools and strategies for engaging with place. For others, it resembles something approaching a coherent philosophy – a way of life which, much like that of the protagonist in Luke Rhinehart's *The Dice Man*, relies on the intervention of chance. My suspicion is that there is no single description on which all self-styled psychogeographers would agree – but also that psychogeographical writing lies towards the negotiable end of the interpretative spectrum I have proposed.

This is perhaps evident in *The Rings of Saturn* – W.G. Sebald’s account of a walk along the Suffolk Coast which, in addition to describing the material facts of the landscape he passes through (albeit from the perspective of a man struck with a seemingly incurable melancholy), accumulates digressive sub-narratives which range across – amongst many other things – the history of imperialism, sericulture, the Holocaust and the war in Bosnia. These are all – no matter how tenuously – connected to locations, objects, incidents, people that Sebald encounters on his journey, but they are never presented as anything other than the associations made by a particular individual at a particular time in a particular frame of mind. They aren’t, in other words, presented as manifestations of the spirit or heart and soul of the Suffolk coast, but as possible – but not implausible – responses to a place whose seemingly rather anonymous surfaces can – if closely attended to – become the occasion for the construction of a particularly complex set of narratives, meanings and values.

Indeed, if looked at from this perspective, it could be argued that Sebald’s approach – unconventional as it first appears – offers a richer – and, in fact, deeper – engagement with place than one founded on the assumption that visible surfaces are ciphers which need to be solved in order to progress to an understanding of the “deep truth” of any given location. To push that thought a little further, we might even say that the associations articulated in *The Rings of Saturn* suggest that there is no such thing as a “spirit of place” – and that when we talk or write about such a thing what we’re actually doing is mistaking our partial, subjective impressions for objective knowledge.

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DUBOKI PROSTOR: PROBLEMI VERTIKALNOG PUTOVANJA

Putopisci često tvrde da su se susreli i da su predstavili samo “srce,” “dušu” ili “duh” koji leže pod naizgled nekoherentnim površinama mjesta. Ovo pretpostavlja da mjesta imaju srca i dubine i da im marljivi putnik može pristupiti tako što će otići “ispod površine”. U ovom radu istraživaću metaforu vertikalnog putovanja na primjerima tri putopisna teksta o Albaniji – *Na obalama Mediterana* Erica Newbya, *Preporođena Ilirija* Dymphne Cusack i *Proklete planine* Roberta Carvera – i predložiti njihovu povezanost sa romantičarskom konceptualizacijom prostora kako se ona očituje u poeziji Shelleya i Wordswortha. Kontrastirajući ovaj alternativnim, znatno psihogeografskim pristupom mjestu, u ovom radu zapitaću se da li ideja da mjesta zaista posjeduju koherentnost, čak i permanentna “srca” ili “duše” zaista ne izobličava i čak spriječava uspješan susret putnika i mjesta.

Key Words: travel, encounter, cultural template, symbolic economy, psychogeography, stereotyping, representation.

DICHOTOMY OF PERSONAL AND EMPIRICAL EXPERIENCING OF ENVIRONMENT AND LANGUAGE

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Abstract: Acquisition of knowledge can be greatly facilitated if it coincides with one's personal experience. Fortunately, in the majority of cases it does. The postulated truths are attested in everyday, common circumstances. But as we go from concrete towards abstract knowledge, that is from the sphere of empiric towards the sphere of experiential abstract-theoretical knowledge, the empirical side begins to lose its predominance, and the experiential side gains momentum. If we consider, further on, that different individuals do not experience identical but similar elements, it would lead to the conclusion that the reality presented to one individual is never the same as that presented to another. In other words, every living being has its own world impervious to the worlds of others. In a situation like that, no communication would seem possible. If a few ingenious individuals ever managed to create a language under such conditions, all their language signs would have totally subjective, personal meanings, based on their specific experiences, different and totally isolated from the experiences of others. Nobody would be able to learn a single word from others; translation from one language into another would be out of question, and, generally, people would not be able to understand each other. And yet, people do communicate, with varying degrees of success though, and children do manage to learn copious amounts of words from their parents and other people in their surroundings, and it is possible to translate meanings from one language into another, which means that there is intersubjective language and there are intersubjective symbolic forms in general. This paper aims to explore the ways these facts can be reconciled, with a particular view to the facility of language as a means of forging both veracious and illusionary realities.

Key Words: language, experience, knowledge, reality, falsity, veracity.

Introduction

Whenever a child, a pupil or a student undertakes to learn or master a certain idea, theory or concept it actually embraces knowledge forged by somebody else – be it a scientist, an ideologist or a governmental institution. The process can hardly go the other way around. Acquisition of knowledge can be greatly facilitated if it coincides with one's personal experience, and, fortunately, in the majority of cases it does. It is particularly so in exact sciences which postulate axioms based on empirical evidence and concrete observations. There is little room for controversy there. The postulated truths are attested in everyone's

experience. It is reasonable to argue, for example, that gravitation is as real as the chairs we are sitting on, which is of great value in establishing the objective truth. If one attempts to test the existence of gravitation by exposing their body to its force, they will learn the hard way that every word in its equation is true.

However, as we go from concrete towards abstract knowledge, that is from the sphere of empiric towards the sphere of experiential abstract-theoretical knowledge, the empirical side begins to lose its predominance, and the experiential side gains momentum. Experience is commonly seen as something that is completely within the realm of subjectivity and individuality, something liable to variations and, in most cases, something that cannot be repeated. But if we were to uphold the view that experience can only be understood as individual and subjective, we would face an insurmountable obstacle: How can purely subjective experience serve to build intersubjective language?

This brings us to a binary approach in the establishment of communication system. On the one hand we have an experientially based comprehension of reality, and communally established elements to express it on the other. If a language sign expresses neither immediate nor indirect objective experience it is unintelligible and, consequently, cannot perform its communicational function. That further implies that any symbol or language sign that has a certain meaning expresses an objective experience of a certain group of people and can therefore be deemed communicable and able to convey meaningful content from one person to another. This paper aims to highlight the points of convergence and divergence between the personal and empirical experiencing of environment and language. Words are a means of expressing something, of communicating something, and the purpose of the communication is the overriding concern. They function under strong restrictions and offer some resistance to individual manipulation. Words are means, but means with peculiar properties (Pinchuck 42).

Elaboration

Before venturing to elucidate the matters under the previous heading, one should first ponder whether there is absolute objectivity in empirical science in general, one that soars above all the volatile relations. There are cases where an individual can be more objective than the rest of humankind, and can construe meanings which subsequently prove to be the right ones. Galileo claimed that the Earth revolved around the Sun. That clearly clashed with experiential observation, and indeed it is rather difficult to explain to children that the Sun is actually stationary and it is the Earth that revolves around the Sun.

At the time of Galileo, it was not just children that relied on experience rather than on complicated celestial arithmetic. Educated adults also shared that persuasion driven by the vain belief that the place where humankind lived was the centre of the universe. The introduction of the new paradigm required instillation of new ideas which, in turn, necessitated the genesis of new terminology, notions and metalanguages in order to generate sufficient linguistic capacity to express it. One of the most important matters to be cognizant of, especially regarding the expressive capacity of a language, is what must be said in it as opposed to what can be said in it. Because the occurrence possibilities of words within lexical items are typically severely constrained, the "meaning entails choice" principle indicates that their meanings are similarly constrained, but, over time, words tend to become more malleable and serve new purposes. In other words, they are not fully functional semantic elements. Sinclair calls this restriction of meaning possibility "delexification" (124).

In order for new meanings to become universally acceptable, the change needs to go hand in hand between the proponents of new ideas and the general public. Reconciliation between the arcane and the vernacular does not happen overnight. The degree of cognition and readiness to soar above the desire, interests, and emotional needs of individuals and social groups they belong to is usually only seen long after – just like in the case of Galileo, several centuries later. One would hope that in the modern day we are done with clashes between experience and science, but not quite: How many of us can honestly say that they fully understand Einstein's theory of relativity and that time being the fourth dimension liable to shrinking and protraction depending on speed coincides with their own experience of time and space?

Symbols that are higher up the scale of exactness, such as those in science and art, typically do not have such an immediate and simple relation with experience. The objects that they mark, in most cases, have not been experienced by those who operate with them, whether it be that they were not present on the spot or at the time they could be observed (for example a tyrannosaur, a medieval battle) or because they are not real objects to begin with (such as Romeo and Juliet, absolutely empty space, perfect gases, etc). Analysis and interpretation of these symbols, however, shows that the conceptualization of objects that we refer to, always and inevitably, contains experiential elements generated via indirect extrapolation. Dinosaurs can be conceptualized on the basis of perceivable paleontological data and analogy with other reptiles. A medieval battle can be conceptualized on the basis of personal battles or fights we have been involved in, or those seen in films. Absolutely empty space can only be comprehended by extrapolation of the emptying action, or, in other words, by removing objects from a confined field of observation. According to Sinclair, expressions fathoming abstract knowledge and observations require a prior lexical introduction (112). In some languages,

lack of lexical specificity opens door to metaphoric and idiomatic expressions. Building lexical volume in the first way is relatively infrequent, and is in any case mainly confined to particular language genres, especially technical language and literature. In ordinary, everyday language, especially the spoken variety, the idiom principle holds sway (Cruse 81).

Exemplification

Not only do languages express matters differently. Members of the same linguistic community are likely to see things differently too. Let us assume, for example, the way we observe a same object – a computer monitor on the table. Because we are not positioned at the same spot, we observe it from different angles and from different distances. None of the forms and none of the colours will be exactly the same for all the spectators – the accuracy and the clarity of our sight, our colour sensitivity and the illumination will vary from one to another. The organization of the entire body, particularly the nervous system, will determine how each of us will see the monitor. In such a complexity of parameters, in which all individuals are watching and experiencing the same object, there will never be elements that are absolutely equal to all of us.

If we consider, further on, that different individuals do not experience identical but similar elements, it would lead to the conclusion that the reality presented to one individual is never the same as that presented to another. In other words, every living being has its own world impervious to the worlds of others. In a situation like that, no communication would seem possible. If a few ingenious individuals ever managed to create a language under such conditions, all their language signs would have totally subjective, personal meanings, based on their specific experiences, different and totally isolated from the experiences of others. Nobody would be able to learn a single word from others; translation from one language into another would be out of the question, and, generally, people would not be able to understand each other. Add the complexity of language difference on top of that, and we get a multidimensional convolution. The way a language chooses to express, or not express, various meanings cannot be predicted and only occasionally matches the way another language chooses to express the same meaning (Baker 26). One language may express a given meaning by means of a single word, another may express it by means of a transparent fixed expression, a third may express it by means of an idiom, and so on. And yet, people do communicate, with varying degrees of success though, and children do manage to learn copious numbers of words from their parents and other people in their surrounding, and it is possible to translate meanings from one language into another, which means that there is intersubjective language and there are intersubjective symbolic forms in general. How can these facts be reconciled?

First, we need to establish the existence of invariable elements in the experience of all subjects of the group. A set of such elements can then be called objective experience, since it is independent from any individual subject. Lack of fresh air in a stuffy room, for example, will not cease to exist when any of the people therein leave the room. Objective experience, for example, can also be that of seeing a certain object red, when it indeed reflects light under the 687 millimicron wave length. In such a case, subjective experience of a colour-blind person would probably diverge away from the objective one.

Objective experience, however, is not the same as an empirically based scientific postulation. It should be, for as long as we forsake our partialities. And partialities are not an easy thing to forsake. We can see it in the example of the recent wars in the territories of former Yugoslavian republics, during the first half of the nineties, where the objective experience of the opposing sides, i.e. the Serbs, the Bosniaks, the Croats or Kosovar Albanians is in complete incongruence. This may seem a rather inconvenient situation, as far as "objectivity" is concerned. How can three different experiences be objective? Can this relativity of the term "objectivity" somehow be overcome? Is there not, after all, an ultimate objectivity which can serve as the criterion for ascertaining which experience is objective and which is not?

It transpires, then, that there is a certain discrepancy between the two notions of objectivity of meaning. In order to avoid the confusion which can ensue from that kind of perplexity, it is only logical to operate with two, rather than one, terms. One should differentiate between the *degree of experience objectivity* and the *degree of experience adequacy*. Whichever of the different types of objectivity one contemplates, it is bound to be expressed in the medium of language, and that is what gives language such a mighty leverage in establishing both experiential and empirical truths.

The potency of language in the creation of alleged factuality is particularly used in the art of persuasion. People have a proclivity to overestimate words. A skilful orator can misuse this to covertly bend the truth to an extent that it takes a totally different turn. It's often much easier for people to believe someone's testimony as opposed to understanding complex data and variation across a continuum. Quantitative scientific measures are almost always more accurate than personal perceptions and experiences, but our inclination is to believe that which is tangible to us, and/or the word of someone we trust over a more "abstract" statistical reality. Hence the foolish beliefs by some that smoking is not so harmful because somebody's uncle smoked for decades and lived to the age of 94. So let's forget about all those tedious meta analyses and methodologically sound studies showing proven causal relationships!?

Or you can cherry-pick a data cluster to suit your argument, or find a pattern to fit a presumption. For example: The makers of sweet soda drinks point to a research showing that of the five countries where sweet soda drinks

sell the most, three of them are in the top ten healthiest countries on Earth, therefore sweet soda drinks must be healthy!?

Or the claim that a compromise (such a convenient word), or a middle point, between two extremes must be the truth. Much of the time the truth does indeed lie between two extreme points, but this can bias our thinking: sometimes a thing is simply untrue and a compromise of it is also untrue. Half way between truth and a lie is still a lie. For example: Milan said that vaccinations caused autism in children, but his scientifically well-read friend Suzana said that this claim had been debunked and proven false. Their friend Vesna offered a compromise that vaccinations must cause some autism, just not all autism!?

Another example of the truth bending process through the faculty of language can often be observed in currently ubiquitous post-truth pontification: You simply move the goalposts or make up an exception when your claim was shown to be false. People are prone to having a foolish aversion to being wrong. Rather than appreciate the benefits of being able to change one's mind through better understanding, many will invent ways to cling to old beliefs. One of the most common ways that people do this is to post-rationalize a reason why what they thought to be true must remain to be true. It's usually very easy to find a reason to believe something that suits us, and it requires integrity and genuine honesty with oneself to examine one's own beliefs and motivations without falling into the trap of justifying our existing ways of seeing ourselves and the world around us. For example, Milena Kudra claimed to be psychic, but when her *abilities* were tested under proper scientific conditions, they magically disappeared. Milena explained this by saying that one had to have faith in her abilities for them to work!

In similar situations, some resort to a different tactic and redefine the burden of proof saying that it lies not with the person making the claim, but with someone else to disprove. The burden of proof lies with someone who is making a claim, and is not upon anyone else to disprove. The inability, or disinclination, to disprove a claim does not render that claim valid, nor give it any credence whatsoever. It is important, however, to note that we can never be certain of anything, and so we must assign value to any claim based on the available evidence, and to dismiss something on the basis that it hasn't been proven beyond all doubt is also fallacious reasoning. For example, Anna declares that a double-decker bus is, at this very moment, in orbit around the Sun between the Earth and Mars, and that because no one can prove her wrong, her claim is therefore a valid one!?

Another way to blur the discerning vision between experience and veracity is the so-called *appeal to popularity*. The flaw in this argument is that the popularity of an idea has absolutely no bearing on its validity. If it did, then the Earth would have made itself flat for most of history to

accommodate this popular belief. For example, Stevan rose from his chair, approached Todor and asked him to explain how so many people could believe in leprechauns if they're only a silly old superstition!?

Or you may assume that one part of something has to be applied to all, or other, parts of it; or that the whole must apply to its parts. Often when something is true for the part it does also apply to the whole, or vice versa, but the crucial difference is whether there exists good evidence to show that this is the case. Because we observe consistencies in things, our thinking can become biased so that we presume consistency to exist where it does not. For example, Martin was a precocious child and had a liking for logic. He reasoned that atoms are invisible, and that he was made of atoms and therefore invisible too. Unfortunately, despite his pensive skills, he lost the game of hide and seek.

Sometimes, in order to arrive at the truth one must think outside of the box, particularly when presented with two alternative states as the only possibilities, when in fact more possibilities exist. Also known as the false dilemma, this insidious tactic has the appearance of forming a logical argument, but under closer scrutiny it becomes evident that there are more possibilities than the either/or choice that is presented. Binary, black-or-white thinking doesn't allow for the many different variables, conditions, and contexts in which there would exist more than just the two possibilities put forth. It frames the argument misleadingly and obscures rational, honest debate. Example: Whilst rallying support for his plan to fundamentally undermine citizens' rights, the Supreme Leader told the people they were either on his side, or they were on the side of the enemy.

Or you can misrepresent someone's argument to make it easier to attack. By exaggerating, misrepresenting, or just completely fabricating someone's argument, it is much easier to present your own position as being reasonable. For example, after Marko said that we should put more money into health and education, Ivan responded by saying that he was surprised that Marko hates our country so much that he wants to leave it defenceless by cutting military spending! History is a typical example of academic disagreement in different systems. And it need not be history of national conflicts (even though it might be taken as an epitome of academic disparity); even the geological development of our planet which is supposed to be devoid of any political connotation or abstraction is subject to a fierce debate between creationists and evolutionists. There are educational institutions which teach children that the world is only six thousand years old (pursuant to the Bible) – contrary to others who claim it to be thirteen billion years old. There is a widespread movement to remove Darwinism from schools. Some creationist pundits resort to the “appeal to authority oration skill” – in other words, they say that because an authority thinks something, it must therefore be true. Appeals to authority are not valid arguments, but nor is it reasonable to disregard the claims of experts who have

a demonstrated depth of knowledge unless one has a similar level of understanding and/or access to empirical evidence. It is entirely possible, however, that the opinion of a person or institution of authority is wrong; therefore the authority that such a person or institution holds does not have any intrinsic bearing upon whether their claims are true or not. For example, not able to defend his position that evolution "isn't true" Stevan says that he knows a scientist who also questions evolution.

Similar examples of misuse of the misbalance between experience and axioms channelled through the facility of language are numerous but the purpose of the paper is not to list them all. They serve merely as an example of how camouflaged the thin edge between veracity and falsity can be.

Translatorial Implications

John Sinclair proposes that there are two basic ways of constructing utterances in natural language use (36). One way, governed by what Sinclair calls the "Open-choice principle," builds up or analyses an utterance word by word. Each word is freely chosen and displays the same semantic properties as it does in isolation. This, according to Sinclair, is how utterance construction is viewed in "standard" lexical semantics. The obligatory-optional distinction is an indispensable one. Grammatical knowledge should also enable the language user to distinguish between optional and obligatory forms in the language, those matters that have to be expressed as such and those that have alternatives. This kind of knowledge is second nature to all of us, as far as our mother tongue is concerned. It may be very deeply rooted in a person with a good command of another language but they will never be able to take it for granted in the same way. In any event, nobody has perfect control of any language (Pinchuck 112). Even the most abstract symbols of portentous scientific theories entail in their meaning explicit elements of experience by implying that under certain conditions there could be some real objects which are not circumscribed by their implicit meaning. In that denotative function, they can even lead us to false conclusions and make us rely on precarious predictions which might not be delivered in the future. That would only mean, however, that they are inaccurate, and not without meaning, either denotative or connotative.

The number of words needed to express an idea in one language need not correspond to the number of words needed to express the same notion in another (for example: recreate (English) = ponovo stvoriti/izgraditi (Serbian)) while others may keep the number of corresponding words, involving severe morphological and word class transformation (disbelief = nevjerica). Even loan words are not a guarantee of keeping the number of words equal – take *tennis player* and *teniser* in English and Serbian respectively for example. More often,

however, meanings are carried by units much more complex than the single word and by various structures and linguistic devices. One can hardly call such a structure complex or complicated, and yet it is sufficiently complicated to show that dictionary translation of this type tends to become very cumbersome and impractical, albeit the process itself remains at a rather simple level.

Even the most linguistically innocent people have an intuition that meaning is intrinsically bound up with individual words. While such an assumption seriously underestimates the complexity of word meaning, there is some merit in its postulation. Languages do have words, at least partly, since in the cultures they are supposed to serve, the meanings that such words entail need to be communicated – which provides an explanation in terms of their motivation (Cruse 75). It is therefore unrealistic to expect to find equivalent ways of expressing observations and expressions in two languages as a matter of course (Baker 30). The choice of a suitable equivalent will always depend not only on the linguistic system or systems being handled by the interlocutors, but also on the way both the producer of the source text and the producer of the target text, that is the translator, choose to manipulate the linguistic systems in question; on the expectation, background knowledge and prejudices of readers within a specific temporal and spatial location; on translators' own understanding of their task, including their assessment of what is appropriate in a given situation; and on a range of restrictions that may operate in a given environment at a given point in time, including censorship and various types of intervention by parties other than the translator, author and reader (46).

Lefevere noted that much of the theorizing about language was based on translation practice between European languages and pointed out that problems of the accessibility of linguistic and cultural codes intensifies once we move out beyond Western boundaries. In his later work, he expanded his concern with the metaphors of translation to an enquiry into what he termed the conceptual and textual grids that constrain both writers and translators (Bassnett 114). It would transpire from this that if one persist in putting 'round pegs into square holes' there would have to be a certain amount of flexibility in the elements of both the source and the target languages, notably in their lexical, semantic and syntactic components. This flexibility however can only go so far, and if the translator bends the words, their meaning or congruence too much they will tend to refract. Perhaps Anuradha Dingawaney was right to say that translation from one culture into another involves varying degrees of violence (4). This idea of translation as refraction rather than reflection was first developed by Lefevere offering a more complex model than the old idea of translation as a mirror of the original. Inherent in his view of translation as refraction was a rejection of any linear notion of the translation process. Texts, he argued, have to be seen as complex signifying systems and the task of the

translator is to decode and re-encode whichever of those systems is accessible (Lefevere 88).

The underlying premise here is that the illusion of equivalence should actually reduce cognitive effort at the point of text use. Consequently, if translators are aware of the way equivalence works in reception, they can reduce and direct their effort accordingly. In other words, the illusion of equivalence may well enable a very efficient use of resources (Pym 40). The deeper the analysis, the more likely it is to take us into the lexical realm or even into the realm of the situation (Grant 168).

As a reaction against such vagueness and contradiction, numerous other approaches available as tools for the facilitation and improvement of the accuracy of translation, such as relevance theory (Gutt 46) or descriptive translation (Toury 68), began to appear in the second half of the twentieth century as attempts to redefine the concepts of "literal" and "free" translation in operational terms, to "describe" meaning in scientific terms, and to put together systematic taxonomies of translation phenomena.

Perhaps the best description of the slippery path of relying on word-for-word translation is that expressed by Culler saying that if language were simply a nomenclature for a set of universal concepts, it would be easy to translate from one language to another (22). If language were like this the task of learning a new language would also be much easier than it is. But anyone who has attempted either of these tasks has acquired a vast amount of direct proof that languages are not nomenclatures, that the concepts of one language may differ radically from those of another (23). Each language articulates or organizes the world differently. Languages do not simply name existing categories, they articulate their own.

When this discrepancy of the object perception and the function of its language sign is clearly formulated, there is always an imminent tendency of its elimination in one of the following ways:

- a) certain uses are deemed incorrect;
- b) necessary corrections are introduced in the perception of the object to bring it in line with the use of the symbol;
- c) we become cognizant of the fact that another symbol has come into circulation to mark the same object. In this case, another process commences simultaneously, one that subsequently leads toward making distinctions between the two meanings.

Conclusion

We always understand each other if the apparatus that analyses our sensations is the same. It is no longer about the "quality" of the observation or sensation – what becomes more important is how it can be organized in the

same way in a common system so that they can be classified the same way. Every living being has its own world impervious to the worlds of others. If the experiences of human kind were all different, the meanings of their symbols would also be different, but they are not (Sanders Peirce 86). It is therefore difficult to hypothesize about the existence of objective experiential meaning without having a clear, sound and axiomatic position. And yet, the notions of objective truths, axiomatic positions or objective experience are extremely relative. Thinking is not based on experiential data alone. It is also wrought with different purposes, organizations, conceptualizations and anticipations. This again reinforces the notion of dualism between the empiric and contemplative. If traditional notions presented us with a vision of a human speaker originating the meanings contained in his or her chosen words, then modern linguistics replaces that vision with the recognition that all acts of communication stem from choices made within a system which pre-exists any speaker. This is particularly conspicuous in the process of meaning transposition, such as translation.

Without language, the scarce and identical elements of experience of individual members of a community would remain marooned and incoherent. Even the purely scientific genres abound in personal takes on subject matters. Take for example the multitude of metaphors in the currently topical scientific theories such as “big bang” or “the greenhouse effects.” Language signs can express objective experience directly or indirectly. In the first case, a sign is attached to a certain experience without any approximation, as is the case with descriptive symbols (such as “light,” “dark,” “water,” “stone,” “bird”). There are, however, symbols which have no constant liaison with experience. What is expressed by words like “truth,” “justice,” “photon,” “irrational number” can in no way be visualized regardless of immediate personal experience. That conforms to Korzybski’s general semantics which implies that abstractions always seek to be exemplified (Korzybski 82).

The aim of this paper is not to uphold any of the two different “truths.” It merely aims to illustrate how easy it is for proponents of different truths to pontificate that their views are the ones that are enshrined in empirical plausibility and that personal experience and scientifically axiomatic positions coexist in a matrimonial match, which, like any other such match, has moments of bitter contention as well as those of blissful concord.

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DIHOTOMIJA LIČNOG I EMPIRIJSKOG ISKUSTVOVANJA PROSTORA I JEZIKA

Sticanje znanja može biti uveliko olakšano ukoliko se podudara sa ličnim iskustvom, a to je, srećom, tako u većini slučajeva. Naučne tvrdnje provjerene su u svakodnevnim situacijama. Ali kako se krećemo od konkretnog ka apstraktnom znanju, odnosno od empirijskog ka iskustvenim apstraktno-teoretskim spoznajama, empirijska strana počinje da gubi primat dok iskustvena dobija na snazi. Ukoliko, nadalje, uzmemo u obzir da različiti pojedinci ne prolaze kroz identična već slična iskustva, nameće nam se zaključak da zbilja predočena pojedincu nikada nije ista kao zbilja predočena nekome drugom. Drugim riječima, svako živo biće ima sopstveni svijet izolovan od svijeta ostalih. U takvoj situaciji, ne bi moglo da dođe do komunikacije. Ukoliko bi ikada genijalni pojedinci uspjeli da stvore jezik u takvim okolnostima, svi njihovi jezički znaci imali bi potpuno subjektivno, lično značenje, zasnovano na sopstvenom iskustvu, različitom i potpuno izolovanom od iskustva ostalih. Prevođenje sa jednog jezika na drugi bilo bi onemogućeno. No, ljudi ipak komuniciraju, sa različitim nivoom uspješnosti, a djeca uspijevaju da nauče mnogobrojne riječi od svojih roditelja i okoline, i moguće je prevoditi značenja sa jednog jezika na drugi, što znači da ipak postoji intersubjektivni jezik kao i intersubjektivni simboli uopšte. Ovaj rad teži kao istraživanju načina na koje ove činjenice mogu da budu pomirene, sa posebnim osvrtom na mehaniku jezika kao sredstva kojim se stvaraju kako prividne tako i vjerodostojne realnosti.

Ključne riječi: jezik, iskustvo, znanje, realnost, prividnost, istinitost.

TRAVELLING REAL AND IMAGINARY PLACES IN JEANETTE WINTERSON'S SEXING THE CHERRY

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Abstract: Jeanette Winterson's novel *Sexing the Cherry* is a story about the Dog Woman and her adopted son Jordan, who live in seventeenth-century London. After meeting John Tradescant, a famous botanist and gardener, Jordan, who was found in the Thames and named after the Jordan River, becomes obsessed with travelling, exploration and discovery. He accompanies Tradescant on his journeys across the world in search of exotic plants. At the same time, Jordan does a lot of daydreaming and mind-travelling. On these journeys, which he finds equally realistic and important, he visits magical cities and meets fairy-tale characters. Besides, since Jordan and his mother have their twentieth-century counterparts, it can be said that they also travel through time. This paper will explore the different ways of travelling described in this novel with the purpose of discovering to what extent it follows the conventions of the travel genre in general. It will also examine travelling in the context of the Enlightenment period and colonial expansion of the British Empire. In addition, since one of the novel's most significant topics is gender roles, this paper will also focus on the differences between male and female travellers, and male and female time.

Key words: travelling, discovery, exploration, space, time, quest, gender.

Introduction

Since many books written by Jeanette Winterson are concerned with journeys, it comes as no surprise that her novel *Sexing the Cherry* (1989), which deals with her favourite topic – gender roles and relations – is heavily based on this metaphor. As a matter of fact, all the real and imaginary journeys of the novel's male hero Jordan are often seen as Winterson's journeys into uncharted literary waters:

Jordan's journeying across the real and the fantastic, the geographic and the psychic, the literal and the metaphorical, and the 'foreign' countries of gender both within and without conveys Winterson's own journeying across history, genre, gender, sexuality and identities in her philosophical historical fictions. (Medd 180)

The novel has four narrators: two female – the Dog Woman, a giantess and dog breeder from the seventeenth century, and her twentieth-century counterpart, an anonymous environmentalist and activist; and two male: Jordan, the Dog Woman’s adopted son and a world-traveller and explorer, and his twentieth-century counterpart, Nicolas Jordan, a naval cadet. On the one hand, since travelling and exploring have always been considered a male dominion, the male characters in this novel are those who travel across the world and get the opportunity to become heroes. On the other hand, women are expected to stay home and wait for their men to return, which is the main occupation of the female characters, especially the Dog Woman. In addition, since they are banned from travelling physically, they are forced to travel in their mind by using their imagination or by dreaming. However, as both male heroes have a lot of “feminine” traits, they also do a lot of mind-travelling and day-dreaming. Sometimes they even get in touch with their feminine side by putting on women’s clothes. At the same time, the stay-at-home female characters still get to do heroic deeds and cross gender boundaries by behaving in a “manly” fashion.

Even the main time frame of the novel, seventeenth-century England or, to be more precise, the beginning of the period of Enlightenment, was chosen to demonstrate the predominantly masculine desire to explore and map the world, collect and name different specimens, obtain knowledge, and improve science. This has been a topic of many adventure and travel novels in the history of English literature, such as Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) or even Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver Travels* (1726), but Winterson tells her story both from a different perspective and with a different purpose. According to Moore, “[t]his novel rewrites the origins of European modernity – colonial exploration, the rise of empirical science and Enlightenment notions of the unified self” (115). This can best be seen through Jordan’s travelling across the world, which forms the basis of the actual, geographical journeys in the novel.

Travelling Real Places

The inspiration for *Sexing the Cherry* came from a painting by a Dutch artist, in which John Rose, the Royal Gardener, gives Charles II the first pineapple in England. In the novel, Jordan is the man who brings this pineapple after travelling across the world for thirteen years in search of exotic plants and wonders. This event happened in 1661, after the death of Charles I’s gardener, John Tradescant the Younger, who plays the role of Jordan’s mentor in the novel. Since the main purpose of the journeys made by these historical characters was to find new plants, bring them to England, and try to make them grow in a new environment, these representatives of the English crown did not fit the two earlier planetary projects suggested by Pratt: circumnavigation,

which means both sailing the world and writing about it, and the mapping of the world's coastlines (29). Although their work was connected with the exploitation of natural resources of other countries and could eventually bring profit, their primary goal was knowledge. Because of this, they could be considered a part of a new planetary project called the "systematizing of nature" (Pratt 30), whose most important proponent was Carl Linnaeus. In 1735, this Swedish naturalist published *The System of Nature (Systema Naturae)*, in which he laid out "a descriptive system designed to classify all the plants on the earth, known or unknown, according to the characteristics of their reproductive parts" (Pratt 24). This presented an attempt to make order out of the chaos of nature and the chaos of earlier botany (Pratt 25). In addition, "natural history asserted an urban, lettered, male authority over the whole of the planet" (Pratt 37), and created "a Utopian, innocent vision of European authority," which Pratt refers to "as an *anti-conquest*" (38).

These scientists, whom Pratt calls "herborizers" (26), exhibited elements of both "masculine" and "feminine" behaviour. First, the need to discover everything, gain knowledge, and impose order on chaos is considered by Gillian Rose a typical masculine trait: "the belief that everything is knowable and mappable is fundamentally a patriarchal concept: there is no part of the planet, no society so distant that it cannot be mapped, described and hence contained" (qtd. in Bassnett 230). Even the language used to describe exploration gives men the active and women the passive role: "new territories were metaphorised as female, as virgin lands waiting to be penetrated, ploughed, and husbanded by male explorers" (Bassnett 231). Second, education and travelling (both of which belonged to the so-called "public sphere") in the seventeenth century were available almost exclusively to men and, because of this, only they could become adventurers, heroes, and scientists. Then again, there was something typically "feminine" in the fact that these naturalists-collectors did not harm nature like the more "masculine" colonisers. Pratt describes their androgynous character in the following passage:

Unlike such antecedents as the conquistador and the hunter, the figure of the naturalist-hero often has a certain impotence or androgyny about him; often he portrays himself in infantile or adolescent terms [...] The naturalist-heroes are not, however, women – no world is more androcentric than that of natural history [...] The paternal structure of discipleship is overwhelmingly evident. While Linnaeus the father/king presides at home over the garden/kingdom, the sons range over the world for the missing pieces that will complete it. The image of Adam in the primordial garden is an image of Adam before the creation of Eve [...] Eve's absence is undoubtedly a precondition for Adam's infantility and innocence.

Within its innocence the naturalist's quest does embody [...] an image of conquest and possession. Eve is the garden whom he in his unobjectionable way plunders and possesses. (55)

In Winterson's novel, in 1633, when Jordan is three, his adoptive mother takes him to see a great rarity that a herbalist called Thomas Johnson has brought to England. This exotic wonder turns out to be a banana, and this event determines Jordan's destiny – he makes a wish to sail around the world in search of wonders. In 1640, while sailing his boat, ten-year-old Jordan meets John Tradescant on the banks of the boiling Thames. Tradescant tells him about his journeys and the post of gardener to the King, which he inherited from his dead father. After giving Jordan some sailing lessons, Tradescant departs, leaving the Dog Woman with the realisation that her son will abandon her. In 1642, after the outbreak of the Civil War, Tradescant comes to take Jordan to Wimbledon, where he wants the boy to help him to lay out a garden for Queen Henrietta. The Dog Woman accompanies her son to Wimbledon, where they stay until 1649, when they return to London for the King's trial. After the King's execution, Jordan leaves England with Tradescant and spends the next thirteen years circumnavigating the world. He travels to France, Italy, Persia, and the Bermudas, where Tradescant's plan is to stock up with exotic seeds and pods, hoping he would make them grow in England by using the method of grafting already tested in France. In 1661, after Tradescant's death, Jordan returns to England with the first pineapple that Mr Rose, the new royal gardener, presents to the King. Although Charles II offers to make Jordan a lord and to equip him with a ship, Jordan declines because he just wants to sit by the river and watch the boats, which many people interpret as a sign of madness. After he nearly dies from the plague, and after London is almost destroyed in the Great Fire, Jordan decides to leave England with his mother for good.

All this time Jordan has the "typical" masculine desire to become a hero and accomplish something great. At one point, thinking about the practice of grafting, he expresses a wish "to have some of Tradescant grafted on [him] so that [he] could be a hero like him" (Winterson 79), since England is a land of heroes. On the other hand, Jordan is fully aware of the fact that he is different from other "masculine" travellers, adventurers, and explorers. First, Jordan rather travels in his mind than around the globe, which is considered a more feminine characteristic. Then, he is more flexible when it comes to looking and interpreting the world. He does not have firm beliefs and questions pretty much everything. For him, the earth is both flat and round because it is all a matter of perspective, and he is not even certain whether there is any point in travelling any longer: "And now, swarming over the earth with our tiny insect bodies and putting up flags and building houses, it seems that all the journeys are done"

(Winterson 81). He also knows that he is never going to be like Tradescant because he feels that his own nature is different:

For Tradescant being a hero comes naturally. His father was a hero before him. The journeys he makes can be tracked on any map and he knows what he's looking for. He wants to bring rarities and he does [...]

When we get home, men and women will crowd round us and ask us what happened and every version we tell will be a little more fanciful. But it will be real, whereas if I begin to tell my story about where I've been or where I think I've been, who will believe me? (Winterson 101-102)

The same doubts haunt Jordan's twentieth-century counterpart, Nicolas Jordan, who has also always wanted to become a hero. Since his father watches typical "male" films, such as war films, submarine films, or ocean-going films, Jordan comes to the conclusion that being a hero is the greatest thing in the world:

If you're a hero you can be an idiot, behave badly, ruin your personal life, have any number of mistresses and talk about yourself all the time, and nobody minds. Heroes are immune. They have wide shoulders and plenty of hair and wherever they go a crowd gathers. Mostly they enjoy the company of other men, although attractive women are part of their reward. (Winterson 117-18)

As a boy, he reads *The Boys' Book of Heroes*, which contains stories about men like William the Conqueror, Christopher Columbus, Sir Francis Drake, and Lord Nelson. When he sees the painting of Mr Rose presenting the pineapple to Charles II, he decides to join the Navy. He learns to build model ships by reading *The Observer's Book of Ships*, and while sailing one of them on a pond, he also meets John Tradescant. When Nicolas becomes a naval cadet, his ultimate goal becomes to sail around the world, taking the same route as Sir Francis Drake in the *Golden Hind*.

Nevertheless, Nicolas does not fit the mould of a typical explorer. Like Jordan, he often looks at the stars and wanders off. He also doubts that there are any real places left to travel since we have already been everywhere, and, unlike his colonial colleagues, he does not expect any benefit from his journeys. His practical friend Jack, who is the youngest stock analyst in the City, does not understand the purpose of Nicolas's job. Jack believes it to be a hobby rather than a career and predicts that Nicolas will turn into a loser after he leaves the Navy. He gets almost angry when Nicolas tells him that his plan to sail alone around the world will not even result in breaking some record. Similarly, he sees

no point in Nicolas's decision to join the Navy after the Falklands crisis because this means that Nicolas will not even get an opportunity to become a war hero.

When all this is taken into consideration, we can conclude that Jordan and Nicolas even during their "real" or "geographical" journeys, undertaken in the service of a monarch and with the purpose of either expanding the British Empire, bringing new plants and animals, accumulating knowledge, or protecting the Empire from a real or potential enemy, on many occasions exhibit the characteristics Mills mostly associates with female travellers: first, the accounts of their journeys, written in the first-person confessional mode and containing autobiographical elements, seem to be rather personal and trivial; they are very often accused of lying or exaggerating; their interest in foreign cultures is more personal than scientific; they often doubt their knowledge and skills; and they do not always support the official policy of their country and seem to sympathise more with the natives. Instead of being meticulous scientists, cruel conquerors, or courageous soldiers, most of the time they behave as Laurence Stern's sentimental traveller, who finds more pleasure in the interior landscape of fellow humans than in snow-capped mountains, vast seas, or gold mines.

Travelling Imaginary Places

The fact that the two male protagonists possess many characteristics of female travellers becomes more obvious in their mind-travelling. This especially refers to Jordan, who is more interested in recording the journeys he might have made. In these cases, "[d]iscovery' means not strange fruits and stranger lands and people, accounts of which fuelled the English imagination for three centuries, but a psychic or imaginative discovery of the 'invisible life'" (Moore 116). On most occasions, Jordan simply gets lost in reverie for a while and dreams about strange places until somebody snaps their fingers and forces him to return to reality. Sometimes the weight of the world becomes too heavy and, in order to escape, he leaves his body and finds himself in the most amazing fairy-tale locations, where he experiences "adventures reminiscent of *Gulliver's Travels*" (Moore 117). These episodes usually contain elements of magic realism, whose most common characteristics are:

the mingling and juxtaposition of the realistic and the fantastic or bizarre, skilful time shifts, convoluted and even labyrinthine narratives and plots, miscellaneous use of dreams, myths and fairy stories, expressionistic and even surrealistic description, arcane erudition, the element of surprise or abrupt shock, the horrific and the inexplicable. (Cuddon 417)

One of these places is the city of words, where cleaners in balloons use mops and scrubbing brushes to remove or erase the words spoken or shouted by people in the streets, which rise above and get trapped under the sun. Since the clouds of these angry and foolish words attack the cleaners and bite off their mops, this example of magic realism can be interpreted as a warning to people to be careful about what they say to each other because they will not be able to take back their words and will have to deal with the consequences. In this city, Jordan finds a house with the smell of wild strawberries and no floors, where all the furniture is suspended on racks from the ceiling, and there is a huge pit at the bottom. The family who live here move by using ropes and, while being their guest, Jordan sees for the first time a woman whose face is a sea voyage, a dancer who balances on the ropes and escapes through a window. Jordan starts his search for this mysterious woman, whose lightness of body and acrobatic skills are traditionally associated with freedom from any kind of restraint.

Later on, Jordan dreams about a town “whose inhabitants are so cunning that to escape the insistence of creditors they knock down their houses in a single night and rebuild them elsewhere” (Winterson 42), which can also be interpreted as a symbol of freedom of movement. Jordan is here informed that the Twelve Dancing Princesses from the famous story live down the road and, thinking that these dancing sisters might know his mysterious ballerina, he decides to visit them. He listens to their life stories, which is probably the most fantastical part of the novel because Jordan here speaks with the characters from a proper fairy-tale. These stories subvert the traditional fairy-tale plots by giving the power to the princesses to escape from their suffocating marriages and their cruel, philandering, or unloving husbands, and find happiness in various unconventional unions, which emphasises the freedom of action or will. They also reveal to him that their youngest sister Fortunata is actually the woman he has been looking for but, since they do not know what has become of her after she left her princely groom at the altar, Jordan has to continue with his search.

The following fantastical location is the city whose entire population has been wiped out by love three times in a row and, as a result of this, everything connected with love, such as music, smiles or mandolins, has been forbidden and put in the Museum of Love. Jordan’s arrival stirs emotions of love in its citizens again and, after his departure, the rulers of this city, the monk and the whore, proclaim that love will be punished by death. Not feeling ready to be deprived of love again, the citizens unanimously agree to be put to death. The strict rules of this city remind Jordan of the Puritans in his own country, who publicly reject everything connected with love, but privately take part in the most repugnant orgies. From here, Jordan rows to an island where he finds a house in which a woman teaches other women to dance. It turns out that she is the girl from his dreams. He spends over a month with her, during which she

tells him her version of the story of the twelve dancing princesses and explains what has happened later to her. In the end, she refuses to leave with him because she needs not to “leave this island to see the world, she has seas and cities enough in her mind” (Winterson 100). Again, by deciding not to accompany Jordan to England, Fortunata demonstrates her independence and freedom to make her own choices.

Unlike Jordan and Nicolas, who, as men, are allowed to go everywhere and daydream only in their free time, the two female protagonists, especially the Dog Woman, can only travel in their minds. The Dog Woman “travels” in her songs when the burden of life gets too heavy and when she wants to become invisible. Since she is forbidden to sing in the church choir by the parson on account of her monstrous and gigantic body, she is forced to find alternative “locations” for singing:

So I sing inside the mountain of my flesh, and my voice is as slender as a reed and my voice has no lard in it [...] And I sing of other times, when I was happy, though I know that these are figments of my mind and nowhere I have ever been. But does it matter if the place cannot be mapped as long as I can still describe it? (Winterson 14-15)

She even notices when her son Jordan travels in his mind, which happens for the first time immediately after Jordan sees the banana: “I put my head next to his head and looked where he looked and I saw deep blue waters against a pale shore and trees whose branches sang with green and birds in fairground colours and an old man in a loin-cloth” (Winterson 13). Her infallible maternal instinct helps her to look into Jordan’s heart and discover Fortunata there although Jordan himself is not sure whether she really exists. When they leave London in the end, the Dog Woman looks at her son and for a moment thinks that she sees a slight and strong woman standing beside him. When she tries to call out, she realises that she has no voice. Then the woman vanishes and there is nothing next to Jordan but empty space.

The Dog Woman’s counterpart is no stranger to imaginary lands too. As a fat lonely child, unloved by her disappointed parents, she has to find pleasure elsewhere: “So I learned to be alone and to take pleasure in the dark where no one could see me and where I could look at the stars and invent a world where there was no gravity, no holding force” (Winterson 124). She imagines that she is as big as her parents’ house and that everything is subjected to her: “At night, in bed, I felt the whole house breathing in and out as I did. The roof tiles, the bricks, the lagging, the plumbing, all were subject to my rhythm. I was a monster in a carpeted egg” (Winterson 124). Since she is angry with her parents, she has the feeling that her rage will destroy the house: “There I go, my shoulders pushing into the corners of the room, my head uncurling and smashing the

windows. Shards of glass everywhere, the garden trodden in a single footprint” (Winterson 124). Her mother keeps telling her that she will burn off her fat as she grows older and, because of this, she has visions of herself stoking a great furnace with fat, and the smoke coming out of the chimney is curly, like pig’s tails (Winterson 125).

When she grows up, she loses a lot of weight and becomes an attractive woman but she still sees herself as big. She realises that she has an alter ego, her patron saintess, a huge and powerful woman whom she summons when she feels herself disappearing. She sometimes dreams about having a home, a lover, some children, but she knows it will not work because she is still a monster inside, and this monster will eventually break out of her and be discovered. As an environmentalist, she spends a lot of time by a polluted river, which, she believes, causes her hallucinations and makes her imagine things. Her rage is now directed at world leaders, mostly men, who would do anything to make money, even if it means destroying the environment and the Third World countries. When she gets really angry, she imagines herself becoming her alter ego, this enormous virago of a woman, and going to the places like the World Bank or the Pentagon and putting in her huge sack men in Gucci suits and generals with their medals. They protest, threaten, and scream, but in vain. She forces all the fat ones to go on a diet and attend compulsory training in feminism and ecology. After that, they pack the food surpluses with their own hands and distribute “it in a great human chain of what used to be power and is now co-operation” (Winterson 123).

What we can conclude from this part is that the male characters go on imaginary journeys because they need a break from their lives of heroic deeds and great expectations. They also feel different from other men and, by using their imagination, they try to get in touch with their feminine side. At the same time, they feel as if something is missing in their everyday existence and need to complete it by searching for something else, something more. On the other hand, when the female characters travel in their mind, they actually travel out of their body, the body that does not meet the expectations of their society. They feel trapped and frustrated, and start imagining that they are somebody else and that they do the things they are not normally allowed to do. In addition, because they feel confused about their identity, this journeying is a form of quest whose main purpose is getting to know oneself better. However, for both sexes, dreams present a much-desired freedom.

Travelling in Time

Every journey, be it real or imaginary, takes time. We have already established that in this novel Winterson challenges the main ideas of the Enlightenment period, which was the age of reason, science, and laws. These

ideas were formed by men who believed that everything could be determined, measured, controlled, and fixed. They perceived space as definite and time as linear, and thought that there was no other way of looking at this. However, this novel is structured on the principle that time is not linear but rather cyclical, which basically means that people and things repeat themselves and that nothing actually changes. In order to make this believable, Winterson exploits some notions of the New Physics such as Relativity Theory and Quantum Theory.

Although the concept of absolute time had been challenged before in the works of Immanuel Kant, Henri Bergson, and Edmund Husserl, the biggest challenge to Newton's earlier conception of a universal, abstract, mechanistic time, came with the emergence of Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity, promoting quite a different model of flexible four-dimensional space-time:

In his work on relativity, Einstein explicitly refutes the idea that chronometric time (the time of the clock) progresses evenly in all circumstances. This leads to the conclusion that the structure of the universe can only be understood in terms of a single four-dimensional continuum, space-time. (Morrison 36)

Furthermore, some innovative ideas can be found in Quantum Theory, in whose tradition "the principles of 'complementarity' and 'uncertainty' enshrine the idea that no object may be viewed in its entirety, but instead it presents different qualities to the observer in different circumstances" (Morrison 105). When it comes to the remodelling of time in contemporary fiction, the most important ideas are presented in Mikhail Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination*. Here Bakhtin develops the notion of the "chronotope" to open up the complex exploration of time that is possible in literary texts. In comparison to Einstein's space-time, which is considered a single universal continuum, Bakhtin presents the possibility of multiple chronotopes or models of the time/space. This notion is summarised by Morrison: "Even within a single literary work, more than one chronotope may be in play. And looking from a historical perspective, Bakhtin argues that great shifts in perception can be understood in terms of the transition between different chronotopes" (37).

Besides theoretical physics, Winterson employs here the notion extensively argued by feminist theory that time itself is highly gendered, which basically means that there is male time – linear, commodified, clock time; and female time – cyclical and reproductive. According to Davies, the appearance of the so-called male time can be connected with the emergence of the mechanical clock, which "served religious, state economic and capitalist interests in the Western world" (qtd. in Hughes 134). The mechanical clock was first used to regulate prayer times in Benedictine monasteries, but its wider use

came with the British industrial revolution, especially with the coming of the railways in the late nineteenth century. Morrison summarises Nguyen's explanation of this phenomenon:

Where previously, a whole diversity of localised times had been reckoned on observation of the sun, and the seasonal variation of its orbit, the railway made it necessary to adopt a more rigorous time regime that had not been required for other industries. (27-28)

According to Nguyen, this first led to the introduction of a system of telegraph wires along the railway lines. After that, cable links to Europe and to North America were established, which was followed by the formalisation of the institution of standardised time zones in the United States and, finally, by the appearance of Greenwich time: "No longer determined by either organic or cosmic cycles of time, 'Greenwich time' is a mathematical fiction which signals the collapse of human experience of space and time into a mathematical formula ..." (qtd. in Morrison 28).

Davies refers to this linear clock time as "male time" because she wishes to draw attention to the "patriarchal character of the groups and classes that have been able to influence this concept and measurement of time" (qtd. in Hughes 135-36). She further claims that this "'male time' contributes to the subordination and oppression of women and [that] particular ways of studying time obscure women's lives" (qtd. in Hughes 136). Making this time the only objective one, concludes Hughes, distracts our attention from the multitude of times that exist. In addition, this linear model fits more with men's lives because it regulates hours at workplace, while cyclical time better reflects women's lives because the type of work they do is less dependent on the clock (136).

Winterson criticises the traditional concepts of time by saying that these are lies: there is only the present and nothing to remember; time is a straight line; the difference between the past and the future is that one has happened while the other has not; we can only be in one place at a time; any proposition that contains the word "finite" (the world, the universe, experience, ourselves ...); reality as something which can be agreed upon; reality as truth (Winterson 83). In the part of the novel called "The nature of time," Jordan reveals his views on the so-called linear time:

We have dreams about moving back and forward in time, though to use the words back and forward is to make a nonsense of the dream, for it implies that time is linear, and if that were so there could be no movement, only a forward progression. But we do not move through time, time moves through us. (Winterson 90)

He shares his negation of the existence of the past, present, and future with the Hopi Indians, whose language has no tenses because they do not sense time in that way – for them, time is one (Winterson 134-35). This is confirmed once more at the end of the novel, when Jordan and his mother leave London. Thinking about their future, he realises that “[the] future and the present and past exist only in our minds, and from a distance the borders of each shrink and fade like the borders of hostile countries seen from a floating city in the sky” (Winterson 144).

The most obvious example of the fluidity of time in the novel is the existence of counterparts or alter egos, which is referred to by Moore as a “series of brief exercises in post-Einsteinian physics and post-Saussurean philosophy” (118). Because of the idea that we can exist at several places at the same time, it is possible that Jordan and Nicolas Jordan, as well as the Dog Woman and the environmentalist, are basically the same person, living in two different centuries, meeting the same people, having the same desires, fears, hopes, and memories, as well as the awareness of having lived in some other time. It is possible that Nicolas Jordan, on board an admiralty tug, while looking at the stars, hears a man’s voice saying: “They are burying the King at Windsor today” (Winterson 121), after which he sees a man who seems familiar to him and who wears clothes that nobody else wears any more. It is also possible that a twentieth-century girl from London, feeling hurt and alone, steps onto Waterloo Bridge to look at St Paul’s but instead she sees “rickety vegetable boats and women arguing with one another and a regiment on horseback crossing the Thames” (Winterson 128). It is even possible that Nicolas Jordan has the feeling that he knows the environmentalist even before he meets her.

Since time is one, even the existence of childhood is challenged: “Childhood, the founding experience of identity in the Lockean schema, is for these characters malleable and ‘unnecessary’, unknowable even when remembered, forgotten even in the act of recounting” (Moore 117). Jordan wonders whether his childhood happened. He says that he must believe it did, but he has no proof of it. He remembers things but, like his mother, he is a fantasist and a liar, so he cannot trust either of them. The problem is in our faulty and deceptive memory because “[e]veryone remembers things which never happened. And it is common knowledge that people often forget things which did. Either we are all fantasists and liars or the past has nothing definite in it” (Winterson 92). Similarly, having alter egos essentially means having multiple identities, and this is another method Winterson uses to break the Enlightenment unified subject. All characters are aware of this. The environmentalist claims that if she has a spirit or a soul, it will not be single but multiple; it will not be confined but free; and it may inhabit numerous changing decaying bodies in the future and in the past (Winterson 126). Again, this is connected with the fact that we live in the eternal present so, Jordan concludes,

“there is no reason why we should not step out of one present into another” (Winterson 90). He compares our multiple existences with cut-out paper dolls holding hands, “but unlike the dolls never coming to an end” (Winterson 90), or with plates stacked together on a waiter’s hand, “[o]nly the top is showing, but the rest are there and by mistake we discover them” (Winterson 90-91).

When it comes to our experience of time, we can differentiate between subjective and objective time or between an internal and external clock. Jordan also notices these contradictory certainties:

our outward lives are governed by the seasons and the clock [...] our inward lives are governed by something much less regular – an imaginative impulse cutting through the dictates of daily time, and leaving us free to ignore the boundaries of here and now and pass like lightning along the coil of pure time. (Winterson 89-90)

Because of this, it is possible that “[i]n a single day the mind can make a millpond of the oceans,” and that “[s]ome people who have never crossed the land they were born on have travelled all over the world (Winterson 80). This makes the measuring of time very difficult. The environmentalist has been alone by the polluted river so long that she cannot measure time in the units she is used to. She thinks that time has mutinied and run wild and concludes that she does not measure time – time measures her (Winterson 126). She also discovers that there is more than one kind of time: “I have a calendar and a watch, and so rationally I can tell where I am in this thing called a year. My own experience is different. I feel as though I have been here for years already” (Winterson 126). For her, time has slowed down just like our pulses slow or race under certain conditions. The same thing happens in fairy tales when “someone falls asleep for a while and wakes up to find himself in a different time” (Winterson 126).

The way we experience time, according to Jordan, depends on our conductivity: “Just as certain metals and alloys when suitably cooled conduct electricity without generating any heat, and therefore without losing any of the energy they are carrying, so certain people may be superconductors for time” (Winterson 91). In his opinion, artists and gurus are such people. Their goal is to prevent everyday distractions from taking up their energy. Monks and contemplatives do this by withdrawing from the world and concentrating, which results in delirium, meditation, or out-of-body experiences. Similarly, true artists are capable of taking us where they have been, to a different place where we are free from gravity: “When we are drawn into the art we are drawn out of ourselves. We are no longer bound by matter, matter has become what it is: empty space and light” (Winterson 91).

By subverting the traditional concepts of time and space, Winterson manages to prove that they are only social constructs and that our perception of

them depends on many general factors such as history, education, culture, language, and sex, as well as on our subjective feelings, notions, and impressions.

Conclusion

Although Winterson's novel *Sexing the Cherry* includes various types of journeys, travelling itself is clearly not the point of the novel but rather a metaphor used by Winterson in order to challenge different social conventions. On the surface, her novel resembles traditional travel and adventure books because it mostly presents the journeys of an Englishman in the period of the colonial expansion of the British Empire. However, since her main character Jordan is not a typical macho adventurer or explorer but primarily a botanist and gardener, his journeys are unconventional. In addition, Jordan finds his imaginary journeys into magical cities and fairylands equally important and believable, which basically means that it is not always easy to distinguish between reality and dreams. Similarly, by creating two pairs of counterparts who live in different centuries, Winterson explores the idea of time travelling. However, as she rejects the traditional notions of time and space, it turns out that her characters do not travel through time but actually have multiple identities existing simultaneously.

By challenging these conventions, Winterson simply paves the way for a more thorough examination of other conventions she finds much closer to her heart – gender roles and relations. Her final message is that men and women do not have to assume the roles imposed on them by society because these roles are also social constructs and, as such, they are neither real nor permanent. In conclusion, Winterson's journeys in time, space, and mind actually represent the quest for our multiple identities as well as the journey across gender boundaries.

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LES VOYAGES À TRAVERS LES LIEUX RÉELS ET IMAGINAIRES DANS LE ROMAN DE JEANETTE WINTERSON *LE SEXE DES CERISES*

Le roman de Jeanette Winterson *Le sexe des cerises* est l'histoire de la Femme aux chiens et son fils Jourdain qui vivent à Londres de la fin du 17^e siècle. Après sa rencontre avec John Tradescant, botaniste et jardinier célèbre, Jourdain, qui, enfant, a été retrouvé Themse et qui dut son prénom à la rivière Jourdain, devint passionné des voyages, de l'exploration et de la découverte. Il suit Tradescant, à recherche des plantes exotiques, dans ses voyages autour du monde. En même temps, il se perd souvent dans ses propres rêveries et fait des voyages imaginaires. Pendant ces voyages, qui, pour lui, sont réels et importants, il visite des villes magiques et rencontre des personnages des contes de fée. Comme Jourdain et sa mère ont leurs alter-egos au 20^e siècle, on pourrait dire qu'ils voyagent à la fois à travers le temps.

Ce travail vise à explorer différents types de voyages décrits dans le roman, dans le but d'établir dans quelle mesure le roman respecte les conventions des récits de voyages en tant que genre littéraire en général. Nous visons également d'examiner les voyages dans le contexte de la période des Lumières et de l'expansion coloniale de l'Empire britannique. Avec cela, étant donné qu'un des thèmes majeurs du roman est le rôle des sexes, dans ce travail nous allons nous pencher sur les différences entre les voyageurs masculins et féminins, aussi bien que sur celles entre la conception du temps masculine et féminine.

Mots clés : voyage, découverte, exploration, espace, temps, sexe.

DEFINING AND UNDEFINING HOME AND FAMILY SPACE IN LOUIS DE BERNIERE'S NOVEL *BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS*

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Abstract: The paper deals with Louis de Bernières' novel *Birds Without Wings* in view of Derrida's concept of the *arrivant* and his concept of hospitality. In this novel, both Christians and Muslims live side by side in harmony in the town of Eskibahçe until the war comes. They are both guests and hosts who show hospitality to each other by going to each other's homes: the imam's wife is friendly with a Christian woman, a beautiful Christian girl is in love with a Muslim goatherd.

Derrida argues that the *arrivant* can surprise the host enough to jeopardize the very border that determines the host's legitimate home, the door and threshold of his home and that is what happens in the novel. Those, who are both hosts and guests to each other, become involved in the devastating conflict during the First World War which leads to the expulsion of the Turkish Christians to Greece and to the evacuation of the Greek Muslims to Turkey. Before the war, the inhabitants of this small town live in some kind of liminal space, somewhere in between Turkish and Greek culture. Since the word *liminal* comes from the Latin word *limin* which means *threshold*, it brings us back to Derrida's concept of the guest, i.e. the *arrivant* who crosses the threshold of his host's home and who can jeopardize the borders of that home, thus creating a conflict.

Key words: guest, host, *arrivant*, conditional hospitality, absolute hospitality, language of hospitality.

Introduction

The paper focuses on the question of defining and destroying the boundaries of home and family space in Louis de Bernières' novel *Birds Without Wings* in view of Jacques Derrida's concept of hospitality and his concept of the *arrivant*. In his discussions of hospitality Derrida tackles the following issues: conditional and absolute hospitality, the relationship between the host and the guest and the language of hospitality. The paper examines how Derrida's concepts can apply to this novel.

Conditional and Absolute Hospitality

Defining the law of hospitality, Derrida writes:

hospitality is certainly, necessarily, a right, a duty, an obligation, the *greeting* of the foreign other [*l'autre étranger*] as a friend but on the

condition that the host, the *Wirt*, the one who receives, lodges or *gives asylum* remains the *patron*, the master of the household, on the condition that he maintains his own authority *in his own home*, that he looks after himself and sees to and considers all that concerns him [*qu'il se garde et garde et regarde ce qui le regarde*] and thereby affirms the law of hospitality as the law of the household, *oikonomia*, the law of his household, the law of a place (house, hotel, hospital, hospice, family, city, nation, language, etc.) (2000, 4)

Derrida makes a distinction between conditional and absolute hospitality and whether it is possible to achieve the latter. In contrast to this ordinary or general hospitality that entails following the rules, abiding by laws and fulfilling certain conditions, Derrida defines absolute hospitality as follows:

To put it in different terms, absolute hospitality requires that I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner, but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I *give place* to them, that I let them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even their names. (Westmoreland 6)

Westmoreland further interprets Derrida's words:

In order to be hospitable, the host must rid himself of security and invite the new arrival. The *ipse* gives up security, authority, and property and promises benevolence. The guest becomes the host. Thus, absolute hospitality is never possible in conjunction with indivisible sovereignty. (7)

Westmoreland also gives his reply to the question of whether absolute hospitality is possible: "Absolute hospitality can only exist as unlimited, as not being within the parameters of laws and concepts. The conditions for such hospitality are both the conditions for its possibility and its impossibility" (4). Therefore, it can be said that absolute hospitality is both possible and impossible. It exists as a concept and one can strive to reach that kind of hospitality. But it is impossible to realize the concept of absolute hospitality since its realization requires fulfilment of many conditions, which are not always easy or possible to fulfil, although absolute hospitality itself goes beyond any condition, duty or law (Westmoreland 4).

According to Westmoreland, Derrida's discussion on hospitality centers within the home, in the relationship between the master, or host, and the guest (4). Derrida says: "Hospitality is the deconstruction of the at-home; deconstruction is hospitality to the other" (Westmoreland 4) and Leonard

Lawlor adds: "Toward the inside (hospitality) – deconstruction concerns itself with the limit or the threshold" (Westmoreland 4). Derrida adds: "I have used, and even used up, most used words in the code of hospitality, the lexicon of which consists of the words 'invite,' 'welcome,' receive 'at home' while one is 'master of one's own home' and of the threshold" (2000, 6).

Where the concept of threshold and defining the boundaries of one's home are concerned, Derrida's concept of the *arrivant* should also be mentioned. Derrida writes:

One does not expect the event of whatever, of whoever comes, arrives, and crosses the threshold – the immigrant, the emigrant, the guest, or stranger. But if the new *arrivant* who arrives is new, one must expect – without waiting for him or her, without expecting it – that he does not simply cross a given threshold. Such an *arrivant* affects the very experience of the threshold, whose possibility he thus brings to light before one even knows whether there has been an invitation, a call, a nomination, or a promise (Verheissung, Heissen, etc.). What we could here call the *arrivant*, the most *arrivant* among all *arrivants*, the *arrivant* par excellence, is whatever, whoever, in arriving, does not cross a threshold separating two identifiable places, the proper and the foreign, the proper of the one and the proper of the other. (1993, 33-34)

At the beginning of the story in this novel, the small town of Eskibahçe was the place where the Muslims and the Christians opened up their homes to each other and made sure there was always a place for a guest at their table. For some time, the inhabitants of this small town lived in some kind of liminal space, somewhere in between Turkish and Greek culture. Since the word *liminal*⁴ comes from the Latin word *limin* which means *threshold*, it brings us back to Derrida's concept of the guest, i.e. the *arrivant* who crosses the threshold of his host's home and by doing it he can define and also jeopardize the borders of that home, thus creating a conflict and causing violence.

The Muslims and the Christians let each other into their respective homes and shared with each other the sovereignty of their homes. Thus, at the same time, they all became hosts and guests or *arrivants*. In the light of Derrida's concept, when both the Muslims and the Christians crossed the threshold and entered each other's houses, they brought with themselves the wealth of their own previously acquired experience. Therefore, they affected the threshold they crossed and the family life in the home they entered. In other words, the *arrivant* or the guest with his arrival redefines the home and family space and family life he encounters upon crossing the threshold. How much they defined

⁴ Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/.../liminal> 5 January, 2017.

each other's lives is illustrated by the words of one of the locals, Iskander the Potter, who said: "Life was merrier when the Christians were still among us" (de Bernières 2). The Christians and the Muslims also defined each other's family structure and space because they were related by marriage (de Bernières 772). Philothei, a Christian girl, and Ibrahim, a Muslim boy, had been in love since they were children (de Bernières 771). His and her parents had nothing against their love as they had been more than friends "because they were all related in one way or another by marriage" (de Bernières 772). Marriages between the Muslims and the Christians were not uncommon which Iskander confirmed by saying: "With us it was the custom that although a man could not exchange his faith, the woman should take her husband's religion upon her marriage. It was understood that most often the woman kept her faith in private as long as this never became known" (de Bernières 772).

Their readiness to share the sovereignty of their homes with their neighbours created the possibility of absolute hospitality. The Turks, the Greeks, the Armenians lived side by side in this town, respecting and even accepting each other's customs and tolerating each other's differences. Iskander described it in the following way: "we were very much mixed up and, apart from the rantings of a few hotheads whose bellies were filled with raki [...], we lived together in sufficient harmony" (de Bernières 12). Their lives were intertwined. Iskander said that their town was a place "where everybody is into everybody else's business, with women swapping gossip at the wells and in the kitchens of each other's houses, and the men doing the same thing in the coffeehouses" (de Bernières 12). When Philothei was born, her mother "had drunk from a bowl engraved with verses from the Koran [...] and had slept with a cross on her belly for at least a week" (de Bernières 8). Both Christian and Muslim babies were delivered to that world by the same midwife Mihrimah Efendim (de Bernières 8), a Turkish woman, and in the same way, through the same birthing chair (de Bernières 9). The imam came to bless Philothei (de Bernières 16) and the child's mother said the baby had a small crimson blemish where the imam had kissed the infant's hand (de Bernières 16-17). According to Iskander, it proved that even the Christians believed the imam was a saint (de Bernières 17). Iskander saluted the father of the newborn child with a Muslim greeting: "Salaam aleikum" and Philothei's father accepted it as something normal and replied with a Christian greeting: "And upon you be peace" (de Bernières 11). The women who came to see the baby were hanging Bibles and Korans and blue beads and cloves of garlic all over the house where the baby was born (de Bernières 11). They all showed their respect for Mary Mother of Jesus, thinking that she protected them and brought good luck to all of them (de Bernières 7, 772). Even though it went against their religious beliefs, the Muslims sometimes even drank wine with their Christians and "caught their high spirits in the same way that one catches malaria from the chill night air" (de Bernières 2). The birth

of Philothei also showed that there was a possibility of absolute hospitality and that there was no clear distinction between the host and the guest. The guest easily became the host and vice versa. Both Muslims and Christians opened up their homes to each other, shared with their neighbours the security and authority that they had at their home, defining each other's homes and family space.

The Relationship Between the Host and the Guest

Derrida says that the host secures the house in order to “keep the outside out” and holds authority over those who may enter the home as guests and he adds that hospitality “cannot be without sovereignty of oneself over one's home, but since there is also no hospitality without finitude, sovereignty can only be exercised by filtering [...] and doing violence” (Westmoreland 5-6). Some, but not all, Muslims and Christians were ready to share with each other the sovereignty over their home town of Eskibahçe. They were, at the same time, hosts and guests to each other. This division of sovereignty worked well in the novel up to a certain point. The hospitality that Muslims and Christians extended to each other had the potential to become absolute, but they never realized that potential because some acts of violence started to appear. These acts were done by some Muslims and some Christians, who were keen to establish sovereignty over their home and to mark its boundaries strictly. But they were not ready to share that sovereignty with their neighbours. Derrida gives one explanation why the host insists on having authority and sovereignty over his home. He argues that the *arrivant* or the guest can surprise the host enough to call into question the host's identity, the very border that determines his legitimate home, the door and threshold of the host's home (Derrida 1993, 34). That was what happened in the novel when some Christians and Muslims began to feel threatened by each other's presence. First, there was verbal violence. The Christians were often called “infidels” by the Muslims (de Bernières 5). According to Iskander the Potter, these names were said:

in a manner that was formality or said with a smile, just as were their [the Christians'] deprecatory terms for us. They would call us "Turks" in order to insult us, at the time when we called ourselves "Ottomans" or "Osmanlis." Later on it turned out that we really are "Turks," and we became proud of it. (de Bernières 5)

Then, verbal violence turned into the instances of minor physical violence which seemed harmless at first: some thoughtless Christians threw lemon peel at the imam to show that they despised him (de Bernières 17). He could have had them hanged, but he decided that the adequate punishment would be to ignore

them (de Bernières 17). Christian schoolmaster Leonidas Efendi thought he should assert sovereignty over his home and hold authority over the Muslims. He thought that the region belonged to the Greeks and he told children stories that the Osmanlis had taken the land from the Greeks, and that the land was rightly theirs (de Bernières 10). He conveniently forgot that before the Greeks came to that region, the land had belonged to the Lycians (de Bernières 10). Leonidas was thought to be a bad character, stirring trouble (de Bernières 9) and stirring up resentment in children with his stories (de Bernières 10). Eventually, the situation culminated in the expulsion of all the Christians from that town (de Bernières 704).

Derrida further explains the relationship between the host and the guest:

the *hôte* who receives (the host), the one who welcomes the invited or received the *hôte* (the guest), the welcoming *hôte* who considers himself the owner of the place, is in truth a *hôte* received in his own home. He receives the hospitality that he offers in his own home; he receives it from his own home – which, in the end does not belong to him. The *hôte* as host is a guest. (Westmoreland 6)

In time tension rose in Eskibahçe as the host became the guest and finally that same guest became the hostage in his own home town. Here, it should be mentioned that Derrida points out that there is a very fine line between hospitality and hostility just as there is a very thin line between the host and the guest, meaning that hospitality can easily turn into hostility just as the host can easily become the guest or the hostage. Therefore, Derrida says that the word “hospitality” is

a word of Latin origin, of a troubled and troubling origin, a word which carries its own contradiction incorporated into it, a Latin word which allows itself to be parasitized by its opposite, *hostility*, the undesirable guest [*hôte*] which it harbors as the self-contradiction in its own body.” (2000, 3)

There is an etymological connection between the words *hospitality* and *hostile*. The word *hospitality* derives from the Latin *hospes*, meaning *host*, *guest* or *stranger* and *hospes* is formed from *hostis*, which means *stranger* or *enemy* and the word *hostile*⁵ comes from the Latin *hostis*.

Even during the history of that region the host became the guest in his own home. In ancient times, the land belonged to the people called Lycians,

⁵ Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/.../hostility> 5 January, 2017.

then came the Greeks who took the land from them and then came the Osmanlis (de Bernières 10). The example of the host becoming a hostage, who is thrown out of his own home, is the situation when the Armenians were made to leave their homes in this town (de Bernières 769). Eight years after their departure, according to Iskander, "the pashas of the great world" decided that the Muslims from Greece should come to this town and that the Christians should be deported from this town and come to live in Greece (de Bernières 769). When the Christians were expelled from Eskibahçe, their former neighbours started referring to them as Greeks. When they came to live in Greece, "their new compatriots often deprecated them as Turks" (de Bernières 777). So, the Christians soon went from being hosts to being hostages of their Turkish neighbours and then from hostages they went to become not so warmly welcomed guests in their new country. Here, we can see at work Derrida's concept of the *arrivant* as the guest who surprises his host so much that the host has the impression that his home and identity are jeopardized and he needs to defend them. In this case, the Greek hosts did it by insulting the newcomers or *arrivants*. Just like the Christians, the Muslims, who were brought from Crete to live in Eskibahçe (de Bernières 762), underwent the same transformation as they went from being hosts to becoming guests. When the Greek Turks came to live in Eskibahçe, they carried in small purses the soil of Crete (de Bernières 763), which only shows that they struggled to determine where their home was and they still felt like guests in their new home.

After the deportation of the Christians, some Muslims became hosts in the abandoned Christian houses. They broke into those houses and inside them they found wine jars and took them out to empty them in the streets (de Bernières 759). Other Muslims were gracious hosts who looked after the houses and land of their Christian neighbours (de Bernières 769-770). On the other hand, negative reciprocity occurred in Greece where most of the abandoned mosques were demolished (de Bernières 761).

The other example of the host becoming a hostage is Mehmetçik. Since he was a Christian, he was not allowed to fight for the Sultan and for the empire and because of that he ran away from home to become a brigand (de Bernières 743). Once, he had been a host who had his home and then he became a hostage of the circumstances which turned him into an outlaw. Mehmetçik himself summed up his situation: "Well, I've gone from being a slave to being a bandit" (de Bernières 745). In the end, after the deportation of the Christians, the Muslims themselves became hostages in their own town and in the life that was even more grave and melancholic without the Christians (de Bernières 2). At first, the Muslims were helpless and perplexed since they could not lead a normal life without the Christians (de Bernières 778). The town "was dying on its feet because not enough Greek Turks had arrived to fill the empty houses of the Turkish Greeks" (de Bernières 778) and "there was no pharmacist, no

doctor, no blacksmith, no saddlemaker or stone-mason" (de Bernières 778). Some Muslim artisans lost many customers when the Christians left (de Bernières 779). Consequently, the Muslims lived "amid so much absence" (de Bernières 782) and one of them "felt like a ghost in a land of ghosts" (de Bernières 782). Iskander was known as a maker of proverbs and he said: "I have noticed that when the Christians were here I invented light-hearted proverbs, but now they have gone, I invent serious ones" (de Bernières 7). He missed the Christians and he explained the reason why: "Without them our life has less variety, and we are forgetting how to look at others and see ourselves" (de Bernières 7). Therefore, it is seen here that these people of different religions defined each other's lives so much that the absence of the Christians almost paralysed the Muslims. The Christians became the mirror in which the Muslims could see their own reflection and it showed the Muslims their qualities and their flaws. The Muslims and the Christians in both Turkey and Greece forced each other to become guests and hostages in their own homes. Thus, they did not only define, they also destroyed each other's homes, family structure and space. The situation described in the novel illustrates Westmoreland's point: "The host has welcomed into his home the very thing that can overturn his sovereignty. In welcoming the new arrival, the host has brought about that which takes him hostage" (Westmoreland 7).

The Language of Hospitality

Derrida asserts that the language of hospitality "appeals to the other without condition" and he thinks that asking the guest to be able to communicate in a foreign language is usually the first violence to which foreigners are subjected (Westmoreland 5). Derrida also writes: "The first effect or first destination of language therefore involves depriving me of, or delivering me from, my singularity" (Westmoreland 5). Westmoreland concludes: "Common hospitality involves linguistic communication, which requires the distinction between individuals to be stripped away, and cancels the possibility of having absolute hospitality" (Westmoreland 5). One of the circumstances that destroyed the possibility of having absolute hospitality in Eskibahçe was the fact that everybody, including the Greeks, had to speak Turkish, "but those who could write did that in the Greek script" (de Bernières 9). The local schoolmaster insisted that the Christians should speak Greek and not Turkish and he forced all the children to learn the Greek tongue (de Bernières 10), committing an act of violence against those children by forcing them to learn a language "that to them was like chewing stones" (de Bernières 10). Here once again, it is clearly seen how difficult it is to determine who is the host and who is the guest. At one point, the Turks were hosts who imposed their language on all the Christians living in that town. Then, Karavatuk, one of the locals, assumed the role of the

guest who was forced to learn to write his Turkish language in Greek letters (de Bernières 789) so that the Greeks could understand him. Later on, he had to learn to write in Roman letters so that he could be understood by the rest of the world (de Bernières 789). Therefore, the language of hospitality in Eskibahçe did not appeal to the other without any condition. In order to receive hospitality, the Christians had to fulfil the condition of learning the Turkish language and the Muslims had to write in Greek letters. By doing it, they lost their singularity, as Derrida calls it, and, in a linguistic sense, there was not much difference between the host and the guest. Since absolute hospitality should come with no conditions attached, any possibility of having that kind of hospitality was destroyed there.

Conclusion

The analysis of the novel shows that defining and destroying one's home and family space are determined and conditioned by the relationship between the host and the *arrivant*, who is the guest here, and by the kind of hospitality that the host is ready to extend to the guest. The host wants to define the boundaries of his home so that he can establish his authority and sovereignty within those boundaries. However, there is a fine line that separates the host from the guest and hospitality from hostility. That line sometimes becomes so blurred that the host easily becomes the guest or even the hostage in his own home. Then, the host turned hostage, who is thrown out of his house, sees his home and family space being destroyed before his eyes.

It is shown that at the beginning of the story there was a possibility of absolute hospitality. In Eskibahçe people unintentionally tried to realize that possibility by being ready to share the sovereignty over their home with their neighbours. As the time went by, it was less and less probable that absolute hospitality could be achieved. In order to exercise sovereignty over his home, the host sometimes felt compelled to resort to violence and the emergence of violence ruled out any possibility of absolute hospitality. Therefore, it could be concluded that absolute hospitality is possible as a concept or idea and one can only strive to realize it. But, it turns out that the realization of that idea is impossible because the possibility of absolute hospitality turns into hospitality which comes with many conditions. In the end, the hospitality that the inhabitants of Eskibahçe extended to each other was as flawed as they were. And the people in that town had a tragic flaw because they imagined themselves to be birds, but birds without wings. Unlike real birds who knew of no boundaries, birds without wings were constrained by many rules, boundaries, conditions and restrictions (de Bernières 796). Nevertheless, the inhabitants of that town strove to achieve the impossible when they tried to fly,

flapping their arms which often caused them to fall (de Bernières 795-796). Karavatuk concluded the story with the following words:

But we are always confined to earth, no matter how far we climbed to the high places and flap our arms. Because we cannot fly, we are condemned to do things that do not agree with us. Because we have no wings we are pushed into struggles and abominations that we did not seek. (de Bernières 796)

Their attempt to fly without wings could be seen as the metaphor for the struggle to reach absolute hospitality since they both represent ideas that are impossible to achieve. But, it is worth trying to achieve even the impossible even though in the end people are forced to face the reality and take all the blows that life deals to them.

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STVARANJE I RAZARANJE DOMA I PORODIČNOG PROSTORA U ROMANU LUJA DE BERNIJERA *PTICE BEZ KRILA*

Ovaj rad analizira roman Luja de Bernijera *Ptice bez krila* u okviru Deridina koncepta gostoprimstva i njegovog koncepta koji definiše pojam *arrivant*, odnosno pojam koji se odnosi na *onog koji dolazi*. Kada je u pitanju roman *Ptice bez krila*, muslimani i hrišćani žive u slozi jedni kraj drugih u gradiću Eskibahče sve do početka rata. I jedni i drugi su istovremeno i gosti i domaćini koji se posećuju, ukazujući gostoprimstvo jedni drugima: imamova žena i hrišćanka su prijateljice, prelepa devojka, koja je hrišćanka, zaljubljena je u kozara koji je musliman.

Derida, takođe, zaključuje da *onaj koji dolazi* može da iznenadi domaćina i da dovede u pitanje granice koje određuju domaćinov zakonit dom, vrata i prag

njegovog doma, a to se upravo događa u ovom romanu. Muslimani i hrišćani, koji su istovremeno i domaćini i gosti jedni drugima, postaju učesnici tragičnog sukoba tokom Prvog svetskog rata koji je doveo do toga da su hrišćani proterani iz turskog gradića Eskibahče u Grčku, a da su muslimani isterani sa Krita i poslani da žive u Turskoj. Pre rata stanovnici ovog gradića su živeli u nekom liminalnom prostoru, odnosno međuprostoru između turske i grčke kulture. Pošto reč *liminalan* potiče od latinske reči *limin* koja označava *prag*, ona nas vraća Deridinom konceptu *arrivant*, koji je u ovom slučaju gost, tj. *onaj koji dolazi* i koji prelazi prag domaćinovog doma i svojim prelaskom može da ugrozi taj dom i da dovede do sukoba.

Ključne reči: gost, domaćin, *arrivant*, uslovno gostoprimstvo, apsolutno gostoprimstvo, jezik gostoprimstva.

BURYING THE DIPLOMAT FATHER: SHIFTING EX-YUGOSLAV SPACES IN YELENA FRANKLIN'S *A BOWL OF SOUR CHERRIES*

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Abstract: Drawing on recent research into East European diasporic and migrant writing by women, the paper explores ex-Yugoslav spaces of memory as represented in *A Bowl of Sour Cherries* (1997), a semi-autobiographical novel authored by Yugoslav-born US American writer Yelena Franklin. Following the narrative's transnational trajectories of displacement, return, and departure, the paper embarks on mapping thematic and political preoccupations that Franklin shares with other women writers who have migrated from the former Yugoslavia to the United States, where their works composed in English emerge as a strategy of self-translating, preserving, and challenging their experiences of Yugoslavia as a vanished land. Based on the identification of recurring themes in post-Yugoslav migrant prose that often deals with the traditional notions of "the Slav spirit", "brotherhood and unity", and "the magic word *abroad*", the paper attempts to offer an insight into women migrants' revisiting of stereotypical representations of their birth and adopted cultures. While the disintegration of the homeland coinciding with the death of the father figure seems to be the main focus of the novel, it may be argued that Franklin in her literary representations of ex-Yugoslav patriarchal family and society tends to invoke subversive yet powerful pathways of women's empowerment. The paper also juxtaposes the representations of shifting ex-Yugoslav and transnational spaces, as well as the notions of borders, transit visas, and nationalisms on the move.

Key words: post-Yugoslav migrant prose by women, Yugoslav-born US American, homeland, father figure, spaces of memory.

Diverse migrant narratives that have become a vital part of contemporary US literary production have both reflected and encouraged transnational trends in American literature and related scholarly work. An increasing number of research publications acknowledge the presence of migrant and diasporic writing by authors who originate from different parts of the world, including Africa, Asia, and South America, yet there is a marked absence of ongoing scholarly discussion regarding narratives by South-East European migrant women who have addressed their positions within turbulent geopolitical restructuring of the Balkans in the last several decades. Recent scholarship on East European migrant writing by women explores the issues of transnationalism and women's agency, appropriating the very terms to the specific interpretative frameworks that encourage more contextual readings of literary texts that would otherwise lose their cultural complexity. While scholars

easily recognize migrant narratives that presumably deal with restoring national identity, or with “fixation on trauma and loss” as well as the works based on rather unconvincing migrant success stories, there is a common focus on linking the texts that offer “the capacity for creating linkages and bridges” between the personal and the political within dynamic transnational contexts (Nicolaescu 12-13). The bridging texts, expressed in the form of contemporary migrant narratives, have thus “provide[d] critical clues for a better understanding of the nature and significance of new cultural identities in contemporary Europe” (Seyhan 12).

Written in English and published in the States in 1997 as part of the New American Voices series, Yelena Franklin’s semi-autobiographical novel *A Bowl of Sour Cherries*, is one such narrative that revisits personal and political insights into her family’s life within and without the borders of socialist Yugoslavia from a transnational migrant perspective. Apart from a brief plot summary, a tiny biographical entry and a blurb on the book’s cover claiming that the novel is “a stunning story about a woman’s journey to find herself and her heritage in a homeland that no longer exists” (242), very little is known about the author and her work. An extensive research into academic and other online sources fails to produce any substantial critical references about this novel and the two other ones by Franklin⁶, offering only a few hints about the author’s background. Thus we learn that Yelena Franklin was born in Zagreb, probably in the 1940s, that she travelled extensively as a child due to her father’s diplomatic career, and that she was educated in Belgrade and Paris prior to her marriage to an American. Reading the novel, however, one discovers an array of themes and preoccupations that delineate not only former Yugoslav contexts, but also offer a larger transnational map of migratory encounters between socialist Yugoslavia as the country of origin and the United States as the host or adopted country. Journeying between home and host countries, Franklin’s narrator, like other migrants worldwide, undergoes complex experiences of displacement, return, and departure, yet her diasporic position is rather peculiar since her home country Yugoslavia has ceased to exist, leaving her without primary homeland, which further complicates the narrator’s juxtapositions of troubled geopolitical and personal spaces of memory. Revisiting ex-Yugoslavia through fragmented recollections of her own childhood and the stories recounted in her ethnically mixed family and wider Yugoslav community, *A Bowl of Sour Cherries* joins a number of equally underdiscussed migrant novels by writers who were born in the former Yugoslavia and emigrated to the West before or on the brink of its disintegration. Similar to contemporary US English-writing authors of Serbian and Bosnian descent, particularly Nadja Tesich and Natasha Radojčić, Yelena

⁶ Franklin has also authored two seemingly more commercial novels, a mystery titled *Second Hand Murder* (2002) and *Piranha Times* (2008).

Franklin in her frequent references to Yugoslav and translocational spaces emerges in the 1990s as a self-translating prose writer who at the same time preserves and challenges her experiences of Yugoslavia as a vanished land. While Tesich in her Yugo-nostalgic novels laments the loss of socialist Yugoslavia, vociferously condemning US American exterior politics from her artistic and activist position in the United States, Radojčić offers a rather transnational image of Yugoslavia as a dismembered phantom space full of usable narrative fragments that reveal both advantages and drawbacks of socialism in the homeland she voluntarily left in search of her own American dream. While Tesich and Radojčić in their respective novels *Native Land* (1998) and *You Don't Have to Live Here* (2005) concentrate on their female narrators' translocational experiences of Yugoslavia through either a nostalgic homecoming or multiple border crossings, Yelena Franklin initially seems to focus more on the figure of the narrator's father as a travelling subject and the very embodiment of a partly reclaimed Yugoslav space.

Appointed by the Communist Party to represent Yugoslavia and its socialist values in the peace-building postwar world until his disillusionment with the system and eventual decision to resign, the diplomat father appears to emulate the phases of Yugoslavia's construction, well-being, challenges, and its gradual downfall. Needless to say, the disintegration of the narrator's homeland coincides with the death of the father, who during his retirement spent some time in the States and his last days in the last years of what was Yugoslavia. Although the highlighted father figure symbolizes the former Yugoslavia, its ostensibly stern socialist values and their subsequent deterioration, it may be argued that Franklin in her literary representation of Yugoslav family and society often tends to evoke the subversiveness of strong and educated women who also believed in unity and solidarity but tried to resist patriarchal impositions within families, or "the oppression within the home itself" (Funk 323).

Although the novel's plot foregrounds the father figure as the embodiment of former Yugoslav state politics, there are also many intriguing concepts and thematic preoccupations dealing not only with the father as the embodiment of Yugoslavia, but with broader migrant and transnational exchanges as well. Read as a post-Yugoslav migrant narrative, Franklin's novel embraces issues that seem characteristic for other semi-autobiographical narratives authored by writers living in exile between the spaces of homeland and hostland. According to Jasmina Lukić, post-Yugoslav literature "is characterized by strong references to life in Yugoslavia and to post-Yugoslav experiences," and is "mainly produced by (self)exiled and migrant authors" (91). As this definition is broad enough to encompass both biographical and fictional writing in their inevitable diversities, it often includes particular thematic preoccupations that can be identified as common to most of the semi-autobiographical novels by women. It could be argued that some of the

preoccupations are: the author's engagement with the fall of communism, the family's social position in the former Yugoslavia, the border-crossing trauma, revisiting Yugoslav spaces through temporary return, Yugoslav harsh humor and tourism, nationality stereotypes and nationalisms, frequent references to mother-daughter and sisterly bonds within patriarchy, pronounced contrasts and conflicts between the migrant's homeland and hostland, as well as the blessings and costs of Westernization.

In *A Bowl of Sour Cherries*, the narrator's engagement with the meaning and fall of communism is partly based on her parents' understanding of their social position in the former Yugoslavia. Through her fragmented childhood memories, the narrator observes early differences between her mother's and father's approaches to living communism, disclosing the father's snobbishness and arrogance that the mother succinctly summarizes in a rhetorical question: "What kind of Communist walks around as if he had servants walking behind him?" (73) This nutshell observation, which mainly points at the father having "royal" treatment in the family while the mother works 24/7, is also applicable to Radojčić's depiction of a Yugoslav ambassador father whose bourgeois manners and racist attitudes discriminate against coloured people in communist Cuba (35).

Regardless of his unjustified *pater familias* privileges, the father in Franklin's novel is positively connoted and remembered through some rather nostalgic flashbacks of the narrator's childhood. Franklin likewise offers a loose chronology of the father's political orientation, ranging from his idealistic beliefs in his Communist mission to his more mature philosophical insights into the essence of every social ideology. Although there are authentic depictions of the father's social activism, first in the underground Communist Party, then in his engagement with the resistance movement, and later through an active involvement in the building of socialism, more space is reserved for descriptions of his subsequent political isolation that was looked upon as his "political suicide" (99). In one of his final monologues inspired by various media spins and propaganda, he exhibits his utter disorientation in the world of enumerating pluralisms:

Capitalism, socialism, communism! There's no fucking difference! You know why? [...] I'll tell you why. Because, like God, they're all man's creations. Social alchemy! Man's got the formula, all right. It's the ingredients that are missing. You think history is about progress? Hah! It's about technology. Technology helps us do the same thing over and over, better and better. And we're getting frighteningly good at what we do best. (193)

It becomes obvious that the father's death just before the warring 1990s saves him from another, very poignant type of social alchemy, leaving his Yugo-American daughter relieved and with more space for her own reclamation of Yugoslavia, both as her native land and a land that vanished irretrievably. In the process of reclaiming her own past, Franklin's narrator attempts to outline her father's political identity by placing the scattered fragments of his biography into broader transnational contexts. Briefly adopting a historically linear approach, the outline reconstructs the father's fluctuating position within the Party and his wider community. Portrayed as a Jew whose national identity is never discussed publicly, an aspiring intellectual in the society in which "intellectualism is neither a common insult nor a compliment" (63), a young idealist nicknamed Dandy who risked his life to prove his loyalty to the Party that once expelled and readmitted him, and a "cherubic, likable old Commie" (65) who much later attended social gatherings in the States, the narrator's father is presented as a social outsider and individualist although his early political identity is constructed by the forces of collective idealism characteristic of the first stages of building Yugoslavia. While embracing his early idealism both privately and as a member of the Communist Party, the father observes the constraints of his position within the Party, comparing its ideology to the values espoused by his own father, who was likewise "stern, narrow, doctrinaire, demanding and strictly unphilosophical" (65). Although such ideology offered him a familiar structure and a promise of continuing safety, particularly within the institution of family, where his authority remained supported by the laws of patriarchy, the father is outlined as a disruptive other whose strangeness lies in his eventual inability to comply with any ideology that has worked against both his national identity and his idealistic convictions about personal and political freedom. Defining the final state of his ideological confusion as a "madness [that] is also a form of guilt" (123), the narrator probes into how her father's political utopianism has corrupted his private space and a few family members for whose subsequent deaths he felt entirely responsible. In the process of reclaiming her ambiguous family heritage, the narrator revisits the homeland spaces of Yugoslavia, mapping the signposts that reconstruct the story of a culture envisioned and symbolised by her dying father. The process consists of (re)crossing spatial and temporal borders between homeland and hostland in an urge to transfer and somehow preserve the remains of the country embodied in the man that once epitomized its brotherhood-and-unity enthusiasm. Transporting her ailing retired father from the United States to Yugoslavia, mostly for practical reasons, such as high hospital insurance costs in the US, the narrator hopes for the father's reconnection with his native land, projecting her own nostalgic impulses on his rather reluctant return to a country he disowned much earlier.

Crossing borders to revisit the long-neglected places of memory just before the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the narrator illustrates her in-between identity position through several episodes that cast additional light on the female travelling subject and her own account of nostalgia. One of the episodes takes place at the Italian-Yugoslav border, where the narrator's problem with obtaining the visa to her birth country reflects both her foreignness and otherness in relation to the notions of belonging and transgressing the established order. The narrator travels with her American-born son Alexander, and while she is initially refused entry to Yugoslavia despite her valid American passport, Alexander passes as a "natural American," which officially confirms his only and true national identity. Unlike him, the narrator is a "naturalized" Yugoslav-born American and a mother of an American, whose hybrid identity seems to pose a threat to the customs officials. *Foreign* or uncategorized due to her not really belonging to either Yugoslavia or America, and *other* or unrecognized owing to her "turncoat mother" appearance, the narrator wonders whether the officials punish her "for the lack of patriotism or because they envied [her] successful expatriation" (33). Apart from illustrating the obstacles created by the returning narrator's dual citizenship at the entrance to the country of her origin, the visa episode highlights the author's concern related to the travelling subject who is female and therefore unconventional within traditional narratives of displacement. While evoking random scenes and events from her past, the narrator inserts fragments from the history of her homeland that mostly pertain to successful journeys undertaken by men, be it her diplomat father, fellow immigrants, her own son, or the pre-socialist Yugoslavia's king, who "packed his bags and departed with the first whistle of bombs falling out of the sky" (44).

The contemporary female migrating subject delineated through the narrator's reminiscences often works against the traditional definition of an ordinary or proverbial male immigrant who leaves his family behind, either to provide for them from a distance, or never to return. The new subject, or a new female cosmopolitan hero whose journey is not linear, becomes constructed through many paradoxes, some of which rely on a deeper and more informed understanding of immigrant suffering and nostalgia (Hron 4), or on exploring the notions of nomadic consciousness, hybridity and tropes of mobility. In reference to the new travelling subject, Rosi Braidotti defines it as a nomad, who "never takes on fully the limits of one national, fixed identity", whereupon her identity becomes transgressive and interconnective, ready to transcend the national and offer "a political hope for a point of exit from phallogocentrism" (33). While migration for such a subject would signify a general freedom from dominant narratives, the migrant's identity "also includes emigrant's perception of the past," which is "seen as *unfinished* and thus changeable", yet the necessary quest for the past as something left "on the other side of *physical* border"

represents “a permanent and fundamental imprint of an émigré habitus” (Matijevic 40). Negotiating with the past becomes more meaningful when its topics are gendered and their narratives open to transnational frameworks of interpretation, which additionally unpacks, challenges, and destabilizes “static notions of racial, gendered, and sexual selves” in the constitution of social subjects (Camp and Thomas 6-7).

Throughout the novel, Franklin openly genders the issues of travel and migration, emphasizing the freedom and ease with which men decide to cross borders, while women are depicted as dependent on men and more grounded. For that reason, the introduction of the narrator who offers her own representations of native and adopted countries, whether they are stereotypical, exceptional, or revolutionary, represents a diversion from the narratives told by the proverbial male immigrant. The visa episode thus initiates a series of border crossings arranged by the narrator who achieves her agency by mediating between cultures, time periods, and gendered spaces of memory and travelling. Interestingly enough, the very episode illustrates multiple mediations by simply juxtaposing different personal approaches to memory and travel that for a moment lead to estrangement between the narrator and her son. While Alexander “is thoroughly American in that the mode of transportation excites him more than the destination,” the Balkan woman who mothered him hardly resists “succumb[ing] to the hysterical mix of joy and melancholy that’s making [her] body tremble with contradiction” (60). While the young man is rather indifferent towards the approaching first encounter with Yugoslavia as the faraway place that represents his mother’s origin and identity, the mother experiences her homecoming journey with a life-altering intensity. Although their different emotional states might seem self-explanatory in terms of their (non)existing spatial and temporal bonds with the place, it can be argued that the son’s detachment from part of his own origin stems from perpetuating gender imbalances and stereotypical roles in in both native and immigrant settings. It is well illustrated by the narrator’s juxtaposition of her marriage to an American and her immigrant sister’s marriage to a Yugoslav compatriot. While the narrator’s sister Zlata teaches her daughter her and her husband’s native language, her own son speaks only English, which creates an additional rift between him and Yugoslavia. The narrator’s failure to preserve her mother tongue within her family can be ascribed to her reluctance to force the other language upon her child because she perhaps “deemed [her] native tongue and land, [her] people and [her] heritage, unworthy of [her] son” (177), but it is more likely that the American husband did not see the language learning as a necessity, which influenced the mother’s decision to renounce her initial teaching idea and conform to the impositions of yet another *pater familias*. Not only is her native language excluded from her American family’s ways of communication, but also her memories that are retold and expressed in

English. Convinced by her husband Sam that her non-linear storytelling loses something in translation, the narrator speculates that her fragmented “stories aren’t stories at all” but some “cracked and crazy tales” whose “importance [and] circular logic” are allegedly understood only by therapists (141). Without the husband’s more profound understanding of her rootedness in her native culture, the narrator experiences widening language and cultural discrepancies within her American family. For that reason, the narrator attempts to detach from American views of her homeland and offer her own presentation of the inevitably fragmented memorabilia. While the novel is somewhat superficially reviewed as “an essentially shapeless narrative redeemed by intermittent vivid detail and especially by Franklin’s affectionate portrayal of Anka’s stoic father” (Kirkus, par. 1)⁷, it appears to offer a more complex storyline structure that is conditioned by Franklin’s frequent references to the immigrant narrator’s gendered juxtaposition of homeland and hostland cultures.

One of Franklin’s strategies for comparing transnational spaces emerges through her intentional deployment of gender and other stereotypes to help the narrator reclaim her partial loss of linguistic identity and homeland space that existed within the borders of Yugoslavia. The narrator’s re-encounter with her native land is thus replete with depictions of stereotypes that evoke her past experiences of a Balkan collectivity expressed through the concept of “Balkan body language” (60). By describing her own uncontrollable emotional state as equivalent to the specific body language of her broader native area, the narrator highlights her border crossing and repeated entrance into Yugoslavia, where she anticipates familiarity with people and culture. The very concept of the body language that maps and preserves the unverballed space between countries and languages is later followed by other origin-marked concepts that are defined as area-specific and therefore unique. The concepts such as “the Slav soul”, “Slav spirit” (95), and “the sloppy, Slav heat” (151) either target a collective spirituality or brotherhood-and-unity collectivity, or they express the unique physicality of the area. As the narrator reminds herself of these and similar stereotypical concepts, she temporarily merges with the land of her origin and detaches from her American identity. As she becomes more re-accustomed to her original culture, the narrator is more aware of certain national(istic) stereotypes prevailing among the peoples of Yugoslavia. This can be illustrated by rather ironic depictions of some of the proverbially typical characteristics of Yugoslav nations and nationalities in the 1970s, where Franklin’s juxtapositions are not only based on stereotypes linked to a particular socialist republic, but also contain subversive inversions of them. Playing thus with the concept of Balkan heroes, which usually refers to men and their

⁷ Interestingly enough, the book review mentions the name Anka as the narrator’s name, while the narrator of this novel is, in fact, nameless, and Anka is her mother’s name.

prominent roles in battles and wars in the Balkan area, the narrator states that “the truest Balkan heroes, at least in my opinion, are the Montenegrin women, whose lot is to act on their men’s lofty, hindsight-inspired motions for reaction” (88). While Franklin here refers exclusively to women from one of the six former Yugoslav republics, she offers illustrations of patriarchal gender inequalities throughout the novel, pointing at instances of women’s oppression within both national and transnational contexts. While social inferiority of women may not be recognized as a mainstream stereotype, particularly in cases where gender roles are firmly entrenched in patriarchal values, it is obvious that stereotypes which target national identity influence representations of Balkan women as well. Although representations of such stereotypes may at first seem solely humorous and harmless, they eventually recognize the stereotypes’ transformation from purely regional ones to nationalistic stereotypes. Revisiting Yugoslavia just before its disintegration, the narrator observes the consequences of mutation of stereotypes expressed through scenes of overt hatred among nations and nationalities that up to then shared the common space and uniform ideology. She observes that previously dormant and insignificant differences in national identity have become increasingly pronounced, leading to changes in people’s and street names, and culminating in self-loathing of ethnically mixed individuals and families, who suddenly want to undergo a blood transfusion in order to belong to a single ethnicity (157, 238). The narrator’s own mixed ethnicity, or Serbian-Jewish origin by birth, coupled with her post-migrant American identity, additionally complicates her Yugoslav-American nationality, challenging her previously utopian views of both homeland and hostland. Her emerging transnational detachment from single or double national identities increasingly clashes with the notion of freedom inherited from her parents and other compatriots who survived the Second World War and participated in the creation of socialist Yugoslavia. Defining the war as “the matrix experience” through which survivors viewed the world around them and their life’s purpose (67), Franklin portrays the diplomat father through representations of survivors’ achievements and their eventual expatriation.

As with other migrant novels that deal with former Yugoslav and American lifestyles, the representations of homeland and hostland seem to be equally ambivalent. While the notion of freedom in Yugoslavia stems from its postwar well-being, American freedom is usually linked to “American distances [that] are beyond comprehension for most Yugoslavs” and to immigrants’ financial prosperity (166). The main paradox lies in frequent representations of former Yugoslavs who have chosen to pursue their capitalist American dream regardless of their socialist ideology. However, once the diplomat father acknowledges his disillusionment with socialism, he categorically repudiates any social system and governments that engage in controlling their citizens through

empty promises and fear. His daughter, on the other hand, criticizes both social systems and private lives, perceiving that “familiarity” and lack of privacy are “the root of the rot in [Yugoslavia]” (170) as well as a “stubborn residue of the past” (215). While the father continues to live in a complex relationship with his communist and partisan past, the daughter recognizes the importance of *moving on* from the past, adopting some American strategies of facing traumatic experiences through seeking professional help. What ultimately challenges the narrator’s smug American identity is not only the death of her father just prior to the breakup of Yugoslavia, but the way US American media and their “glib commentators” misinterpret the overall political situation in her native land:

The war is a droning news story, a staple of global consternation. Talking heads twist their tongues around the unpronounceable names, unspeakable acts of hatred, rearranging and redistributing American righteousness over footage that makes domestic problems seem laughable. [...] “Are you worried about family back there?” people ask in calming tones. The question infuriates me. Why is that they think immigrants only leave family behind when they come for their piece of the American pie? (222)

Faced with the loss of homeland and disappointed in the hostland she subtly accuses of instigating the 1990s war, the narrator revisits the Yugoslav space once again, comparing her rather comfortable life in America with the lives of fearless Yugoslav women who “carr[ie]d heavy loads” with stoicism. Obtaining new insights into her own “homeless” position, she finds her identification with Yugoslavia and America utterly impossible, stating that she herself “declare[s] war on both [her] houses” (224). Traumatized by the political events and subsequent conflicts that leave her seemingly rootless and without grounding, stability, and safety, the narrator renounces her belonging to any tradition or set of beliefs. The clash between the two homes or cultures she temporarily refuses to identify with leads to her own breakdown, followed by an acute need to recollect and reclaim the fragments of her past.

Mourning her father, the narrator mourns her own concept of Yugoslavia based on her equally rough and idyllic childhood spent with the rest of her family and relatives. But she also mourns the death of her mother and other women silenced in societies that are ruled by patriarchal men. While the father is buried in Yugoslavia without expected financial support from the state despite his partisan, state-building and diplomatic merits, he is at least formally recognised as a worthy citizen at his state-organized funeral ceremony. Unlike him, the mother gets buried under a false name in order to be accepted into the graveyard of the father’s ethnicity. Self-effacing and nameless, the narrator’s

mother stands for all Balkan women without political and professional power. In her elaborate representations of women in socialist Yugoslavia, Franklin offers numerous illustrations of silencing women and wives through the acts of physical, mental and emotional abuse that are in many patriarchal settings perceived as acceptable means of controlling women and restricting their movements and social connections outside family. Drawing on Balkan men's stereotypical denial of frequent aggressiveness towards women in their vicinity, Franklin shows how educated men are falsely proud of being verbal abusers only, and not some illiterate wife-beaters from disadvantaged parts of the country (89). In the same context, she also voices highly educated and professional women, who become aware of their precarious position in the world that belittles their abilities and efforts. Thus the narrator's friend Zlata speaks of herself:

But look at me. I'm forty-seven, an M.D. in charge of all the geriatric facilities in Zagreb, in direct control of at least four hundred patients and close to two hundred nurses and various technicians, but at the absolute mercy of my father and husband. (119)

Whereas doctor Zlata feels at least temporarily empowered in the presence of the Yugo-American narrator who offers her the necessary illusion of women abroad enjoying freedom in full possession of their bodies, fathers and husbands are portrayed as personalities who are predisposed to ruling the society and family simply by being male. Protected by the gender dominant position in his own country, the diplomat father resembles dignified male representatives from other countries and their "automatic affinity spr[ings] from a mutual respect for patriarchy" (140). Zlata's professionally respected husband feels likewise safe not only as a doctor and the head of family, but also as a domestic violator. From a number of similar illustrations, the novel seems to confirm the existing insights into the levels of women's emancipation in socialist Yugoslavia, where women worked double shifts, at work and home (Coulson 1993), and where "the home [was] the site of patriarchal relations" (McDowell 2003) in which women had to assume their conventional domestic position within family. Women's almost invisible confinement to the domestic sphere and their muffled anger are partly illustrated by a gender-marked definition of famous "Dalmatian songs of sea" that might as well illustrate all other songs and artistic forms of expression in the Balkans:

In a man's throat, the Dalmatian accent is the sound of good humor. In a woman's, it's clipped anger and disappointment. Dalmatian songs of sea, fishing, wine and love are for and about men. Women have little to sing about. (129)

Offering authentic accounts of women employed in her home country, Yelena Franklin revisits mother-daughter and sisterly bonds affected by persistent gender stereotypes. The novel pays tribute to the father figure as the embodiment of former Yugoslavia, its collective mythology, and the narrator's private nostalgia for the lost space, but it also outlines the author's intention to represent interdependent positions of domestic and migrant women who are interchangeably victimized, enraged, and empowered. In spite of the strong presence of the Balkan men who tend to perpetuate old divisions between patriots and immigrants, ensuring that native women conform to traditional gender expectations according to which an independent woman faces social exclusion, Franklin in *A Bowl of Sour Cherries* offers subversive yet powerful representations of women's solidarity and empowerment. A strong potential of female bonding across borders is symbolically represented by the sisterly triad in which the narrator mediates between two Zlatas; her alienated sister who also resides in the US, and her homeland friend from Zagreb. While estrangement and misunderstanding between the narrator and her sister reflect "a microcosm of the internecine war that is rumbling ominously between Belgrade and Zagreb" (203), the narrator's reunion with Zagreb Zlata promises freedom and new beginnings. The slightly surreal scene of laughter, in which the two friends, almost naked, spend the night "scream[ing] at the thunder" and "push[ing] brooms against the water-stained canvas over [their] heads" (118) is combined with descriptions of their relaxed arm-in-arm walk down the street and insightful conversations about position of women at home and abroad, which forms an overall picture of a decades-long friendship that has survived all external challenges.

Franklin's female characters are thus at the same time products of their patriarchal heritage and "communist-patriarchal legacy" (Papić 154), eternally guilty and submissive mothers who are taught to please others, professional self-sabotaging individuals, cynical performance artists, transnational migrants, self-exiles, and witches. If Yugo-nostalgia is defined as "a peculiar subgenre of the postcommunist nostalgia stretching from Europe to Central Asia, China, and beyond" (Božović 6), the characters' nostalgia is equally transportable and transnational, and it "does not pretend to rebuild the mythical place called home". Describing the unpretentious type of nostalgia as "ironic, fragmentary, and singular," Svetlana Boym makes a clear distinction between utopian and ironic nostalgia. While utopian nostalgia symbolically acts towards rebuilding the mythical home, ironic nostalgia accepts "the paradoxes of exile and displacement" along with artistic and social estrangement primarily because "its *nostos* could exist in the plural as geographical, political, and aesthetic homes" (Boym 241). Although Franklin's characters disappear, get buried, or just disown their familiar and faraway homes, transnational spaces of memory with their

specific local and global preoccupations, utopias and ironies, preserve the past and revise it through the narrative that is personal, shifting, and plural.

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OPRAŠTANJE OD OCA DIPLOMATE: REVIZIJA PROSTORA BIVŠE JUGOSLAVIJE U ROMANU *ZDJELA VIŠANJA* YELENE FRENKLIN

Pozivajući se na aktuelna istraživanja u oblasti migrantske književnosti koju stvaraju žene u dijaspori, ovaj rad bavi se reprezentacijom ex-Yu prostora sjećanja u poluautobiografskom romanu *Zdjela višanja* (*A Bowl of Sour Cherries*, 1997) Yelene Franklin, američke autorke jugoslovenskog porijekla. Sagledavanjem načina na koje transnacionalni pravci premještanja, povratka i odlaska određuju narativnu strukturu romana, vrši se mapiranje tematskih i političkih preokupacija koje se zapažaju ne samo kod Franklin, nego i kod ostalih književnica koje su migrirale iz bivše Jugoslavije u Sjedinjene Države, gdje njihova djela na engleskom jeziku predstavljaju strategiju samoprevođenja, prezervacije i preispitivanja ličnih iskustava Jugoslavije kao nepostojećeg zavičaja. Kroz identifikaciju učestalih tema u post-jugoslovenskoj migrantskoj prozi koja se nerijetko osvrće na značenje tradicionalnih pojmova kao što su *slavenska duša*, *bratstvo i jedinstvo* i *magična fraza "u inostranstvu"*, nastoje se ponuditi uvidi u načine na koje autorke perpetuiraju ili revidiraju stereotipne reprezentacije kulturnog prostora zemlje porijekla i zemlje prebivališta. Iako djeluje da se roman usredsređuje na uporedno odvijanje dezintegracije zavičaja i umiranja figure oca, zapaža se da Franklin u svojim književnim predstavama patrijarhalne porodice i društva nastoji da ukaže na potencijal subverzivnih, ali moćnih, puteva osnaživanja žena. Ovim radom takođe se upoređuju reprezentacije promjenjivih ex-jugoslovenskih i transnacionalnih prostora, kao i pojmovi granica, tranzitnih viza i nacionalizama u pokretu.

Ključne riječi: postjugoslovenska ženska migrantska proza, Amerikanke jugoslovenskog porijekla, zavičaj, figura oca, prostori sjećanja.

HOME AND IDENTITY IN ELIF SHAFAK'S *THE SAINT OF INCIPIENT INSANITIES*

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Abstract: In her debut novel in English, Turkish author Elif Shafak investigates the lives of three foreign students in Boston in order to explore the notions of community and alienation while tackling issues about language, religion, and culture. This paper focuses on the themes of migration, expatriation and "trans-culturalism" while it cross-examines and challenges the established boundaries of "home," "nation" and "identity." *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* develops around the relations of a group of international students in Boston, particularly the relationship between Ömer, a graduate student from Turkey, and Gail, his eccentric, manic-depressive American girlfriend with Jewish roots, who later becomes his wife but commits suicide by jumping from the Bosphorus Bridge, which she describes as the "the perfect place of inbetweenness." In her novel, Elif Shafak explores migrant groups' or individuals' processes of coming to terms with their "new homes" and its marks upon their identity through their multicultural experiences and interactions. Thus, this paper will look at the ways in which the novel puts on show the variety and adaptability of identity, whose conception as such challenges monolithic, essentialist and totalizing discourses of home and identity in the context of nation, race and ethnicity. Like most of her characters in *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*, Shafak is a foreigner, not only to America where she teaches at the University of Arizona, but also to her native Turkey. Having grown up most of her life in Western Europe, she is innately coordinated to the notion of names, nationality, and racism – elements that are tied together under "identity," which she believes "sets barricades among humanity, dividing us into different flocks and sub-flocks."

Key words: home, identity, nation, cosmopolitanism, migrancy.

The fiction and the narrative style of Elif Shafak, is known to blend Western and Eastern traditions of storytelling by bringing together various stories of minorities, immigrants, women, subcultures, youth and "global souls." As Manuel Gogos puts it, she rather consciously "plays with hybrid cultural clichés as well as with reader expectations arising from our cultural and linguistic conditioning," coming to a conclusion that "this intention, however, is perhaps the reason why in many scenes her characters remain a shade less than lifelike" (*Exile as a Metaphysical Problem*, Quantra.de). Through her cosmopolitan novels, such as *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*, she questions themes of, culture, nationality, hybridity, exile, home and belonging; themes that render her one of the most prominent Turkish authors of her generation. In one of her

interviews, she compares her past to the *Tuba* tree, which according to an old Islamic narrative is a tree whose roots are in heaven and are spread up in the air. She says: "I do have roots, but my roots are not in one place, neither in the ground nor in the air. I'm connected to different cultures, and that's, I think, part of the reason why I believe it's possible to be multicultural, multilingual and multifaith" (*Linguistic Cleansing*, NPQ.org). Therefore, the aim of this article is to study the novel through which the reader encounters the expressions, manifestations and the chances for establishing multiple kinds of belongings while addressing the interrelated issues of migration and trans-nationalism in a postcolonial, globalized and multicultural society.

The central characters in the novel are Ömer, Abed and Piyu – three foreign students who have recently arrived in the United States and therefore share a flat in Boston – their "American" girlfriends who share a similar anxiety caused by the same ambivalence about belonging. Omer is a 26-year old PhD student in political science from Istanbul, who easily adapts to his new *home*, and falls in love with the bisexual, suicidal, intellectual chocolate maker Gail. Unlike Ömer, Gail is an American who feels absolutely displaced in her homeland and moves from one obsession to another in an effort to find solid ground. Ömer is addicted to alcohol, coffee and cigarettes. In addition, he is a Muslim who consumes pork products, much to the disappointment of his more pious Moroccan roommate, Abed. He tries to counter the flow of time by avoiding clocks, and measuring time by the duration of the songs he listens to. Abed is the Moroccan roommate who pursues a degree in biotechnology, and deals with Omer's uncontrollable behavior, and the stereotypes of Arabs in America, while struggling to preserve the connection with his girlfriend back in Morocco, and his mother's unexpected visit, on top of all. He suffers from insomnia caused by a jinni that haunts him because *it* was denied food by his mother when she was pregnant with him. Piyu, the Spanish roommate, studies to become a dentist while being stuck in a passionless relationship with a Mexican American girl named Alegre, whose enthusiasm for cooking overpasses the fervor with which she vomits all she eats. Piyu is a pious Catholic, who because of his religious convictions refuses to have sex with Alegre, who, in turn, takes this rejection as a sign of her fatness. To demonstrate her devotion to her boyfriend, she comes to the house every day to cook for the three friends, but she never eats anything with them. The other female characters, Debra Ellen Thompson, and Gail/Zarpandit are a lesbian couple who met as students at Mount Holyoke, and now own a chocolate store in Boston. Debra and Alegre are in the same therapy group for eating disorders.

Like most of the characters in *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*, Elif Shafak is a foreigner, not only to America where she is a professor at the University of Arizona, but to her native Turkey as well. Having grown up for most of her life in Western Europe, she almost naturally deals with the issue of "identity" which in

turn is closely related to the notion of names, nationality, and racism – which she believes "sets barricades among humanity, dividing us into different flocks and sub-flocks." In this respect she has thrown these eccentric inhabitants of the "global village" together under one roof and lets them discuss such matters as the concept of fate and the cultural relativity of fasting periods. They are encircled in what is called "life", trying to fit in, find acceptance, largely with themselves, as much as each other.

Özlem Görümlü observes that it is becoming increasingly apparent that the idea of an "intercultural identity" being the main characteristic of the post-national era has been more significant in all types of relationships than the existing concepts of cultural identities. The binary schema of "familiar" vs. "foreign" she claims constitutes the basis of this notion. "In other words, a person does not become a 'foreigner' or a 'stranger' in new cultural contexts anymore. They establish positive relationships due to overcoming the constraints of their own cultural identities." Further, she asserts that "on the individual level, such an identity must be used in the right sense to avoid those conflicts which result from getting away from your own cultural values" and the possibilities of being aware of the dynamic dialectic of transformation via trans-cultural experiences against the practicability of the concept of intercultural identity is still ambiguous (270). In this respect, she refers to Kath Woodward as she provides the link between an idealistic conception of the issue to the intercultural identity and its paradoxical nature:

The interrelationship between the personal and the social involves negotiation. People reconstruct their own identities, even within the constraints of poverty. Through the collective action of social movements, of class-based action, and through asserting ethnic identities and separate national identities within a multicultural society, people reshape the social structures which restrict them. Even at the level of the individual, through body projects, it is possible to recreate our identities through transforming our bodies, by getting fit, by challenging stereotypes. (qtd. in Görümlü)

Apparently, it is the extent to which the individual is both shaping and being shaped through a mixture of cultural codes that provides the basis for offering a multi-dimensional system for explaining the linkage between identity experience and other aspects of cross-cultural adaptation.

The Saint of Incipient Insanities consists of four parts, which is of crucial significance in understanding how Shafak puts forward the paradoxical journey of different inter-cultural identities and the notion of home in question. The novel opens with a quotation from Rumi's *Mathnawi*, Book 11 (*The Cause of a*

Bird's Flying and Feeding with a Bird That Is Not of Its Own Kind) which indeed justifies this confirmation:

I saw a crow running about with a stork
 I marveled long and investigated their case,
 in order that I might find the clue as to what it was that they had in
 common .
 When amazed and bewildered, I approached them,
 Then indeed I saw that both of them were lame.

So, the opening section of the novel indicates a less polarized notion of identity and belonging which paves the way for a more tolerant and accepting version of the rigid concepts such as national identity and belonging and a rather fluid idea of home, one that overpasses borders. As readers, we come across Rumi's sense of "universal love and brotherhood" at the very beginning of the novel. In this regard, a quotation that describes the experiences of Ömer, the protagonist in Elif Shafak's *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*, within the frame of *belonging* and *home* is significant:

When you leave your homeland behind, they say, you have to renounce at least one part of you. If that was the case, Ömer knew exactly what he had left behind: his dots. Back in Turkey, he used to be ÖMER ÖZSİPAHİLİOĞLU. Here in America, he had become OMAR OZSİPAHİLİOĞLU. His dots were excluded for him to be better included. After all, Americans, just like everyone else, relished familiarity—in names they could pronounce, sounds they could resonate, even if they didn't make much sense one way or the other. Yes, few nations could perhaps be as self-assured as an American in reprocessing the names and the surnames of foreigners. (*The Saint*, 5)

A newcomer, Ömer is not supposed to feel at home in Boston. The appropriation of his name and his life in many ways reflects instability and rootlessness caused by the loss of the dots in his name. In his isolated state that is in vacuum he suffers from feelings of alienation on the one side and a feeling of belonging on the other. In Görümlü's words, "there lies a creeping paralysis that saturates every level of existence from which no variation is possible without consequences" (272).

"Lost" was precisely what he was, and what he had been more than anything for the last five, ten, fifteen years of his life [...] a graduate student of political science unable to accommodate himself either inside the torrent of *politics* or on the little island of *scientists*; a new-to-the-job

husband finding it hard to breathe amid the flora and fauna of the marital institution; an expatriate who retained a deep sense of not being at home here, but not knowing where that home was anymore, even if he had had one sometime in the past; a born Muslim who wanted to have nothing to do with Islam or with any religion whatsoever; a staunch agnostic less because he denied knowledge of God but he denied God knowledge of himself. (*The Saint*, 14)

One of the problems basically, seems to be related to having no definite identity; he loses the reference points that can define him. In the external world, his bonds are so loose that there is nothing which Ömer's identity can be based on. Due to his heavy exposure to popular culture and American music while back in Turkey, "in spite of what many Americans would presume, this foreigner was better acquainted with their culture than with his own" (Saint, 75). When Ömer arrives in America, "he felt simultaneously a foreigner in a foreign land and yet that the place he'd arrived at was somehow *not that foreign*" (*The Saint*, 74).

What America did to the conventional stranger-in-a-strange-land correlation was to kindly twist it upside down. In other parts of the world, to be a newcomer meant you had now arrived at a new place where you didn't know the ways and hows, but you could probably and hopefully learn most, if not all, in the fullness of time. In coming to America for the first time, however, you retained a sense of arriving at a place not *that* new, since you felt you already knew most, if not all, there was to know about it, and ended up unlearning your initial knowledge in the fullness of time. (*The Saint*, 73)

Indeed, although Ömer took pride in his sentiment that as a foreigner he was "better acquainted with their culture than with his own" thanks to the "S factors," meaning Seinfeld, The Simpsons, Saturday Night Live, South Park, the Sundance Film Festival, among others (74-75). Özlem Öğüt Yazıcıoğlu argues that "Ömer's stance can be easily compared to the West's imagination of the East, except that the parts are reversed and Ömer who is assumed to be an Easterner does the imagining and claims the knowledge," adding that his discovery "was a delusion quite similar to the West's deluded claims to know its 'others' and that America is by no means a homogenous entity that can be reduced to certain abstractions" (Yazıcıoğlu, 63). It goes without saying that Ömer undergoes deep moral and psychological problems that further lead him into a personal identity crisis that are a result of the bewilderment and the paradox of human existence. This existential anxiety that he goes through in

order to achieve the freedom necessary to sustain a self-definition further provoke him to decide to take on a nomadic life.

Nomads were noble and restless. They were neither infatuated with the doctrine of a "better future" that kept gorging on the insatiable lust of capitalist consumption, nor entrapped in a good-old-days fetishism that required piling up sentimental relics of an unsentimental past. On the saddle of a nomad's horse there was no room for memento mori, family albums, childhood photos, love letters, or adolescence diaries – each dead long ago but never allowed to rest in peace, no, none of those sappy shackles. Only freedom that merits the name, so pure and plain, could ride a nomad's horse. (*Saint*, 19)

As Görümlü observes, "Omer does not feel allegiance to the institutions that mark his personal and collective history, be it nation, religion and patriarchy." In *Imagined Communities* (1991), Benedict Anderson defines the nation as "an imagined political community" to the extent that "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (6). The twenty-first century is characterized by interactions of a new order and intensity that are marked by transnational migration and mass-media. This could be seen as a process by which the significance of the *nation state* has steadily given way to international structural formations, globalization has generated what can be understood as post-national imagined communities. Referring to and further elaborating on Anderson's notion of imagined community, in *Modernity at Large* (1996) Arjun Appadurai considers the different ways in which communities are brought into being in this new and complex environment. In particular, Appadurai discusses the altered significance of the concept of locality in relation to the creation of "imagined communities" in this globalised world to draw attention to the idea that communities are continually reinvented or reimagined in the face of new developments (41-42).

In this respect, Doğangün concludes that "the changing nature of belonging under the pressure of globalization has led to the question of what it means to be a citizen of the world, and how to underline the importance of diversity" (125), adding that, "to be a cosmopolitan is usually taken to mean the refusal to be defined by one's local origins and group membership but rather by one's commitment to humanity as a whole." As articulated by the Enlightenment, it implies an impulse to be rootless. What should be noted that the ideals of having no loyalty to any particular community, being capable of renouncing identity, being motivated by universal values and the capacity to be

mobile are also a function of belonging to an elite class. As Aihwa Ong rightly observes, this class stratification is intertwined with global systems of production as well as the differences in the power of mobile and non-mobile subjects. According to Ong, ignoring these circumstances "gives the misleading impression that everyone can take equal advantage of mobility and modern communication and that trans-nationality has been liberatory, in both spatial and political senses, for all people" (11).

Another concern with respect to the concept of multiple belongings is related to the way globalization is conceived. John Tomlinson defines globalization as "the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependencies that characterize material, social, economic and cultural life in the modern world" (352). Evidently, the United States of America has been at the centre, setting and consolidating its global sphere of influence in many debates concerning globalization. Doğangün refers to some prominent cultural and social theorists of the 1990s who claimed that globalization was actually "Americanization" (Latouche 1996), "McDonaldisation" (Ritzer 1993) in universalist disguise (125). As Elif Shafak puts it in her novel:

What America did to the conventional stranger-in-a-strange-land correlation was to kindly twist it upside down. In other parts of the world, to be a newcomer meant you had now arrived at a new place where you didn't know the whys and hows, but you could probably and hopefully learn most, if not all, in the fullness of time. In coming to America for the first time, however, you retained a sense of arriving at a place not *that* new, since you felt you already knew most, if not all, there was to know about it, and ended up unlearning your initial knowledge in the fullness of time (*The Saint*, 73).

The issue of America as being always the epitome of globalization, as well as that of the frequently heard critique of cosmopolitanism for its tendency to be elitist and western makes it crucial to critically approach cosmopolitanism, with a focus on the question of whether it holds back a true cosmopolitan outlook or creates a new kind of cosmopolitanism.

Here he was surrounded by hundreds of faces of dazzling variety, and not even one of them looked familiar. None of these individuals had any idea who he was. Not even one single soul. He was a nobody to each and all of them, so pure and immaculate – absolutely nameless, pastless, and thereby, faultless. And because he was a nobody, he could be anybody. (*The Saint*, 82)

How to make a phone call and not go homicidal when you hear the mechanical lady repeat her mantra: "We-are-sorry-your-call-can-not-be-completed" even when you are 100 percent sure this time you dialed the correct area code, inserted the right coin at the right time... How to operate a photocopy machine that works with some sort of a special card that you keep confusing with other special cards... How to talk to a pharmacist about the itch on your penis [...] How to steer the intricately blatant machinery of the routine serpentine paths of daily life and manage not to look like an idiot as you crash over and over again? It was daily life that humiliated most, mortified like nothing else. (*The Saint*, 109)

The bitter feeling generated by the loss of confidence and the stark contrast between the liberating potential of cosmopolitanism and isolation is highlighted in the two quotations above. On the one hand, it is believed that national identities no longer have the power to capitalize identities in the age of cultural globalization in which multiple identities reign. Identities are no longer assumed to be mere fixities of class and nation, but are fluid and overlapping events through which regional and local attachments are challenged and renegotiated. In this sense, cosmopolitanism is read in the desire to be "at home in the world" (Brennan 1997). On the other hand, Ömer's position as a privileged cosmopolitan mingles with his being an isolated migrant who tries to survive daily life in America.

Gail or the previously named Zarpandit (the name of a Babylonian Goddess) is the other most important character and her delayed suicide sets the narrative frame of the novel. We are told that she almost suffocated on a piece of pepperoni at the age of two, learning from that experience that death is like "falling upwards," a liberating release. She embarks on several unsuccessful suicide attempts, at one point she tries to hang herself at her dorm, then lying on the train tracks, trying to jump from the window of the new apartment she is to share with Ömer (whom she marries) before finally accomplishing her goal by jumping from the bridge in Istanbul. Despite the fact that both Ömer and Gail come from different cultural backgrounds they in fact are the representations of Rumi's "lame birds" encountered at the beginning in the novel. What makes Gail the eccentric character is not the fact that she constantly looks for original ways to end her life; she is also extraordinary for the fact that she keeps changing names and identities in *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* which can be regarded as the embodiment of that dynamic notion of identity. Gail acts out her ongoing transformation in a childhood game that she used to play with her mother, which stands as a representation of identities that constantly change and crystallize in endless configurations in their ongoing interaction.

They played it because sometime in the past God up there in heaven had cooked himself an alphabet soup and let it cool down in a huge bowl near his kitchen window. But then a strong, insolent gale, or a mischievous, rotten angel, or perhaps the devil himself had either incidentally or intentionally (this specific component of the story was subject to change each time it was retold) dropped the bowl to the floor, that is to say to the skies, and all the letters inside the soup were scattered far and wide across the universe, never to be gathered back again. Letters were everywhere, waiting to be noticed and picked up, wishing to be matched to the words they could have written had they remained inside their Bowl of Eden. (*The Saint*, 37)

Yazicioğlu sees "the game significant not only because it contains two main metaphors in the novel, namely language and food, as they stand for both cultural differences and transcultural links, but also because of its diasporic implications that are again crucial to understanding the novel." She interprets the scattered letters of the alphabet soup and the nostalgia for their "Bowl of Eden" to evoke the Hebrew and Greek roots of the term diaspora as (often tragic) displacement and dispersal respectively, and the yearning for the lost home (Yazicioğlu, 60). In addition, "the letters of frenzy" in "the Bowl of Eden" (37) that are the reflection of the chaos in her mind are the only remedy for her creative imagination that apparently produces contradicting ideas about the meaning of life. So, in order to produce a so-called order, she creates another system that is "the law of absences" which in order to function properly there should at all times be "a cavity, a loss, something missing from each and every entirety" (65). Gail's suicidal tendency throughout the novel Yazicioğlu explains is "inextricably linked with her penchant for self-effacement through a constant re-inscription of her identity, which both reflects and proliferates her ambivalent identity as American and Jew." She finds resemblance of the attitude to the "eternally displaced Jew, and her Americanness as the ultimate representative of the West" (62).

The fact that Gail finds her psychological milieu in Turkey is underlined with a question about who belongs where, "Who is the real stranger – the one who lives in a foreign land and knows he belongs elsewhere or the one who lives the life of a foreigner in her native land and has no place else to belong?" (351). This rhetorical question suggests that Gail was a stranger in her homeland, but this predicament however is not specific to her. By jumping from the Bosphorus Bridge that connects the East and the West in Istanbul Gail demonstrates that she neither belongs to the West nor to the East. Her attempt to interact and adapt to different cultures is reflected in her efforts to persuade the people around her to switch identities so that they "choose another from the other" (145).

Only if we stop identifying ourselves so much with the identities given to us, only if and when we really accomplish this, can we eliminate all sorts of racism, sexism, nationalism, and fundamentalism, and whatever it is that sets barricades among humanity, dividing us into different flocks and subflocks. (146)

In the final section of the novel entitled "Destroying Your Own Plumage," Ömer and Gail come to Istanbul to visit Ömer's family. Surprisingly, "the bell boy would not be the only one to take Ömer for a tourist" (324). As Gail feels foreign in her home country, Ömer also is seen in the same way in his native Turkey. Shafak through this episode again touches on the recurring theme of being a foreigner even in one's own environment:

On the hand, there were the more educated, the more affluent, and far more sophisticated who were irrefutably Western and modern, and then there was a second group of people, greater in numbers, less in power, less Western in appearance. The discrepancy in between could transfer the members of the former bunch into "tourist" in the eyes of the latter group. A Turk could easily look like a foreigner to another Turk. (*The Saint*, 330)

Obviously, Ömer, who was brought up in a "westernized" and "modern" oriented educational system, is not aware of his own roots, history and culture that lay the foundations for a sense of belonging which is also the capacity to recognize those who are different and to be open towards others.

After staying ten days in Istanbul, Gail and Ömer are leaving the city now. "So we are in the in-between right now [...]" Gail murmurs looking ahead (345). Suddenly it occurred to her, and the next second she knew with certainty that this inbetweenness was the right place, and this very moment was the right time to die (347). [...] a fleeting consolation crosses Ömer's mind [...] People do not commit suicide on other's people's soil, and this is not her homeland. But did she ever have one? Who is the real stranger – the one who lives in a foreign land and knows he belongs elsewhere or the one who lives the life of a foreigner in her native land and has no place else to belong? (*The Saint*, 350-51)

The title of the book in Turkish is *Araf* which means in English "purgatory" or "the space in between." The Bosphorus Bridge is used as a metaphor for the transitory state of being in the middle. This is a cultural conceit of Turkish self-depiction as a connector between the East and the West. Because it links the

European and Asian sides of Istanbul, the Bosphorus Bridge is an apt symbol for this self-definition. Shafak utilizes the image of the bridge not only with this meaning, but also expands it to include Gail's bipolar state as a manic depressive, and her dual sexual identity as a bisexual. The Turkish title of the book *Araf* also identifies this location as the bridge between Heaven and Hell.

All of the characters in the book are outsiders and not only incidentally because they are foreign students, or gay, but because they deliberately choose to be so. Her marginal solitary figures are ultimate representations of a boundless freedom that allows one to be only what one wants.

Elif Shafak explores, through the multicultural experiences and interactions of her characters, migrant groups' or individuals' processes of coming to terms with their past and its marks upon their identity. By pointing to the contradictions, changes and transformations in both individual and collective experiences and histories, which constitute identity, she displays the inexhaustible variety and adaptability of identity, whose conception as such will no doubt challenge monolithic, essentialist and totalizing discourses on nation, race and ethnicity, so as to pave the way for a more peaceful and mutually enriching social, cultural, and political interaction. Nevertheless, writers like Shafak expand this intra-American dichotomous perspective to encompass a transcultural scope of lived metropolitan experience both in the New and Old World (Poole, 218). Unlike other immigrant writers, Shafak is not exploring cultures and duality – just as she makes a point not to define herself as either a "Turkish" or "English" speaking writer. Her questioning such themes might seem confusing because essentially her novel is not a simple look at the "old country" vs. "pop culture" MTV-America dichotomy. Through the novel she brings out fundamental questions of who we are, and where we are, regardless of our accents and the evident reality that there are no boundaries or simple answers. Even though at the very beginning of the novel we encounter Ömer's complaints in regard to his being a desperate foreigner and desperate husband embarked on the topic of cultural misunderstandings due to the processes of migration, the overlapping synchronicity of the novel's ending points towards a contrary direction: no matter where you are or whom you are with, a feeling of belonging, sharing, and intimacy is something that is variable and temporary in most cases. Namely, as Pool puts it, the novel of immigration that starts out as a cultural critique of America's global imperialism filtered through Ömer's (and all other characters') sense of loss of home and identity comes to a resolution with a "huge step towards the claim of cultural relativism: individual estrangement and suffering supersedes collective or national dilemmas" (218). In other words, it becomes crucial to examine how the notion of "cultural clashes" has been defined differently by various groups in the novel. We see that characters are encouraged by conditions and space that reflect on the changes which have taken place within their own backgrounds.

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DOM I IDENTITET U ROMANU ELIF ŠAFAK SVETAC NEIZBEŽNE LUDOSTI

U svom romanu prvencu na engleskom jeziku, turska spisateljica Elif Šafak istražuje živote troje stranih studenata u Bostonu da bi prikazala poimanje zajednice i otuđivanja kroz pitanja jezika, religije i kulture. Ovaj rad se fokusira na teme migracije, odabranog života u inostranstvu i "trans-kulturalizma", istovremeno ispitujući i propitujući zacrtane granice koje se tiču doma, nacije i identiteta. *Svetac neizbežne ludosti* bavi se odnosima jedne grupe stranih studenata u Bostonu, a posebno vezom između Omera, postdiplomskog studenta iz Turske i Gejl, njegove ekscentrične, manično-depresivne američke devojke jevrejskog porekla. Gejl mu kasnije postaje žena, ali izvrši samoubistvo skokom sa Bosforškog mosta, za koji ona kaže da je "savršeno mesto na razmeđu". U ovom romanu, Elif Šafak dočarava kako se sve migrantske grupe i pojedinci suočavaju sa svojim "novim domovima" kao i kakve tragove ovi novi domovi ostavljaju na njihov identitet putem multikulturnih iskustava i interakcija. Drugim rečima, ovaj rad pokazuje kako Šafak razotkriva raznolikost i prilagodljivost identiteta, a ovakvo poimanje samo po sebi dovodi u pitanje monolitne, esencijalističke i totalitarne diskurse doma i identiteta u kontekstu nacije, rase i nacionalnosti. Kao i većina likova iz Sveca neizbežne ludosti, i Šafak je strankinja, ne samo u Americi, gde predaje na Univerzitetu u Arizoni, već i u svojoj domovini Turskoj. Odrastajući uglavnom u Zapadnoj Evropi, ona je neminovno podređena pojmovima imena, nacionalnosti i rasizma - elementima koji zajedno stvaraju "identitet", koncept koji po njenom mišljenju "postavlja barikade među ljudima, deleći nas u vrste i podvrste".

Ključne reči: dom, identitet, nacija, kosmopolitanizam, migrantnost.

CONTESTED SPACES IN MAXINE HONG KINGSTON'S *THE WOMAN WARRIOR AND CHINA MEN* AND AMY TAN'S *THE JOY LUCK CLUB*

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Abstract: Maxine Hong Kingston and Amy Tan contrast the authority of institutionalized history with various stories of immigrants which serve as a counter-memory negating the vision of monolithic and unchangeable history and replacing it by plurality and temporality of experience. This method of intricate design of the past points to the basic feature of historiography: imaginative reconstruction of the process of examination and analysis of the historical records. This process of contestation takes place in sharply juxtaposed spaces of China and the United States which reflect the dual position of Maxine Hong Kingston's and Amy Tan's characters as Asian Americans. In the novels of both authors, China is much more than a physical space, it is as a construction the first generation immigrants create to blunt the pain of nostalgia that never ceases to gnaw on them. For the second generation of Asian Americans, China becomes an idealized space to which they return searching for their roots. Equally importantly, the authors reveal blank spaces in the institutionalized histories of China and the United States by giving voices to various Others in both cultures.

Key Words: contested space, memory, history, Kingston, Tan, *The Woman Warrior*, *China Men*, *The Joy Luck Club*.

Introducion

Critical examinations of history became part of the postmodern endeavor to question our assumptions about what constitutes historical knowledge (Hutcheon 8). The notion "that there can be no single, essentialized, transcendent concept of 'genuine historicity'" (Hutcheon 89) led to reevaluation of the notions of time and space. Spatial turn became a dominant concept in literary studies aided by the transformational effects of postcolonialism, globalization and the rise of ever more advanced information technologies. They put space in the foreground, as traditional spatial or geographic limits were erased or redrawn (Tally 3). The effort to critically approach the notion of space was also undoubtedly influenced by the feeling of displacement after the Second World War. Massive mobilization of people, Holocaust, battles that led to the decimation of populations of whole regions as well as physical changes in the landscape created the literature of exile. As Theodor Adorno declared "It is

part of the morality not to be at home in one's own home" (39). This may seem a radical statement, but as the 21st century brought one of the most urgent immigrant crises in history, we can rightfully ask whether homelessness and unease in one's house as others suffer have become a moral imperative and a virtue. As second generation Asian Americans born in the US, Kingston and Tan constantly explore what it means to be at home and in what way space can be constructed in people's imagination.

The historical framework of Kingston's novels *The Woman Warrior* and *China Men* and Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*, which will be discussed here, encompasses two generations and two continents. The Chinese characters, born at the turn of the centuries, experienced what is often called "the golden age of Chinese middle class" (Bow 235) during the Chinese empire. Consequently, their narrations deal with Chinese customs as well as the transition of a Confucian system into Communism after the revolution which completely changed Chinese society. The Chinese American characters are placed in the framework of American history and culture from the early 1960s to 1990s and their narrations revolve around more contemporary issues of climbing the social ladder, ethnic identity, social rights of ethnic minorities, and interracial marriages.

Due to these shifts in ideology and social systems which have had a major effect on both public and private spaces, Kingston's and Tan's novels are suitable texts for the application of literary geography which looks "at the ways that literature registers the shifting configurations of social space over time, as well as the means by which texts represent or map spaces and places" (Tally 80). For example, their novels feature two spatial levels (China and America) and two temporal ones (past and present). They are juxtaposed as the realm of fantasy represented by China and reality embodied in America. These two disparate spaces are connected by episodes, motifs and metaphors, the most important being the metaphors of map and home.

Writing as Cartography

It can be said that in their homelessness, Kingston's and Tan's narrators show subjective, modern experience, which Hutcheon calls "ex-centric" (12). This term, which she applies to postmodern writers in general, is based on the episode from *China Men* in which the narrator's father in the family's laundry marks only their items with the sign of center to distinguish it from that of his customers'. His mark prompts her to ask: "How we landed in a country where we are eccentric people" (Kingston 1989, 13). Kingston's metaphor of the home/center reflects the need for careful consideration of the geopolitical framework of the novel. For her characters who are Chinese immigrants in America, China remains the center (the old name for China was central nation).

However, in the US, they are ex-centric and marginal in the terms of race, class and ethnicity, relying on the center, i.e. US, for their definition (Hutcheon 65). Their ex-centric position is heightened by the fact that as illegal immigrants they are continually denied by the center. Even when they became legal citizens they are often ignored by mainstream American culture and history. Consequently, Kingston's novels constitute "a potent challenge to ethnocentrism, as the previously silent, displaced China men's history and validity are reasserted by Kingston" (Grice 65). The very project of reinscribing the stories of Chinese immigrants in the American space is evident from the image of Kingston's novel *China Men*: two chapters which occupy the central position in it are dedicated to the immigration laws which for decades exposed Chinese Americans to racial discrimination. This does not result in the displacement of the center by the margin, or even recognition of the margin by the center. The presence of the ex-centric "contests the epistemological status and homogenizing tendency of the dominant cultural and physical center" (Grice 65) that is America and Anglo-American culture. More importantly, "the dominant versions of history are revealed to be erroneous, and America is located geographically both to the east and the west of China, depending on which text it consults" (Grice 65).

Edward Said argued that designations of "our" space vs. "theirs" or barbarian space is entirely arbitrary. This distinction does not require acknowledgment, or consent of all parties in question. "It is enough for 'us' to set up these boundaries in our own minds, 'they' become 'they' accordingly, and both their territory and their mentality are designated as different from 'our'" (Said 1991, 54). Kingston blurs this distinction by making her characters belong to both spaces simultaneously. Her historiographic metafiction carves in the American mainstream history the spaces of immigrant history, underscoring the extent to which history, and in turn narration, are connected to spatiality. The interdependence of history and space is embodied in the metaphor of mapmaking.

A number of Kingston's characters brood over various maps of the world, those that depict turtles and elephants supporting the continents, those that have China in the middle or America, the Gold Mountain, to the east or west. Thus, as "cartographic inscriptions of the world and of reality," maps become "subjective as well as unreliable" (Grice 63). They are perceived as instruments of power, similar to legal and historical texts, since they are used by the state to construct its domain. Kingston's ex-centric cartography undermines the conviction of both American and Chinese characters that Gold Mountain or China are the center of the world. The maps reflect the dual reality of Chinese Americans, for them China is their homeland, their anchorage. On the other hand, they claim the Gold Mountain as their country, a place to which their ancestors traveled for hundreds of years (Kingston 1989, 87). Kingston deliberately calls them American pioneers in order to emphasize the

contribution of the Chinese in building of the United States which has been previously erased from mainstream American history (Izgarjan 732). She emphasizes their commitment to the American dream which prompted them to leave China in search of a mystical Gold Mountain in the first place. That is why writing for Kingston is “a form of mapping or a cartographic activity” which illustrates that maps, as any “scientific” device and discourse, are ideological, serving the structures of power (Tally 25, 45).

China as Centric and Ex-centric Home

The dual identity of Kingston’s and Tan’s characters occasions the need for a new kind of mapping. We can compare their efforts to chart their journey to a space which they could claim with Tally’s assertion that literary cartography undoubtedly derives its force and its desirability from the general unease with respect to our sense of place, “what Lukács would have likened to a loss of a sense of totality.” (Tally 63-4). For the narrators of Kingston’s and Tan’s novels, the need to define the issues of national and gender identity problematizes their search for a space where this identity can be articulated. Consequently, the search for self becomes in their texts the search for home, a place where they can belong and where they can be everything they want to be. In order to do so, they first must come up with the definition of home in order to be able to find it. It turns out that for somebody born in the United States with Chinese parents this can present a considerable feat. The narrator in Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior* famously says: “I could not figure out what my village was” (45). Both authors engage in narrative mapmaking with a conviction that exploration of spaces (Chinese and American) to which their characters belong, as well as journeys that led them to these spaces, will allow them to reach a conclusion about how space defines them, and equally importantly, how people’s perceptions shape spaces. In turn, “literary cartography produced in narratives then becomes a way for readers to understand and think their own social spaces” (Tally 6).

Kingston uses a metaphor of the return home to show dislocation of her characters in the United States. The narrator’s mother, Brave Orchid, instead of teaching her children how to come to their home in China town in Sacramento, teaches them how to go to her ancestral village in China. That is why the narrator wonders whether her home is the US, China or some place between these two spaces. For her, as well as for the characters in the novels discussed here, China is not so much a physical space, as a construction created by their parents in order to define their identities. By holding tenaciously to their memories of China, the land they left behind, they avoid complete assimilation. America also functions as a dream land onto which the immigrants project their wish for a better life. This turns into a nightmare once they reach it since some

of them spent years trapped on Angel Island. On the other hand, for Kingston's and Tan's second generation immigrants, China represents absolute terra incognita. They cannot believe their parent's stories about China which are so different from their American reality, but they cannot also completely reject them.

Thus China and America become a semiotic space in which all Kingston's and Tan's characters project their desires and memories. They struggle to find a third space where they would be allowed to create hybrid identity out of disparate pieces of self. Jacobson finds this trend in a number of works of contemporary American women writers whose characters live in what she calls "translocal homes" (138). This notion includes hybridity, diasporic identity and cultural translation and negotiation. Translocal home allows them to explore the dynamics between feminine domestic space and masculine domestic politics at the national and international level (138). Such strategies are present in Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* and Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* since they start in a private space, a circle of women, who are directly affected by international policies. In *The Joy Luck Club* the advent of Japanese troops triggers the action and in *The Woman Warrior* the loss of a woman's and her child's life is a consequence of Chinese civil wars and immigration to the Gold Mountain. So instead of a place of refuge and domestic space, as it is usually envisioned, home becomes "a critically imagined space for different constructions of reality" (Jacobson 190). This ambiguity of the metaphor of home in Kingston's and Tan's texts recalls Bachelard's perception of home as a fundamental space of the human imagination: "all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home" (1969: 5). According to Tally (92), in his discussion of imaginative geographies, Said found Bachelard's discussion of home helpful since it shows how "the objective space of a house [...] is far less important than what poetically it is endowed with, which is usually a quality with an imaginative or figurative value we can name and feel" (55). Similarly, although they rest upon completely different cultural contexts and have different historical references, both China and the US in the works of Tan and Kingston function as imagined geographies since they show how images of space depend heavily on ideological frameworks.

Imagined Geographies

Edward Said in his examination of how the Orient was constructed in Western imagination came up with the notion of imagined geographies. "In this term, 'imagined' is used not to mean 'false' or 'made-up', but 'perceived'" (Al-Mahfedi 10). It refers to the perception of space created through certain images, texts or discourses. On the surface, it may seem that both in the case of Kingston's and Tan's second generation Chinese Americans, China becomes a

western artifact. It is perceived as exotic and shrouded in mystery since it is viewed from the American vantage point. The narrations about China have as a background the narrator's American experience during the process of translation and reshaping of their identity from Chinese into American. Consequently, the stories about China lose any specific connection with the historical context of Chinese society and become instead connected with American society and the present day reality of the characters.

For example, trying to imagine what it would be like to be a Chinese woman warrior trained in martial skills, Kingston's narrator in *The Woman Warrior* creates a fantasy world resembling Chinese brush paintings, clearly marking the boundary between the narrator's real world, America, and her mother's fairy tale world of China:

The call would come from a bird that flew over our roof. In the brush drawings it looks like the ideograph for "human," two black wings. The bird would cross the sun and lift into the mountains (which look like the ideograph for "mountain"), there parting the mist briefly that swirled opaque again. [...] At the height where the bird used to disappear, the clouds would gray the world like an ink wash. Even when I got used to that gray, I would only see peaks as if shaded in pencil, rock like charcoal rubbings, everything so murky. (1977, 25)

She constantly undercuts this mythical scenario with down-to-earth American comments.

The door opened, and an old man and an old woman came out carrying bowls of rice and soup and leafy branch of peaches.
"Have you eaten rice today, little girl?" they greeted me.
"Yes, I have," I said out of politeness. "Thank you."
(No, I haven't," I would have said in real life, mad at the Chinese for lying so much. "I'm starved. Do you have any cookies? I like chocolate chip cookies.") (1977, 25)

The story becomes a space where the readers can get insight in the dual perspective that informs the hybrid identity of Kingston's characters. Kingston emphasized in interviews that in her novel China functions as an exotic space because she wanted to present it the way it is featured in western culture, particularly kung fu movies (1982, 57). She hoped that through exaggeration and parody she can expose its misrepresentation, but also show how myths change in the process of interaction between two cultures. In her words, the chapter about the woman warrior "is not a Chinese myth, but one transformed by America" (1982, 57).

Similarly, for the Chinese American narrators in *The Joy Luck Club*, China is just a fairy tale. The case in point is June Jing-mei Woo whose mother's stories about China focused predominantly on the Japanese invasion of Kweilin where she was with her two baby girls. She started the Joy Luck Club there with three other friends as a way to divert themselves from the terrible circumstances they found themselves in. June remembers that the story about the club is the only one her mother told again and again but the end always changed, becoming darker with each telling. Suyan would begin the story ripping an old jumper and as she rolled the wool she would reminisce. Thus narration about China is from the beginning seen as unraveling, destruction of the old to create a new story.

And then one evening she told me a completely new ending to the story. "An army officer came to my house early one morning and told me to go quickly to my husband in Chunking. And I knew he was telling me to run away from Kweilin. I knew what happened to officers and their families when the Japanese arrived. [...] I packed my things and my two babies into this wheel barrow and began pushing to Chunking four days before the Japanese marched into Kweilin. [...] By the time arrived I lost everything [...] "What do you mean by everything?" I gasped at the end. I was stunned to realize the story had been true all along. "What happened to the babies?" She did not even pause to think. She simply said in a way that made it clear there was not more to the story: "Your father is not my first husband. You are not those babies." (14)

June's reaction to Suyan's story reveals that the daughters of Chinese American mothers see the Chinese past only discursively, in language, through their mothers' stories which makes representation of ethnic origin more complex. Growing up thinking that the Kweilin story is just a fairy tale, the final version is a rude awakening for June who has to reassess not just her perception of China, which also metaphorically embodies Suyan's past, but also her understanding of her family's past, and ultimately her self. When she finally hears how Suyan left her daughters behind, June is shocked not so much by the fact that she is not her mother's first child, as she used to believe, as by the realization that the stories about China have always been true. After her mother's death, June decided to visit China in an attempt to recover her family and her roots. In doing so, she joins Tan's other characters for whom the trip to China acquires ritualistic qualities since they retrace the journey their ancestors made when they came to the US. Thus, instead of existing as a static and unique category, China becomes a space for articulation of identities and differences (Yuan 293).

Suyan's story about the Joy Luck Club reflects Tan's narrative strategy of multiple narrations which offers shifting perceptions about China and the United States. Each of the fourteen stories told by eight narrators that make up

the novel reveals a process of constant translation of a Chinese past into an American future. Tan's construction of ethnic identity is not based on a vision of stable and unchanging China which can be recalled by each narrator at any moment. On the contrary, she deliberately introduces four different Chinese narrators to evoke varied versions of China (Schueller 82). It is clear that there are class differences between them as well as idiosyncrasies particular to each family. The very history of the Joy Luck Club emphasizes multivalent representations of history and national identity.

As was mentioned in relation to the notion of translocal home, Tan turns the domestic space of home, in this case China, into an embattled territory where different ethnic and class ideologies clash. Home no longer represents tranquility and safety and its loss is symbolically represented as a loss of mother and roots. Being lost and existing only in their imagination, China can be compared to Said's Palestine which is also featured as an imagined geography after Israeli occupation (2000, 182-183). Said, and his countrymen, like Tan's characters, problematize ideological and political processes that stand behind loss of their homeland.

The very notion of the Joy Luck Club deconstructs the traditionally perceived difference between history and fiction, experience and narration (Schueller 81-82). By being created as a "construction" – the members pretending to enjoy themselves while Japanese army is bombing Kweilin – the club reflects the artificial nature of history. Tan points to the discrepancy between the official Chinese records which deny the capture of Kweilin and the stories of refugees, like Suyan, who escaped from Kweilin, especially women and children. The novel provides the readers with layer upon layer of memories of lives shaped by World War II, thus subverting the notion that there is just one history and undermining the hegemonic discourse which insists upon the unchangeability of official records. On both familial and communal level, the story of how the Joy Luck Club came to be in the middle of loss and destruction fills in blank spaces of history and serves as a trigger for the exploration of the past.

June's trip to China is as much an effort to find her lost half-sisters as it is an attempt to establish once and forever what China really looks like and, more importantly, which part of her is Chinese and which is American. What she finds however is rather startling and once more reminds the reader of the fluidity of imagined geographies. Her father's home town, Guangzhou, "looks like a major American city, with high rises and construction going on everywhere" (317). The whole family reunion takes place in a hotel resembling Hyatt Regency and on express wishes of the Chinese part of the family everybody orders hamburgers, French fries and apple pie. Like other characters in Kingston's and Tan's novels, June realizes that the China she grew up with was a chimera and that

globalization, mobility and liberal capitalism are making distant parts of the world amazingly similar.

Nevertheless, despite this similarity, the trip to China for Tan's characters is perceived as a retrieval of Chinese heritage and ethnic identity. While before the daughters resented their Chinese origin (June compares it to mutant DNA), the firsthand experience of China and Chinese culture, more than myths and family stories, helps them to create a balanced definition of their identity. It also bridges the gap between the first and second generation of Chinese Americans. While in the first part of the novel China functions as a cognitive hole, in the second part the descendants of immigrants go to China to recreate their familial and communal histories. In doing so, they reclaim their Chinese names and reconstruct their identity so that it can include both Chinese and American parts. Therefore, the return to China is symbolically loaded; the protagonists have to deal with real geographical, linguistic, political and cultural differences (Shear 197). Only in physical and not abstract contact with China, the characters affirm their identity so China serves as a background giving structure to their existence in the United States. Thus, it has to be stressed that the immigrants remain defined by their experience of China as a homeland. For them, China remains more than anything a space that is subject to transformations and various interpretations. Hutcheon stressed their ambiguous status in both China and the United States where they continue to exist as both insiders and outsiders. However it is precisely this ex-centric position that enables them to question their identity. Thus Kingston's and Tan's characters paradoxically confirm their Americanness by going to China. Hutcheon finds similarity between them and other ex-centric characters in contemporary fiction which she interprets as a hallmark of their postmodern condition:

This is the contradictory position too of Wiebe's *Métis*, Rushdie's *Indian*, Kogawa's *Japanese-Canadian*, and of the many women, gays, hispanics, native peoples, and members of the working class, whose inscription into history since the 1960s has forced a recognition of the untenable nature of any humanist concepts of "human essence" or of universal values that are not culturally and historically dependent. The postmodern attempts to negotiate the space between centers and margins in ways that acknowledge difference and its challenge to any supposedly monolithic culture (as implied by liberal humanism). (197-8)

Ideological Constructions of Space

Instead of linking the spaces in their novel to "real" geographical locations, Kingston and Tan insist upon the value of their characters' involvement with these spaces. Tally on this issue quotes Virginia Woolf who

was likewise against the precise situation of literary spaces within physical ones in the outside world:

A writer's country is a territory within his own brain; and we run the risk of disillusionment if we try to turn such phantom cities into tangible brick and mortar. [...] No city indeed is so real as this that we make for ourselves and people to our liking; and to insist that it has any counterpart in the cities of the earth is to rob it of half its charm. (Woolf in Tally 83)

On the same note, Kingston and Tan invite us to understand that "social relations are produced and reproduced through space" (Tally 117). It follows from this hypothesis that space is also deeply historical, grounded in the developing modes of production and susceptible to conflicting processes: "Every society – and hence every mode of production [...] – produces a space, its own space" (Soja in Tally 117). This can best be seen in the example of the Gold Mountain since it becomes an intersection of imperialism, economic needs of both the Chinese and American population as well as racial policy concerning immigrants which are not of Anglo-American origin. As a representation of historical space, Gold Mountain in Kingston's and Tan's novels reflects changing modes of production in the States. From being a cheap labor force, predominantly in the mines and building of railroads, the Chinese are relegated to spheres usually connected to women due to lack of female workers in the West in the 19th century. This has led to their emasculation, as well as confinement in certain branches of the service industry, specifically laundering and catering. Chinese American private space featured in China towns, and American public spaces (particularly institutions like schools, hospitals, work places etc.) are clearly delineated and separated.

Through ideological construction of space, Kingston and Tan point to shifting attitudes toward Chinese Americans due to a conflicting process of ethnic assimilation. In comparison to the spaces of the first generation, the second generation of Kingston's and Tan's characters occupies spaces in medical, academic and engineering fields reflecting their climbing the social ladder. Their domestic spaces (suburbs, typical American households) equally embody this change. Similarly to American spaces, Chinese spaces also undergo a process of change. While at the beginning of the novels, the Chinese characters live in enclosed family compounds; with the rapid advancement of the Chinese economy they are moved to urban areas as can be seen in June's description of contemporary China.

China as Utopia and Dystopia

Kingston and Tan deliberately play with their readers' expectations of what China or the United States have constituted in the past and how they are configured in the present. As imagined geographies China and America (as the Gold Mountain) function as utopias and dystopias which enable the characters to navigate between the two cultures to which they belong as Chinese Americans. Imagined geographies can be therefore seen as a form of social constructionism. Kingston and Tan envision a home that is specifically located within its geopolitical environment, while simultaneously crafting an imagined geography, challenging the reader to consider alternative realities. Such spaces are utopian in a sense that they are literally "no place" but they are still grounded in material realities and informed by history. As Tally states:

The utopian spaces reveal that like the mapmaker, the writer must survey territory, determining which features of a given landscape to include, to emphasize, or to diminish. The writer must establish the scale and the shape, no less of the narrative than of the places in it. The literary cartographer, even one who operates in such non-realistic modes as myth or fantasy, must determine the degree to which a given representation of a place refers to any "real" place in the geographical world. (45)

The process of inclusion and exclusion of narratives is reflected in the different roles China plays in the lives of Kingston's and Tan's first generation immigrants in comparison to the second generation. For the mothers in the novels, who are the representatives of the first generation, the stories about China revolve around their memories of the past. They are defined by these stories in which China functions as an imagined country which reflects their immigrant mentality and life in exile. Marked by nostalgia and repression of painful memories, China comes to symbolize loss of family, community, language and culture, all the markers that constitute one's individual and national identity. Perception of China as a construction in the immigrants' stories is heightened by their awareness that this land does not exist anymore. After the Communist revolution and the Second World War, the whole social system, and with it traditions and culture, changed irrevocably. As *Brave Orchid* poignantly says: "There is no China to go back to" (1977: 146).

It may seem that China in the stories of Kingston's and Tan's first generation immigrants acquires legendary proportions. For example, while contemplating their return to China, *Brave Orchid* assures her children that they would smell flowers for the first time. For her, America is "a terrible ghost country, where a human being works her life away. [...] Human beings don't work like that in China. Time goes slower there" (1977 122-3). *Brave Orchid's*

juxtaposition of China and America shows that although Kingston's and Tan's first generation immigrants live in an American present, China remains the country which they evoke in their dreams. It represents a home, with family networks which provide rootedness and a sense of belonging. While in China, everything was familiar to them, in the States they have to struggle with a different language, culture and social system. The fact that the China they knew disappeared in the chaos of the Communist revolution and the Second World War adds to its mythical quality. It becomes a space that is irretrievable since it exists only in the imagination of people who once lived in it, heightening its fantastic potential.

In comparison, the daughters reshape their mothers' stories about China in order to answer their need to model their identity in an American context. In that sense, China as a semiotic space is filled with different content. Juan remarks that China is less a geographical location, as it is "cultural extra-territory" which the characters create in order to construct their subjectivity (Yuan 293). Ultimately, Kingston and Tan show in the metaphor of China that it stops functioning as a physical space and geopolitical locality. As a fictional place, it also stops being the locus of identity, even for the first generation. They are forced to find new sources of definition in the new society. In their new circumstances they have to sacrifice parts of their old identity if they want to assimilate and succeed in the new society.

As was mentioned above, for a long time Chinese Americans were struggling with discrimination so that for them America changed from utopia into a dystopia. On the other hand, China can be seen as a dystopia too because of its rigid hierarchy, restrictive patriarchal Confucian social system, misogyny, prearranged marriages, and female slavery. Particularly for women, China is a restrictive society which can be seen in the novels of Kingston and Tan. The first chapter of *The Woman Warrior* is dedicated to the narrator's aunt No Name Woman who is ostracized by the community for giving birth to a child out of wedlock. Faced with a prospect of living as a beggar with no means to fend for her child and herself, she murders her child and then commits suicide. Similarly, one of Tan's characters also commits suicide after she was raped by a wealthy man so that she would be forced to become his concubine. A number of Kingston's and Tan's characters are coerced into prearranged marriages in early youth and they are constantly subjected to demeaning attitudes of their communities because they are women. Thus it could be said that the major project for both writers is exposition of misogyny in Chinese and American society and claiming of voice and power on the part of their characters.

Gold Mountain as Utopia and Dystopia

While it may seem that America would present an opportunity for Chinese Americans to overcome the restrictions they struggled with in China, Kingston and Tan foreground the sexism and racism in American society by making it a different kind of dystopia than China, but dystopia nevertheless. Gold Mountain features in both novels as an ambiguous symbol of wealth. While they are preparing for their trip to America, poor Chinese dream about Gold Mountain which comes to represent their refuge from the turmoil during the Opium wars and later the Communist revolution and the Second World War.

Kingston and Tan do not hesitate to deal with the underside of the Gold Mountain in the stories of immigrants who were subjected to humiliations and pressure to assimilate into the American society. During the 19th and 20th century, Chinese Americans were treated as racially inferior and a number of laws prevented them from becoming legal citizens of the United States and bring the members of their family to the States. Their sense of insecurity was heightened by attacks and lynchings of Chinese Americans prompting them to create China towns in which they felt safer. China towns started functioning as Chinese microcosms within American society. As enclosed spaces, they enabled Chinese immigrants to preserve Chinese culture and tradition.

Still, Kingston and Tan point out that China town is an imaginary space that has to be carefully constructed and maintained. Even then it becomes refashioned under the influence of the dominant American culture. The authors expose the artificiality of this space through the gaze of both native Chinese and Americans. For example in *The Woman Warrior*, the narrator's mother Brave Orchid gives a tour of China town to her sister Moon Orchid freshly arrived from China. She proudly points out a Chinese school where the children chant "I am a Person of the Middle Nation", a row of Chinese shops and the China town newspaper the *Gold Mountain News*. In a comic twist, her sister comments: "So this is the United States. [...] It certainly looks different from China. I'm glad to see the Americans talk like us" (1977, 156). As a Chinese native, Moon Orchid recognizes China town for what it is, a simulacrum. Brave Orchid is offended since her sister undermines her concept of reality. However, she is unable to show her "real" America and point out the difference between it and China town because she herself has never ventured out of it and does not speak English.

The outward gaze which threatens encapsulation of Chinese Americans in China town is featured more prominently in *The Joy Luck Club*. One of the protagonists, Waverly Jong, grows up in San Francisco China town and before she goes to school, meets white people solely as tourists. When one of them takes a picture of her in front of a Chinese restaurant hoping to make his photograph more authentic, Waverly mocks him by telling him that he should

try gizzard and duck feet as a Chinese specialty. She posits herself as an insider and the tourist as an outsider who treats her as an exotic object. Waverly's description of her childhood resists orientalizing of the China town. She demystifies it and presents it simply as her home, instead of a spectacle constantly on display for the enjoyment of the tourists. However, when she starts American school, Waverly is made to feel ashamed of her Chinese language and customs. For her, China town becomes a prison with its circumscribed space and carefully observed traditions, and she escapes into wider American society.

Conclusion

Kingston's and Tan's novels transform China from the geographical location and the place of origin of the first generation immigrants into the space of exilic imagination. In the case of their narrators who grow up listening to the stories about China, it remains the repository of dreams, fantasies and myths. However, it would be wrong to assume that China serves solely as a correlative to the American reality. Although it is a realm of fantasy, the characters manage to define their dual identity (Chinese and American) only after contact with China which often includes visits to the land itself. Instead of existing as a static category, China becomes a space for the articulation of differences (Yuan 292).

Kingston's and Tan's characters survive two kinds of extreme situations: one related to China (war, economic hardships, prearranged marriages, and misogyny) and the other related to the States (loss of home and identity, cultural assimilation, disintegration of habitual family and community structures). Existence in the two worlds makes them weaker and stronger at the same time. More importantly, their kaleidoscopic vision empowers them to problematize perceptions of both countries they belong to. Instead of living in a fantasy, they learn to embrace their current outlook. This dual perspective enables them to help their descendants to cope more successfully with their hybrid identity. In the end, the novels trace the characters' journey from the position of isolation and marginalization to a repositioning of ethnic identity and accommodation to multicultural society.

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SUPROTSTAVLJENI PROSTORI U ROMANIMA *THE WOMAN WARRIOR* I *CHINA MEN* MAKSIN HONG KINSTON I *THE JOY LUCK CLUB* EJMI TEN

Maksin Hong Kingston i Ejmi Ten u svojim romanima porede autoritet institucionalizovane istorije sa različitim pričama imigranata koje služe kao kontra-sećanje koje negira viziju monolitne i nepromenljive istorije zamenjujući je pluralnim i temporalnim iskustvom. Ovaj metod kompleksnog struktuiranja doživljaja prošlosti ukazuje na osnovnu odliku historiografije: imaginativnu rekonstrukciju procesa preispitivanja i analize istorijskih zapisa. Dovođenje u pitanje istorije se odvija u jasno suprotstavljenim prostorima Kine i Sjedinjenih

Američkih Država što reflektuje dualnu poziciju njihovih likova koji kao azijski Amerikanci pripadaju i Kini i Americi. U romanima obe autorke, Kina ne funkcioniše kao fizički prostor već je pre konstrukcija koju stvara prva generacija imigranata kako bi otupeli bolnu nostalgiju koja nikad ne prestaje da ih izjeda. Za drugu generaciju azijskih Amerikanaca, Kina postaje idealizovani prostor kojem se vraćaju u potrazi za svojim korenima. Podjednako je važno istaći da obe autorke otkrivaju prazna mesta u institucionalizovanim istorijama Kine i Sjedinjenih Američkih Država time što daju glas različitim Drugim u obe kulture.

Ključne reči: prostor, istorija, sećanje, Kingston, Ten, *The Woman Warrior*, *China Men*, *The Joy Luck Club*.

CHASING HOME AND SEARCHING IDENTITY: THE MEANING OF PLACE IN BHARATI MUKHERJEE'S JASMINE

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Abstract: *Jasmine* is a unique novel written by Bharatee Mukherjee about an Indian girl who comes to America to pursue her dream of freedom and a better life. However tempting the idea about the American dream might appear to Jasmine, her journey across the ocean results in many difficulties and problems regarding her adjustment to a new society. Jasmine is trying to find herself by constantly questioning her identity and cultural affiliation. In order to re-invent herself and fit into American society, Jasmine constantly transforms her personality. This quest for the Self leads Jasmine to a realization that she is neither Indian nor American, but something in between. On the example of Mukherjee's novel, the purpose of this paper is to explore the issues that many immigrants in diaspora struggle with in their search for identity, as well as the ways in which the transition from one place to another changes their attitudes and points of view.

Key words: Bharati Mukherjee, *Jasmine*, identity, hybrid identity, displacement, diaspora, home

Bharati Mukherjee is one of the writers who have used their own experience to communicate to their readers the struggle to form a hybrid identity. As a Bengali immigrant living in America, Mukherjee had an insight into both cultures, which gave her the possibility to question her own identity as well as the identity of the people she wrote about. Her characters, always of Indian descent, face cultural clashes, discrimination or racism in a different country. Mukherjee depicts their struggle to balance the tension between a dominant and minority culture. This struggle contributes to the sense of their displacement and discomfort since they are constantly seen as the Other by the dominant Anglo-American population. That is the reason why the quest for identity and self-definition become the key issues in Mukherjee's novels, and dominant topics in them. These topics are remarkably important and up-to-date from the perspective of the 20th and 21st centuries. *Jasmine* provides the insight into the main protagonist's displacement and her need to find out where she belongs. Thus, place in the novel functions as a means of the heroine's transition from one identity to another. In this respect, following the main protagonist through the phases of her self-discovery, the paper will try to explore the correlation between identity and place in the novel, as well as the

issue of hybrid identity in a post-modern era of migrations, displacement and loss.

The concept of identity is a complex one and very difficult to define. It is used in many different contexts, starting from the analysis of a child's personality to the collective attitude of a nation in times of war. This means that identity is a personal as much as a social category. Many authors point out that identity has particularly become an elusive and vague concept in postmodernism, since its meaning has changed. Due to constant migrations and cultural contacts, more than ever, it can mean more than one thing at the same time. In the postmodern era researchers do not consider identity to be a constant attribute of an individual or a group, for the reason that identities are multiplied due to the clash of cultures in multicultural societies. According to the postmodernists, the constant Self does not exist. It is discontinuous rather than permanent, and it can be constructed and re-constructed all over again. According to Chris Barker, "identity is an essence that can be signified through signs of taste, beliefs, attitudes and lifestyles" (220). The components of individual identity include physical, psychological and social attributes that may affect an individual's attitudes, habits, beliefs and ideas. In psychological terms, individual identity is built entirely on the basis of individual experience (Halpern 18). Since all the mentioned notions are inclined to change, so is identity. Individuals build their identity in stages, over a long period of time spanning from the moment of birth to adulthood. During that period, the image of the Self that is constantly being built and rebuilt by one's own beliefs and notions presents an extremely important psychological structure which enables a person to choose their activities and social roles (Halpern 21). This (illusion) of choice, along with fragmentation of the Self, brought by multiculturalism and globalization, indicate that people are composed not of one but several, often contradictory identities (Barker 224).

In the light of the aforementioned postmodern theories about identity, all that was said above could be applied to the young heroine in Mukherjee's novel. Jasmine's intense journey of self-discovery results in a constant change and transformation. The journey begins in India, the place of Jasmine's birth. She was born as Jyoti, into a poor family, in the village of Hasanpur. The very first chapter of the book reveals Jyoti's strong will and determination to stand up against her foretold fate and the roles that traditional Indian society designed for her. The chapter opens with her words that set the tone for the whole novel:

Lifetimes ago, under a banyan tree in the village of Hasnapur, an astrologer cupped his ears – his satellite dish to the stars – and foretold my widowhood and exile. I was only seven then, fast and venturesome, scabrous-armed from leaves and thorns. 'No!' I shouted. 'You're a crazy old man. You don't know what my future holds!'" (Mukherjee 2).

Jyoti's refusal of the foretelling of her fate indicates that she would rather be a forger of her own destiny.

Opposing the stringent rules of her family and tradition, Jyoti disobeys their will and chooses to marry for love, thus revealing an independent and modern side to her. This subversive act is enhanced by the fact that her husband Prakash is a poor but perceptive young non-conformist. Upon getting married, Jyoti becomes Jasmine, the name her husband chooses for her to signify her transition from the life of a village girl to that of a city woman. "He wanted to break down the Jyoti I'd been in Hasnapur and make me a new kind of city woman. To break off the past, he gave me a new name: Jasmine" (Mukherjee 50). The name Jasmine functions as a metaphor for her breaking free from Indian tradition and its hierarchy. At the same time, the heroine's independence, symbolically gained by her name change, presents a kind of metamorphosis and initiation into the new identity.

After Prakash's death in a bomb attack, Jasmine is desperate but determined to pursue his dream of going to America. However, Jasmine is immediately faced with cruel treatment in a new country. As an illegal immigrant with false documents, she is manipulated and blackmailed by the captain of the ship that transports immigrants. He takes her to a motel room where he rapes her. After the abominable act, Jasmine feels ashamed, dishonored and guilty and instead of committing suicide, she kills her oppressor, Half-Face. By slicing her tongue and letting the blood ooze out, she identifies with the vengeful goddess of destruction Kali, irresistibly reminding the readers of her image (Dubey and Srivastava 163). Her transition to a new place and appropriation of another identity empower Jasmine to do something she would otherwise not be able to do. Identification with Goddess Kali gives her the strength to do something that she morally disagrees with, making distance between her act and her *Self*. "The room looked like a slaughter house, blood has congealed on my hands, my chin, my breast [...] I was in a room with a slain man, my body bloodied. I was walking death. Death incarnate" (Mukherjee 77). Instead of becoming a victim and object of violence and oppression, Jasmine decides to kill her oppressor. Moreover, she metaphorically kills her Indian identity by burning all her Indian clothes and putting on American clothes. Jasmine's act of burning clothes instead of committing self-immolation is a subversion of the Sati ritual in which she burns the shell of her previous life in order to obtain a new one: "My body was merely a shell, soon to be discarded. Then I could be reborn, debts and sins all paid for" (Mukherjee 78). In this act she seeks a symbolical purification of her soul and body soiled by Half-Face's touch, preventing herself from disappearing "between patriarchy and imperialism, subject-constitution and object-formation [...] not into a pristine nothingness, but into a violent shuttling which is the displaced figuration of the

'third world woman' caught between tradition and modernization" (Spivak 2008: 102).

The journey of self-discovery that Jasmine begins in America differs from the one she experienced in India. While in her homeland Jasmine faced the problems of a patriarchal society that imposes its strict rules, in America, on the other hand, she grapples with different issues. Completely alone and far away from her family, Jasmine soon realizes that America is not the promised land that she was expecting it to be. In the USA, she struggles with marginalization and stereotypes on account of her ethnicity. Americans have an impression, based on her dark complexion, that she is from the East, but they cannot exactly pinpoint her native country or language. She is seen as either someone exotic or an invader in America (Erten 35). Very often she is ignored due to generalizations caused by her looks or insulted by the cruelty of people and their condescending comments that "the border's like Swiss cheese and all the mice are squirming through the holes" (Mukherjee 19). In response to the treatment that she is subjected to, as well as her desire to fit into a new society as quickly as she can, Jasmine tries to break free from everything that stands for India (Erten 35).

Jasmine's arrival in a new place starts with a new name – a new change of identity. The moment she starts working in New York for Taylor Hayes and his wife, as their daughter's babysitter, Jasmine becomes Jase. The name stands for the transformation from an Indian to an American woman, and it is a signifier of another pivotal moment in the heroine's life, which becomes even more important after she falls in love with Taylor. "Taylor called me Jase [...] I like the name he gave me. 'Jase'. Jase was a woman who bought herself spangled heels and silk chartreuse pants" (Mukherjee 113). Jasmine's desperate desire to afford clothes that a woman from consumerist American society would wear, makes her removed even further from her Indian descent. Her radical transformations, at moments resembling an identity crisis, partially stem from her feeling of neglect and her unfair treatment as an immigrant. Homi Bhabha points out that "the problem of identity returns as a persistent questioning of the frame, the space or representation, where the image – missing person, invisible eye, Oriental stereotype – is confronted with its difference, its Other" (45). In American society Jasmine is shunned and seen as the Other, despite her efforts to blend in. That is why she needs to break free from her past, in order to be accepted in this new society. She is aware that the process of change is painful. "There are no harmless, compassionate ways to remake oneself. We murder who we were so we can rebirth ourselves in the image of dreams" (Mukherjee 20).

However, Jasmine's moving away from India and Indian culture does not mean that she is not Indian anymore. On the contrary, she is trying to fit in the frame imposed by the American way of living, bearing in mind that the ties with

her native culture are too strong. She must come to terms with the fact that she is from India while learning about the new culture that she finds herself in. This results in Jasmine's split identity between the two cultures. Jasmine's identity formation supports the theories of hybridity which emerged in the post-colonial period.⁸ Kuorotti and Nyman propose that hybridity does not mean "any given mixing of cultural materials, backgrounds or identities, but implies a markedly unbalanced relationship where fixed identities are called into question" (2). This unbalanced relationship between identities in *Jasmine* is seen in her post-colonial state of "in-betweenness." Bhabha perceives hybridity as a "stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, [which] becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue, the difference between upper and lower, black and white (4). Bhabha insists on the dynamic nature of cultures, claiming that they greatly rely upon the inconsistent historical narratives in order to define themselves and draw the line between the Self and the Other (4).

Kuorotti and Nyman particularly point out the importance of Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of hybridity.⁹ For Bakhtin, hybridization is a process that involves linguistic and cultural aspects emerging when different linguistic codes meet. The authors also stress the interpretation of Bakhtin's hybridization theory by Pnina Werbner, suggesting that Bakhtin distinguishes between two forms of hybridization. One is organic or unconscious hybridization, and the second is aesthetic or intentional hybridization. According to that theory, unconscious hybridity is a natural and spontaneous process in which one language or culture absorbs the elements from the other. This process happens gradually, over time, and its occurrence is unnoticed. On the other hand, intentional hybrids undergo shock which can result in revitalization or disruption of a subject, creating an ironic double consciousness (Kuorotti and Nyman 6-7).

When applied to Mukherjee's novel, it can be concluded that Jasmine belongs to the second group of hybrids. Her transformation is stressful, but in the process of change she is revitalized. Jasmine's revitalization is reflected in her willingness to adopt cultural patterns of American society, and to become a part of it by learning its language since language may be one of many elements

⁸ The history of the term hybridity is connected to biological sciences, where the hybrid is thought to be a cross between two different botanical or animal species. The term was often understood in a negative manner, owing to colonialist ideologies of race, since it emphasized the alleged purity of the white people. In the narratives of evolution, the hybrid was referred to as infertile or inferior copy of the original (Kuorotti and Nyman 6). Subsequently, the representations of hybridity have changed. In contemporary cultural theories the term hybridity refers to the mixed identities, ethnic communities or the literary texts exploring the condition (Brooker 77).

⁹ See more in the introduction to the book: *Reconstructing Hybridity: Post-Colonial Studies in Transition*, Eds. Joel Kuorotti, and Jopi Nyman Rodopi, Amsterdam-New York, 2007.

that allow us to make sense of things and ourselves (Spivak 1993: 179). In order to assert American identity as her own, Jasmine spends a lot of time improving her language skills, which results in her becoming eloquent enough to tell her story in perfect English. In the process of learning English, the words from her native language start fading away: "Language on the street, on the forbidden television, at the Hayes's dinners [...] all became my language, which I learned like a child, from the first words up. The squatting fields of Hasnapur receded fast" (Mukherjee 113). The mixing of the two linguistic codes, resulting in one of them eventually taking over another, shows the extent of Jasmine's hybridization.

The concept of hybridity is tightly connected with the concept of displacement in diaspora, since the world today is characterized by constant migrations of people. Israel Nico claims that geographical displacement is a profoundly traumatic experience, while exile and diaspora are the two overlapping ways of describing this predicament. "Although generally homologous with loss, the word *diaspora*, like *exile*, has accrued a positive resonance as well, bespeaking a sense of tenacity, resistance, and preservation of faith during the worst of circumstances" (3). In diaspora, many immigrants cling to the past or to the people from their homeland, because the feeling of nostalgia often shapes immigrants' perceptions regarding their new country. However, a new country does not necessarily mean home.

The ironic example of a misfit in the novel is Professorji, Prakash's professor and role model who had lived in America for years. In the past, Professorji used to send Prakash the letters full of praise for the American way of life, opportunities and wealth. He advised him to come and try his luck there, after which Prakash and Jasmine decided to move to America. Jasmine stays with him and his family in New York for a while, soon realizing the contradiction between the professor's words in the letters and his reality. Professorji's family is completely locked away from life in America, living in memories of India, reluctant to accept their new home or let go of the past. It turns out that Professorji is not really the professor he claims to be, but an importer of human hair undergoing adjustment issues. "He had sealed his heart when he'd left home. His real life was in an unlivable land across oceans. He was a ghost, hanging on" (Mukherjee 99). American society, just like any other, has its rules and certain expectations from the immigrants regarding their assimilation. The professor's family is unwilling to obey the rules, not because they do not want to but because they do not know how. Just like most immigrants, they are torn between two completely different cultures. The professor is unwilling to admit to himself that he failed to accomplish his goals, the reason he came to America in the first place, so he lives in a lie. Therefore, Jasmine is aware of the danger of remaining an outcast and she gives her best to adjust to the new society. Although she does not completely belong in America, and she does not feel at

home there, she puts a lot of effort into changing that. Unhomeliness is the reason why immigrants often hold on to their native culture and language, idealizing their old home. It is involved in the construction of hybrid identity being an “estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world – the unhomeliness – that is the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations” (Bhabha 9). The sense of otherness that immigrants have, along with their longing to belong somewhere, leads to their turning to a group of people who come from the same country, speak the same language and share the same beliefs. This especially applies to first generation immigrants.

Therefore, in order to find the answer to the question of identity, Jasmine has to find home. Her feeling of displacement is conditioned by her immigrant identity and the life between the two worlds. In the process of transition from place to place Jasmine gradually becomes aware that she is a hybrid who would never find home by simply discarding her Indian Self, and yet she does not wallow in self-pity or nostalgia. “*I changed because I wanted to. To bunker oneself inside nostalgia, to sheathe the heart in a bulletproof vest, was to be a coward*” (Mukherjee 121). It becomes clear to the heroine that only by embracing American ways will she be able to survive. This survival instinct that she is constantly led by, gives her the strength to pursue her true Self, balancing between her Indian and American identity.

In this respect, a sharp criticism can be directed towards American (or any other) society for imposing its will on immigrants to assimilate. Some questions addressed at this point can be: to what extent is it possible to expect immigrants to assimilate? Is hybrid identity really accepted by the mainstream? Theory and praxis seem to differ a lot regarding these issues. While theory offers a possibility of reconciliation between cultural opposites, and their peaceful coexistence, in reality a strong antagonism is often expressed towards minority groups, since people have always been afraid of the unknown. The retreat from the unknown diminishes communication between different groups, leading to lack of understanding. In this process a majority culture's demands for assimilation of a minority group result in incongruity and destruction of diversity. Mutual understanding is a two-way street. Thus, a majority culture should adapt to a minority one as well, to the same extent it seeks to be acclaimed by others.

The shuttling between identities leads Jasmine to her last transformation in Iowa, where she becomes Jane, a pregnant twenty-four year old woman who lives out of wedlock with a middle-aged banker, Bud Ripplemayer. Jasmine runs away to Iowa when she recognizes Prakash's killer on the street in New York. Bud and Jasmine have an adopted son, Du, a Vietnamese refugee. Du and Jasmine share certain similarities and they understand each other very well, since both of them are immigrants in the USA, and both of them are hybrids. Just like Jasmine, Du has done his best to adapt to the American way of life.

However, the lack of home and feeling of safety that they are longing for leads them to new changes towards the end of the novel. They both run away from Iowa, Du to reunite with his sister, the only surviving member of his real family, and Jasmine to reunite with Taylor, and try once more to find herself.

Jyoti of Hasnapur was not Jasmine, Duff's day mummy and Taylor and Wylie's au pair in Manhattan; that Jasmine isn't this Jane Ripplemeyer having lunch with Mary Webb at the University Club today. And which of us is the undetected murderer of a half-faced monster, which of us has held a dying husband, which of us was raped and raped and raped in boats and cars and motel rooms? (Mukherjee 82)

These questions, indeed, remain unanswered until the end of the novel, a novel that does not seem to provide a satisfactory explanation of Jasmine's actions, which appear to be rather unmotivated. First of all, her hasty decision to leave New York and avoid a potential re-encounter with Prakash's murderer can be explained and justified by the fear that she felt. However, the same justification cannot be provided for the mysterious presence of Sukhwinder in New York. If the murderer's intention was to track down Jasmine and kill her for having witnessed the assassination of her husband, the question is why did he not kill her in India? How did he manage to find her in the USA since she had changed her identity and moved on more than one occasion? Why would he perceive Jasmine as a threat in the USA, a place so far away from their homeland, where Indian laws do not apply? However, if their encounter in the USA is a mere coincidence it does not seem very plausible. Furthermore, Jasmine's relationship with Bud seems very artificial. Not only is he a lot older than Jasmine and completely different from her, but she refuses to marry him although she is pregnant with his child. It becomes clear that Jasmine stays with Bud only because of the sense of duty that she imposes on herself, which she eventually chooses to abandon when Taylor appears and invites her to leave Bud and come with him. The contradictory decision of the heroine to leave Bud is a confirmation of both independence, so typical of her, and the lack of it, as she succumbs to fear and runs away instead of bravely facing the consequences of her choices.

If, however, certain faults of the plot are neglected and put aside, it can be said that the novel still provides an enjoyable read that tends to celebrate hybrid identity. At the same time, Mukherjee puts forward the idea of alienation from a native culture, the situation that immigrants are often faced with. Yet, her heroine does not have time for concern. In Jasmine's case, this alienation is intentional. By shifting from one place to another, she switches from one identity to another. The final result of Jasmine's change seems merely like survival which, sadly, does not bring fulfillment or a happy home. Since hybridity

is the term connected with intercultural transfer and the forms of identity such a change generates (Asheroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 58), it is not a surprise that cultural affiliation and identity are so difficult to find. There are no definite answers to the question of identity. Moreover, the right granted to each individual to identify with whomever or whichever group they want, indicates that identity is unstable and a changeable category and, to a great extent, a matter of choice. Jasmine is a proof of that.

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POTRAGA ZA DOMOM I IDENTITETOM: ZNAČENJE MESTA U ROMANU JASMIN BARATI MUKERDŽI

Jasmin je roman književnice Barati Mukerdži koji govori o Indijskoj devojci koja dolazi u Ameriku tragajući za snom o slobodi i boljem životu. Koliko god

ideja o američkom snu bila primamljiva heroini, njeno putovanje preko okeana za rezultat ima mnoge poteškoće i probleme koji se tiču prilagođavanja novom društvu. Jasmin pokušava da pronađe sebe neprestano ispitujući svoj identitet i pripadnost. Kako bi se uklopila u američko društvo, Jasmin iznova transformiše svoju ličnost. Ova potraga za sobom vodi je do saznanja da nije ni Indijka ni Amerikanka, već nešto između. Na primeru romana *Jasmin*, rad će istraživati problem potrage za identitetom sa kojim se suočavaju mnogi imigranti u dijaspori, kao i način na koji prelazak iz jednog mesta u drugo menja njihove stavove i poglede na svet.

Ključne reči: Barati Mukerdži, Jasmin, hibridni identitet, izmeštenost, dijaspora, dom

MEMORY SPACE AND SPACE MYTHIZATION – SPACE- PERCEPTION OF THE HUNGARIAN LITERATURE IN VOJVODINA IN THE 1990S

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Abstract: Among the key issues of Hungarian literature in Vojvodina during the Yugoslav wars is the discourse of space, more specifically, several acute problems of space poetics. The authors who decided to stay in their homeland embed into their texts their attitudes to the local space, local colours and the aspects of mythization and demythization. Migrant authors, on the other hand, often refer to their memory spaces. In this period, Ottó Tolnai's local texts emerge, as well as István Németh's mythicized spaces, Nándor Gion's or István Szathmári's memory spaces and Erzsébet Juhász's historical approach to the borderland area. The turn of the millennium provided an opportunity for the reappraisal of space discourses and an examination of the culture of translation.

Key Words: local space, border, local colour, mythization, paradox of the existence of a minority, stereotypes.

The outbreak of the Yugoslav war in 1991, the dangers the homeland faced, the disintegration of the country, the changing borders, migration etc. resulted in a change of attitudes, in significant movements and even outspokenness and debates. It was during the course of the late 20th century Balkan war that the concepts of *homeland*, *nation*, *faithfulness*, *border*, *family*, *destruction*, *homelessness*, as well as metaphors connected with these became topical in Serbian/Vojvodinian Hungarian literature, and in many cases the territorial nation-concept was associated with Central-Europeanism, the search for perspective and (ironically) with a shift of the *couleur locale* (often ironic). During Tito's era the national, linguistic, religious, local, regional, cultural and literary sense of identity of the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina developed in a multilingual and multicultural environment. On the one hand, it was forged by belonging to the mother tongue and the vernacular culture, and on the other hand, by being accepted as part of the South Slavic culture; it was also influenced by myths about Yugoslavism and communism (Katona 111). The national consciousness that grew stronger as the Yugoslav policy of brotherhood

and unity weakened resulted in unique cultural and literary debates, which revived the problem of dilettantism and provincialism, already topical (though in a different context) in the 1930s. In a similar vein, the concept of Vojvodinian Hungarian literature has been also approached from various viewpoints and its self-reliance has been strongly emphasized in our literary history due to different political paths. Hungarian literary criticism still faces the problem of disregarding all texts which fail to adhere to the latest theoretical frameworks in the homeland. Only these writings may become the object of literary discourse (Elek 2007: 17), while the majority of migrant authors from Vojvodina end up in an intermediate space, since they continue to write about their *own homeland* from an external viewpoint.

The wartime events of the 1990s resulted in a restructuring of the Hungarian community in Vojvodina, and also of the writers' community:¹⁰

A community has broken up, which was the victim of changes. Those who stayed and those who have emigrated have had to reestablish their identity. Those who have moved from a minority setting into the majority setting (the homeland) have had to define their position and to face relations, the fact that their identity is valued in a different way. (Katona 112)

The essays, notes, memoranda, diary notes, lyrical writings and novels published in this period are characterized by a strong sense of reality, the problem of the end and the growing influence of the media. For example, the interpretations of the homeland, of the stigmata carried and of the nation differ significantly in the texts of Erzsébet Juhász and István Németh, though it is equally important to stress the external viewpoint of migrant authors, emigrating from Vojvodina to Hungary, such as Nándor Gion, Attila Balázs, Sándor Majoros, Ottó Fenyvesi, Péter Bozsik, György Szerbhorváth and others. It is especially interesting to examine György Szerbhorváth's volumes written around the time of his emigration, since they reflect a change in his manner of writing.

Contrary to the infantile mythology of bright decay proclaimed in Radomir Konstantinović's volume entitled *A vidék filozófiája* [Philosophy of the region], a mythology of the homeland emerges, which refers to higher morals, which is hymn-like and timeless (cf. the decay of Banat, the concept of diaspora), and along with it an ironic mythology of the homeland also occurs (cf. Paunović

¹⁰ Because of the fear of war and the military call up in the 1990s, as well as the poor economic situation and later, in 1999, the bombing campaign of Yugoslavia and its consequences, large numbers of Hungarians emigrated from Vojvodina. According to some estimates, around 50,000 Hungarians migrated, mostly to European countries (Gábrity-Molnár 126). Most of them migrated to the homeland, to Hungary, because they hoped that they would return once the political and economic situation stabilizes.

143). Ethnography as a science produces impressive results, with numerous young people undertaking research into story telling or material ethnography. Interest in the theatre and in theatre criticism increases significantly.

The 1990s brought a polarisation to Hungarian cultural life in Vojvodina. The relation towards the national tradition resulted in separation, in a national and multicultural orientation. While the rapid development of information technologies aided young people's desire for unification, our age accomplished the transformation of the edge concept. Owing to minor publishers, literary evenings and a change in journal culture, readers could learn about and adopt different viewpoints. Performance art, which uses the human body as its medium and relies on the image of bodily affliction, became popular again, it was frequently part of book or journal presentations. István Domonkos's poem entitled *Kormányeltörésben* [Rudderless], written in 1971, almost became a cult text. The clustered infinitives in the poem allude to the language and identity loss of former migrant workers, a situation which became relevant again at the time of the Yugoslav wars in 1990s. Domonkos's poem is often recited at poetry competitions and literary events and lends itself to being interpreted as an existential poem. Thus, the poem, which was already considered part of the literary canon by researchers in Hungary, has been updated and reinterpreted by Hungarian readers in Vojvodina.

Younger authors follow more recent trends in literary theory; they embrace the globalized world, fashion trends, attitudes towards mass culture, though they do not form a homogeneous group. In the past two years the Yugoslav war has been the topic of two young writers' novels, Zoltán Danyi and Attila Sirbik.

Homelessness of the (E)migrant Writers

From the viewpoint of a Vojvodinian, the key problems of the last decade of the 20th century are the collapse of the Yugoslav state, collective and personal degradation, as well as the homelessness of those fleeing to Hungary to avoid the call-up. These topics are central for example in Sándor Majoros's novel entitled *Meghalni Vukovárnál* [Dying at Vukovar], in his short stories, as well as in Nándor Gion's, István Szathmári's and other writers' prose.

The way in which migrant authors present the micro community of the family likewise deserves attention. The essence of the *big adventure* is best formulated in István Szathmári's prose, who claims that the person leaving the country initially thinks more about what he has left behind than what awaits him in the unknown. Péter Bozsik's Csantavér novel, István Apró's short stories existing in an interspace, the poems of Attila Balázs, Károly Ács, Ottó Fenyvesi, Zoltán Szűgyi have all been written far from the homeland. Árpád Nagy Abonyi's

prose entitled *Tükörcelek* [Mirror tricks] represents an interplay of viewpoints, a unique quest for literary space (Hózsa 2004, 91).

In the 1990s, people living in remote regions of Vojvodina had to cope with the depressing effect of destruction and this is the topic Erzsébet Juhász's writings focus on (*Senki sehol soha* [Nobody, nowhere, never], 1992). The shipwreck metaphor, the problems of transience, of the disintegration of the country and of the virtual redrawing of maps are likewise mentioned in Erzsébet Juhász's essays, in which it is often the communication situations of the individuals remaining here and contemplating helplessly that come into the limelight. In Erzsébet Juhász's opus the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and its (re)interpretations from different points of view become important issues at the time of the disintegration of Yugoslavia (Hózsa 2009: 126).

The events of the 1990s ended with NATO's bombing campaign of Yugoslavia. Many of the Vojvodinian Hungarians who were still living in their homeland decided to flee, to cross the border, to migrate. László Végel decided to stay and started writing a wartime diary in his flat in Novi Sad. A series of wartime diaries was eventually published and the reports of the extraordinary events they contain have a documentary value. The events which occurred during the 78 days of the NATO operation presented a considerable challenge to politicians, historians, psychologists and sociologists alike. László Végel faced the challenge as a writer, with the interpretative force of an era extremely rich in events. His *Exterritórium* [Exterritory] is a circular diary, which starts on 10 June, 1999, the day the bombing was suspended and peace was declared, and goes back in time, almost like an investigation. The aim of the investigation is to gain an understanding of the world (Csányi 87). At the turn of the millennium, this catastrophic era, the author often feels alone, "like an outcast" (Végel 60). He is tormented by moral instability: he does not know what to do, what to say, he is burdened by individual responsibility or the responsibility of the community and of power. At other times, he feels unsure and redundant (Végel 121), and keeps pointing to the importance of the veracity of both the individual and the writer. Actual or symbolical depictions of darkness occur frequently. During bombing, the lights may go out for a long time and the darkness becomes depressing. But the world is also growing ever darker. The lights of European cities grow distant and so does the shimmering of the beloved sea. The author feels as if he were on "no man's land" (Végel 63) (Szekér 16).

After the outbreak of the war in 1993, the writer Nándor Gion, who was at the time the editor-in-chief of the Hungarian editorial office at Radio Novi Sad, moved to Budapest. His experiences of the period before the migration are described in his novel entitled *Izsakhár* [Issachar]. In the novel, published in 1994, Nándor Gion depicts the genesis of the war in Yugoslavia:

He describes the sheer madness, how it starts, gradually evolves and how it eventually pervades everything, seeps into every part of life until the new way of life becomes natural: the narrator learns that funerals of young soldiers become rather frequent, war profiteers proliferate, he can find himself in crossfire anywhere, Russian roulette has become popular, the arms trade blossoms. (Toldi 99)

The main character in the novel, János M. Holló, lives on the fourth floor of a block of flats, where he is writing a novel about Issachar. However, the story of the biblical figure is soon interspersed by events of the civil war which has burst out in the neighbouring country:

The dull thundering of attack aircraft and helicopters, the loud rolling of tanks, youngsters babbling about great causes, plundering nouveau riches, "volunteers" returning in coffins, arms dealers squaring accounts with each other and frightened refugees elbow into the forefront, despite the fact that Nándor Gion does not intend to put the symptoms of madness in the centre in order to appear modern. (Utasi 107)

The plot leads the reader from Issachar's story to János M. Holló's story and back. The two worlds are far from each other both in time and space, yet they resemble each other:

Izsakhár is a novel about a novel, about the opportunities of novel writing, about the extent to which the author's work, though it is set in a biblical space, is influenced by his life experiences, the age he lives in, of how he can use these to create a fictional world. Thus, the novel can almost be read as a didactic collection of techniques for turning life and reality into art. (Elek 2009, 187-188)

As the country's area shrinks so does the narrator's proper name, too. At the beginning of the novel he writes his name as János M. Holló in full, which soon becomes János M. H. and finally just J. M. H.

Rewriting of the Myths of the Past, Mythization of the Present

People torn out of myths create myths. An author who faces danger, loss, uncertainty and instability in his homeland becomes absorbed in homeland myths and family myths of the past, of memories, in the gesture of prayer, in mythological motifs, polemical moments, thus searching for his national and local identity. All this arises within a nation-state in the broader sense, or rather

as a result of the disintegration of a state which created its own exclusive monomyth (Hózsza 2004: 89).

The historical challenge emphasizes the problem of alienation and individualism: it weighs the displaced outlander status of the (e)migrant (who has been expatriated) against his status of a foreigner in his own homeland. In Ferenc Deák's drama (*Perlekedők* [Squabblers]) the Hungarian nation's hope reduces to a plateful of lentils. Death/disintegration causes private quarrels, individualism will manifest itself as the spirit of the region. Apparently, this I-game bears no relevance to the drama, though from a worm's eye or bird's eye perspective everything can be reconsidered again, particularly the various views of the nation. The Vojvodinian Hungarian drama entitled *Perlekedők* [Squabblers], featuring outstanding characters of 19th century Hungarian history like Lajos Kossuth, István Széchenyi or Ferenc Deák (with original passages from Ferenc Deák's *wax-work drama in four dazes*) was written between 1997 and 2002 and published in 2006. The dialogues in the drama increasingly emphasize money issues (wheeling and dealing), the importance of thinking as an economist, the parliamentary salary. The drama resembles an exhibition of wax figures which features historical figures of the past. Just before dying, Lajos Kossuth (1802–1894) argues in a vision with the revived statues of the reformer István Széchenyi (1791–1860) and the wise statesman Ferenc Deák (1803–1876). All three handle the debate from a personal viewpoint: they interpret the "common cause," i.e. the events of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848, relative to their own historical roles in it, and it is in this respect that they demand explanations from each other (Bence 148). The character of Ferenc Deák (the writer's namesake, as a 19th century statesman he is the sort of man who is well-suited to be the wise man of remote areas, of Vojvodina) argues with Kossuth from an exterior, marginal point of view. Széchenyi, on the other hand, is rather present as an interlocutor, who is well-versed in issues pertaining to the Délvidék (an area in the southern part of the Pannonian Plain). One might argue that this Kossuth–Széchenyi drama seemed anachronistic when it was published in 2006; however, political disputes and differences were very much the reality of the post-war new beginning. The *wax-work* suggesting finiteness is important for the dramatic conflict, and it is also one of the key words of Vojvodinian literature of the nineties. Erzsébet Juhász's novel entitled *Határregény* [Border novel] gives a wax-work portrayal of the court of Francis Joseph I of Austria, of the bygone Austro-Hungarian Empire. Ferenc Deák's wax-work drama asks the following questions: Is it possible to take a big step by waiting? Is it possible to take a big step by dethronement? Can the nation trust external forces and emigrants' platforms, in reaching a compromise, in adopting a European perspective?

The Deák drama does not resolve the dilemma about whether to stay or to go. Desperate struggle awaits the debaters and it turns out that becoming a

stranger in one's homeland is a process so lacking perspective that it even fails to create a myth. The perspective of Lajos Kossuth, the emigrant dying away from home is different, even his sculpture remains unstained by the pigeons. The historical figures fail "to keep their deaths in their bodies". The statue is an exterior, degraded image of death (Konstantinović 52). An individual cannot establish a truly personal relationship with death, statues are erected by those who come after us, mythization implies a temporal and spatial perspective.

(Ideological) Colours of Statues

In Ferenc Deák's drama *Perlekedők* [Squabblers], the sculpture of Deák has a dull colour, while the sculptures of those who flee are vivid in colour. The (ideological) colour of the sculpture and the monument is a formality which is nevertheless often associated with the national issue in texts (and debates) at the turn of the millennium. In István Németh's writings, the mother tongue becomes pallid; however, one of his ironic notes may well refer to the erection of a Hungarian monument of historical value:

If a sculpture like this is set up after all, it should not have a colour, a shade. Such a sculpture may only convey an aesthetic message and nothing else. Otherwise the citizens may not accept it and may not feel it as their own. It would appear outlandish in such an environment and some citizens may even find it humiliating. It is less important that other monuments erected in the same place may seem equally outlandish to other citizens since their opinions and their views are less important. If the latter group of citizens wishes to pay their respects to their supposed leaders, they should go to the cemetery, as they have done until now. Their prayers will offend no one there, not even the sophisticated sense of beauty. (Németh 2002: 201)

István Németh is self-critical, his view concerning the national issue of Hungarians (for whom he uses the terms Hungarians in Yugoslavia, Hungarians in Vojvodina, Hungarians in Délvidék, etc.) is conveyed in a number of his writings, as illustrated by the following excerpt:

Identity is often referred to these days, both in speech and in writing. The sense of identity. The national sense of identity. It is claimed that Hungarians in Vojvodina, in Délvidék have an extremely poor sense of identity. The Magyarabs, a small African tribe, proudly declares itself Hungarian, whereas we seem to be much less proud of our Hungarian identity. Yet this is not surprising given the numerous problems our Hungarian identity caused us particularly between the two world wars,

but also immediately after the war. [...] Our national sense of identity is determined not only by internal, domestic factors, but it is moulded, formed and crippled by the homeland, too. Either by ignoring us completely or by watching us carefully. Consequently, we become inert, dormant or worse yet, sly, even before our national sense of identity develops. (Németh 2002: 93–94)

One of the keywords of the Deák drama is treason, interpreted by individuals living in Vojvodina as a done deed. Treason is also a process; the individual gradually loses his loyalty and faith, and turns into a traitor. "Being treacherous involves a feeling of nausea and disgust, much like a rough night out. But there is no recovering from treason, not in life" (Németh 2002: 168).

István Németh's writings published at the turn of the millennium address the reader. The writer doubts the definition of loyalty, this outmoded, worn-out, obsolete word, and yet in the name of loyalty he uses words which younger generations of authors mostly consider as pertaining to nineteenth century narrative. However, they, too, turn to alterity more and more frequently: see, for example, the agitation of Dionysus, questioning transcendental stability, etc. Migration has been a current topic in Vojvodinian literature since the sixties (Gastarbeiter texts) and thus leaving can be interpreted as a longer, insuppressible process. It comes as no surprise that István Domonkos's poem entitled *Kormányeltörésben* [Rudderless] became a kind of Vojvodinian anthem in the nineties, when young people "tried to settle down in a place where they hoped to find safety and a dignified life" (Németh 2002a: 98).

Vojvodina: a Metamorphosis Pot – a Delta of Cultural Codes in Ottó Tolnai's Prose

The *delta* is one of a myriad of concepts, self-descriptive metaphors intertwined in Ottó Tolnai's literary opus:

To me, the delta is a sort of an island: a geometrical park and a jungle at the same time [...] It is a terrain where salty and fresh water mix, the place where the river and the sea engage in a continual sexual intercourse. A live model. (Tolnai 1989: 10)

The intercultural discourse of Vojvodinian literature represents a peculiar delta of intertwined, interconnecting cultural codes. At the estuary, the river gives itself up: it loses its shape, becomes spriggy, while salty and fresh water swirl and mix and in this metamorphosis the river transforms into the sea, by handing over its treasures it creates something new. The delta is a point where the end meets the beginning.

The Balkan-Mediterranean-Bačka components found in Ottó Tolnai's art are also defined by the cultural melting-pot of Vojvodina. In the 20th century this cultural region could carry on its struggle for literary-cultural canonizing in a relatively free intellectual atmosphere. Tolnai's fundamentally "hedonistic orientation" (Fekete 33) of the world is exalted by the experience of diversity and the awe-inspiring contrasts in Vojvodina.

In the late-modern and postmodern era, multi-rooted identity and the "plural code system" (Virág 38) occur naturally in the context of former Yugoslav cultural canons, which is a determining feature of minority cultures anyway. With memories of the former Pannonian Sea – "here on the Seabed" (Tolnai 1987: 212) – with the proximity of the Mediterranean, Vojvodina creates the image of the delta-metaphor: the fusion of the river and the sea, salty and fresh water whirling, the fertile confluence, the contact between the end and the beginning.

Tolnai exposes his poetry to the enormous influence of late modern Yugoslav literature: he emphasizes the impact of Krleža, Andrić, Crnjanski, Vasko Popa, Slavko Mihalić, Radomir Konstantinović, Antun Šoljan, Miodrag Bulatović and Danilo Kiš. So much so, that eventually the whole concept of being a poet becomes intercultural for Tolnai: the sea motif embodied. Without the sea, without the "azure", there is no poetry, no poesy. The sea motif and the delta motif are the imaginative base categories of this art.

For Tolnai, making a home, creating a world of one's own, a private universe is synonymous with the incorporation of Vojvodina, Hungary and areas of the former Yugoslavia. Contact with the distant sea grants Vojvodina its peculiar character:

Namely, one of Vojvodina's dimensions is the lowland dimension, the other one is the Mediterranean-Balkan dimension. One can encounter six different cultures almost on a daily basis. All of these are of a different colour and represent a world different from what we are used to seeing in Hungarian literature,

Tolnai says in the volume of interviews entitled *Rózsaszín flastrom* [The pink patch] (Szajbély 71–72). He modestly summarizes his uniqueness in Hungarian literature by claiming that he has a sea. Nevertheless, István Ladányi, who follows-up the route of the sea motif, points out that by the concept of the sea, Tolnai actually refers to "this 'completely different world,'" i.e. he bases his uniqueness on the "Yugoslav' aspect" (Ladányi 49). The trope of the sea and the delta become Vojvodinian in their *peculiar* meaning.

Tolnai's literary opus represents an encyclopaedia of meaning associations of the sea and the azure:

In Tolnai's works, the sea, attracting, sucking up everything is the territory of multiculturalism and variety, of the here and the away, of the finite and the infinite, of life and death, the visible and the invisible. Tolnai, a specialist of the aquamarine, ultramarine, ultraviolet, violet, cobalt and indigo blue, creates his encyclopaedia of the azure by mediating between this familiar typography, topography and architecture. (Virág 44)

The examination of the development of the sea trope shows that in the very beginning Tolnai completely identified with the sea, the Mediterranean atmosphere with a wonder of nature, seawater with amniotic fluid, as an affection for safety and origin, immateriality, the eternal and nought. In the sixties this relation was not yet addressed as a problem of identity. In the seventies and eighties, however, emotions became contradictory and conflicting. The need to belong both to Hungarian literature and to the Adriatic becomes even more prominent. Eventually, the "azure express," the Mediterranean becomes a symbol of distress, the synonym of a fatal tragedy.

Around this time, Tolnai involves in his mythization of the sea motif former writers from Subotica, namely Géza Csáth and Dezső Kosztolányi. The mixture of biographical elements from Csáth's and Kosztolányi's lives, bits and pieces taken from their works and fictional elements results in an unusual narrative concerning the Adriatic and the question of identity.

The volume *Balkáni babér* [Balkan laurel], published in 2001, already describes the fatal, tragic loss of the sea and of the poetic voice. In the context of this mythology the loss is universal, since the poetic vision portrays the Balkans and the Mediterranean as one. István Ladányi writes: "For Tolnai, the sea does not refer to the Adriatic only, nor to the Mediterranean, but it also implies the Balkans, too, at least as the background, as an additional or counterpointing medium in the background" (Ladányi 64). With the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the loss of the sea also implies the poet's complete failure, his expulsion from poetry.

The relationships between the various geographical units carry the Mediterranean-Balkan effect further, almost imperceptibly. Tolnai's fictive world emerges from the actual landscape: his narratives are centred around Novi Sad, Subotica, Szeged, Stari Žednik, Prizren, Budapest, Palić, Balaton, the Telep (part of Novi Sad), Mol, Zagreb, Hvar, Senta, Martonoš, Novi Kneževac, Adorjan, etc. The sea of light, the blinding splendour undertake the strangest, most bizarre wanderings in this world. Associations to Vojvodina are woven into the network of sea motifs; its lakes and rivers, the Tisza, the Danube, the Palić, the Vértó all play a special role. The following passage, based on a child's false belief, reflects the interdependence and close connection between Vojvodina and the sea:

Interestingly, I believed for a very long time, and to be honest, I still believe it to a point, that the Tisza flows directly into the sea, somewhere after Martonoš and Novi Kneževac, because the world beyond Martonoš and Novi Kneževac simply did not exist for me, so the sea or whatever unfathomed blue abyss, may well have been there. (Tolnai 1987: 239)

Thus, references to the Mediterranean flash into stories taking place in Vojvodinian space at all times. The azure's distorting blueness finds its way into the most idyllic picture of Bačka. The delta situation, as a complex, ambivalent state of being, the struggle of the differences, the intercourse of the beginning and the end moulds, washes, curls, claims and withdraws with the restlessness of the water the semantics of this emblematic system. Something breaks up unceasingly and turns into something else. Vojvodina: a live model.

Breaking Taboos

In the course of the nineties, taboos started to break down, there was a proliferation of autobiographical works and works dealing with the question of nation, the world views of writers changed, local texts came into the limelight, the problem of mixed marriages had to be dealt with as well. Never had there been so many literary evenings, for example in Subotica, as in the last decade of the twentieth century. Interest in literary cult creation and literature was growing, the popularity of Kosztolányi days and the Kosztolányi camp was enormous, it was almost as if they were signals of one's identity. Goli otok, the barren island that was the site of a political prison in Yugoslavia, was gradually being exposed in the press and in literature, the texts of the inmates (their prison poems and camp poems) that have been lying in drawers for such a long time also deserve in-depth research in the future.

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GEDÄCHTNISRAUM UND MYTHISIERUNG DES RAUMES – ANSCHAUUNG DES RAUMES IN DER UNGARISCHEN LITERATUR DER VOJVODINAIN DEN 1990ER JAHREN

Der Diskurs des Raumes, beziehungsweise einige überragende Probleme der Raumpoetik gehören zu den Schlüsselfragen der ungarischen Literatur der Vojvodina, die sich mit den jugoslawischen Kriegen befasst. Die Autoren, die hier geblieben sind, haben in ihren Texten die Attitüde der Zuwendung zum lokalen Raum, zum Lokalkolorit, und die Aspekte der Mythisierung und Demythisierung zum Ausdruck gebracht, die Schriftsteller, die emigriert sind, haben über die Fragen der Gedächtnisräumen geschrieben. In der erwähnten Periode sind die lokalen Texte von Ottó Tolnai, die mythisierten Räume von István Németh, die Gedächtnisräume von Nándor Gion oder István Szathmári, und die, aus der historischen Hinsicht, Annäherungen an die Grenze von Erzsébet Juhász beachtenswert. Die 2000er Jahre haben Anlass zu einer Neubewertung der Raumdiskurse und der Untersuchung der Übersetzungskultur gegeben.

Schlüsselwörter: lokaler Raum, Grenze, Lokalkolorit, Mythisierung, Paradox des Minderheitendaseins, Stereotypen

TONI MORRISON'S JAZZ CITY – A LOCUS OF BLACK PRIDE AND TRAUMA

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Abstract: Space is never a neutral category, it carries with it a history (personal, political, national, or cultural) and thus is central to the comprehension of individual or collective identity. In her works, Toni Morrison determinedly uses enclosed spaces in order to achieve the connection between space and characters' identities (in *Beloved* it is the house at 124 Bluestone Road, in *Jazz* – Harlem, in *Paradise* – the town of Ruby, in *Tar Baby* – a Caribbean island). The novel *Jazz* can be viewed as a novel about a city: it explores the economic possibilities in the city, creates erotic images typical of urban areas, depicts transformation of individual consciousness and, more than anything, delineates the urban spirit of jazz. On the other hand, it "is a novel historicising racial trauma," portraying black people's attempt to release themselves from the grip of the past at the time when jazz music, deeply rooted in the black slave experience in the US, started to become widely popular among the Harlem inhabitants. This is how, in Morrison's *Jazz City*, black pride entwines with black trauma, making the City one of the main characters in the novel. The author of the paper analyzes the crafty networking of the City, jazz and the characters in Morrison's literary focus on the dehumanizing effect of the City illustrated in a *crime passionnel* – the murder of a young girl by her much older lover at the end of novel.

Key Words: space, the locus, Toni Morrison, jazz, racial trauma.

Introduction

Space is never a neutral category, it carries with it a history (personal, political or cultural) and thus is central to the comprehension of individual or collective identity. In her works, Toni Morrison uses enclosed spaces in order to achieve the connection between space and characters' identities (in *Beloved* it is 124, in *Jazz* – Harlem, in *Paradise* – Ruby). For Morrison, the connection between space and identity is central and when reading a Morrison novel the reader becomes immediately aware of the significance of location, in this paper referred to as "locus," i.e. a particular place where something occurs. Therefore, her fiction is a rich territory for the exploration of the relation between identity (racial and individual) and space – there's a vast space of physical and synthetic terrains she creates.

If we accept the geographical division of spaces into rural and urban, it is abundantly clear that Morrison's *Jazz* (1992) is a novel about a city, i.e. the City: it explores the economic possibilities in the city, creates erotic images typical of urban areas, depicts transformation of individual consciousness and, more than anything, delineates the urban spirit of jazz. Looking from another perspective, however, it "is a novel historicising racial trauma" (Matus 122), portraying black people's attempt to release themselves from the grip of the repressed past. As in Morrison's entire literary opus, "it reconstitutes the social history of America by constructing historical knowledge" (Grewal 119) from the point of view of the oppressed.

The Locus

The action of the novel takes place in Harlem in 1926, the year in which the narrator states that "history is over, you all, and everything's ahead at last" (Morrison 7). Reflecting on the atmosphere in Harlem in 1920s, she¹¹ adds that "all the wars are over and there will never be another one." Before World War I the majority of black people in the US lived in the South, but after the war they started migrating to the industrial North. At the time of the novel, Harlem was the largest black community in America, it was called a capital for the race, an intellectual centre for the black, "a cultural Mecca for Americans of African descent" (Tally 60). Its population doubled between 1920 and 1930. By setting the story in mid-1920s, Morrison locates it in the time of Harlem Renaissance when black intellectuals engaged themselves in "race-building" and "history-remaking" (W.E.B. Du Bois), when black writers won literary prizes (Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston), and when jazz music was played and recorded. The main characters of the novel, Joe Trace and his wife Violet, moved to New York back in 1906. They found jobs and started climbing up the social ladder. Through Joe's social engagement, the readers can learn about the history of the City: in 1917 Joe's head was injured in racial riots, in 1919 he marched the streets of New York with the First World War black veterans. These events that took place in the City left a psychological *trace* on Joe Trace's search for support in the community since he had never known his mother.

Jazz gives an account of the city seen from the eyes of the country folk arriving in the rich and complex urban area and is a record of their "amazement of throwing open the window and being hypnotized for hours by people on the

¹¹ Although much has been said on the "indefinite" gender of the narrator, I'll use the feminine gender here, for the practical reason in addition to the fact that Toni Morrison explained in *Beloved* that the sound sth – the first thing the narrator utters at the very beginning of *Jazz* – is the sound "a woman makes when she misses the needle's eye." Therefore the careful Morrison reader may assume that the anonymous narrator of *Jazz* is a woman particularly given the narrator's gossipy nature.

street below" (Morrison 34). It seems that these migrants fall in love with the city at first sight. Such a phenomenon of encountering the urban culture captivates the narrator too who describes it as a need to "watch everything and everyone" (Morrison 8). She is influenced by the City to the extent that she becomes an unreliable story-teller, even though all-knowing, enchanted by the City's "dirty, get-on-down" (jazz) music, its "unbelievable sky" (Morrison 35), and "sweetheart weather" (Morrison 195). She easily admits that the City distorts her feelings: "A city like this one makes me dream tall and feel in on things" (Morrison 7).

Undoubtedly, the City is one of the main characters in the novel, perhaps the most important one, marking a place of a new beginning. Accounts of Harlem in the book are numerous and enthusiastic, summarized in the one-sentence-long narrator's confession: "I am crazy about this City" (Morrison 7). It is a place where everyone can thrive, both economically and emotionally: "White people literally threw money at you – just for being neighbourly: opening a taxi door, picking up a package. And anything you had or made or found you could sell in the streets" (Morrison 106). The omniscient, yet undependable, narrator also notices "all sorts of ignorance and criminality" in the City: "I like the way the City makes people think they can do what they want and get away with it" (Morrison 8). The jazz age in Harlem brought violent change into the lives of Violet, Joe and his much younger lover Dorcas, the main characters in the novel. Like thousands of others, Violet and Joe Trace headed to Harlem to escape violence and persecution in the epidemic of race riots which broke out early in the twentieth century. This quality of offering a refuge makes the City a place of a great hope for the future:

fascination, permanent and out of control, seizes children, young girls, men of every description, mothers, brides, and barfly women, and if they have their way and get to the City, they feel more like themselves, more like the people they always believed they were. (Morrison 35)

While moving to Harlem from the South, they felt joy and excitement about their future environment:

They weren't even there yet and the City was speaking to them. They were dancing. And like a million others, *chests pounding*, tracks controlling their feet, they stared out the windows for the first sight of the City that danced with them, proving already how much it loved them. Like a million more they could hardly wait to get there and *love* it back. (Morrison 32)

Living in this kind of a locus makes its (black) inhabitants feel human, as if the city had some humanizing effect on them and they can finally become the sort of person they have always wanted to.

This living-in-the-paradise feeling is contributed to by the jazz music, perhaps the most significant cultural event in the 1920s in black America, intertwined with the painful history of African Americans. Nevertheless, in those times jazz music was seen as a symbol of social decay because its beginnings were commonly associated with Storyville, the prostitution district in New Orleans.¹² It was connected with "crime, feeble-mindedness, insanity and sex" (Matus 139) and was constantly attacked by the press. Morrison's characters blame it for improper behaviour: "It made you do unwise disorderly things. Just hearing it was like violating the law" (Morrison 58). It becomes obvious that in the nineteen twenties jazz was not a widely respectable musical form. For some people, if not most of them, jazz was related to sensual pleasures and viewed as sordid. However, in its beginnings jazz was a non-white, non-European form of entertainment, which gave it a special quality of solely black heritage. This may be the reason why Toni Morrison wanted to use jazz structure in literature and to incorporate a long history of black music into a traditional genre of a novel (Rice 155), to intertwine notes with words. The narrator of *Jazz* manages to portray a fast pace of life in the Big Apple, a city emerging and developing simultaneously with jazz music.

The characters in the novel resemble a jazz trio, with Joe Trace as a bandleader and the narrator as a sideman. Dorcas can be interpreted as an instrument – the one the bandleader plays, but simultaneously Joe is seen as being played on or even played for. Here is one example of author's skillfulness at conveying music through words:

knowing that there was no place to be where somewhere, close by, somebody was not *licking his licorice stick, tickling the ivories, beating his skins, blowing off his horn* while a knowing woman sang *ain't nobody going to keep me down you got the right key baby but the wrong keyhole you got to get it bring it and put it right here, or else.* (Morrison 60)

The rhythm of jazz is splendidly imitated with shortened vowels, *-icks* and *-ings* making a counterpoint, the ambiguity of the names of instruments exploited artfully with easily recognizable sexual metaphors: licorice stick – the clarinet, skins – the drums, ivories – the piano. Some parts seems to be the repetiton of other parts, or they sound as their echo, the commas speed up the tempo. Throughout the novel, the language, the non-standard punctuation,

¹² Many people continue to associate Storyville with the origins of jazz music, even though this is now regarded as inaccurate.

curious repetitions of words, a distinct rhythm make us convinced that the author uses the principles of jazz to structure the novel. We can reasonably ask the question: what is the main signifier of meaning in this text – the word or the sound? The words that we read or the sounds that we can hear? Because of the vocal quality of the text, we can easily describe it as a songbook. Early jazz bands were usually composed of a mixture of the trumpet or cornet, clarinet, trombone, tuba, piano, drums, saxophone, guitar or string bass. Morrison remains faithful to the history of jazz music by never mentioning instruments which had not yet been used on the jazz scene.

The Trauma

In addition to capturing the excitement of the new beginning for numerous migrants, Morrison also focuses on the City's limitations and frequent disadvantageous effect on the newcomers. If we investigate the historical archives, we will learn that in the early 1920s an average Harlemiter worked in menial or unskilled positions (as in the 1890s) and earned less than other New Yorkers, but paid more for housing (Matus 131). Violet starts out working as a house help ("going into service"), and Joe works shoe leather, rolls tobacco, cleans fish at night and toilets by day before he becomes a waiter and eventually begins selling beauty products. It appears that Morrison wants to show how "subjectivities and identities are produced through the conditions of racism and oppression specific to the first three decades of the twentieth century" (Matus 129).

On the one hand, the City is a place of black pride, and on the other – of racial trauma: the father of Joe's eighteen-year-old lover Dorcas died in the riots in which two hundred black men were killed even though he himself was not involved in the riots and had no weapon; Dorcas's mother was burnt to death when her house was torched as a result of racial terrorism; Alice Manfred, Dorcas's aunt, stopped travelling out of Harlem after having learned that outside its borders she could easily become a target of racial torture and humiliation. Towards the end of the novel, Morrison makes a turn in positively describing the advantages of the urban life through Violet's confession: "Before I came North I made sense and so did the world. We didn't have nothing but we didn't miss it" (Morrison 207). She continues depicting a dehumanizing effect of the City, saying she forgot it was her life: "just ran up and down the streets wishing I was somebody else" (Morrison 208).

However, it may be said that jazz and its *language* became a cure for black people, a means of preserving African American culture and tradition along with the painful and traumatic history of slavery which had begun on slave ships two centuries before. In order to picture a profound change that the journey from the South to the North made on Joe and Violet, Morrison had to

employ radical narrative strategies such as multiple viewpoints and, ultimately, maintaining an oral (musical) mode of storytelling through the jazz pace of the novel.

Conclusion

For yet another time, Morrison "focuses on the painful race matters that have long occupied her" (Bouson 190). However, the experience of reading this novel is different and it would not be wrong to say that jazz music and Harlem are the main protagonists of the novel, because the author wants to transpose the music which expresses all the pain and suffering, sorrow and joy of her people into a different medium. The time has come when the role of that music be taken by literature – the art of words and fiction – and tell the story of African American people to the rest of the world. While in *Beloved* the structure of blues serves to remind us of the dark history of slavery, now – several decades later – in *Jazz* Morrison uses jazz structure to write about people born in the contemporary time when there is no slavery who have run away from the penurious South to the economically developed North in search of a better life. As she has admitted, the language of the novel should produce the same effect on the black people as the music did before (Carmean 8), i.e. it should be the means of maintaining the culture of the community.

In this novel, space is described with the characteristics typically attributed to jazz music: it has the power to transpose the listener (in this case, the reader) to another time and space. Because of this escapist power, jazz musicians used to call it devilish music. The novel's specific audio quality serves to present Morrison's Harlem of the 1920s both as a place of refuge and space of resistance. Its historical function of cultural and economic capital of black America is underlined in narrator's picturing of "the glittering city" (Morrison 35) and its "race music" (Morrison 79). Nevertheless, despite its title and usage of musical structure, *Jazz*, certainly the most vocal of all Morrison's novels, does not tell a story about the jazzy nature, but about deep psychological wounds of African American people.

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GRAD U DŽEZU TONI MORISON – MESTO PONOSA I TRAUMA CRNAČKOG NARODA

Prostor nikada nije neutralna kategorija, već uvek nosi određenu istoriju (ličnu, političku, nacionalnu, kulturnu) i stoga ima ključnu važnost za razumevanje individualnog ili kolektivnog identiteta. U svojoj prozi, Toni Morison uporno koristi konkretan prostor kako bi ostvarila vezu između prostora i identiteta njenih likova (u *Voljenoj* takav prostor je kuća broj 124 u ulici Bluestone Road, u *Džezu* – Harlem, u *Raju* – gradić Rubi, u *Lutki od katrana* – jedno karijsko ostrvo). Roman *Džez* se može posmatrati i kao roman o gradu: u njemu se istražuju ekonomske mogućnosti u jednom gradu, stvaraju erotske slike karakteristične za gradska područja, opisuje transformacija pojedinačne svesti i, pre svega, govori o urbanom duhu džeza. S druge strane, to je „roman koji govori o istoriji postojanja rasne traume“, jer opisuje crnce koji nastoje da se oslobode stega prošlosti u periodu kada džez muzika, koja je duboko ukorenjena u prošlosti crnačkih robova u Americi, biva sve popularnija među stanovnicima Harlema. U tom smislu, u romanu *Džez* Toni Morison, ponos crnačkog naroda prožimaju njihove traume iz prošlosti, a Grad, kako se čitalac upućuje na Harlem, postaje jedan od glavnih likova u romanu. U ovom radu analizira se vešto prožimanje Grada, džeza i likova tokom Morisonine književne usredsređenosti na dehumanizujući uticaj Grada opisan kroz *crime passionnel* – ubistvo mlade devojkice koje je počinio njen stariji ljubavnik.

Ključne reči: prostor, locus (lat), Toni Morison, džez, rasna trauma.

THE TRANSLATION OF MULTILINGUAL LITERATURE IN A MIGRANT WORLD. THE CASE OF JUNOT DIAZ

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Abstract: Due to emigration waves in recent decades, multilingual literature has become increasingly common (Knauth 2007). It is therefore natural that there should be an increase in the research on this kind of literature (Grutman 2009). Countries like the United States have been an economic attraction pole for many years and have had a Latino literature for half a century. Being one of the most representative migrant groups in the United States the Latino community, whose migration tradition and miscegenation goes back so far in time, gave rise to a language of its own: Spanglish. Over the last fifty years a group of writers has been making use of this "language," emblemizing some sort of "Latino identity." Their literature is multilingual in that it mixes two languages, even in a same sentence (Stavans 2013). Are these expressions of "group belonging" being preserved when they are translated? Can we discover some sort of "identity" when we collect the expressions of Spanglish in literature and does this identity vanish when it is translated? In this article we analyse the translations into Spanish of the Dominican migrant writer Junot Diaz. We try to answer the question if the Spanglish component in his literature is essential to Junot Diaz's art and is it an essential expression of the writer's own identity? The answer to this question might not be straightforward.

Key Words: Junot Díaz, migration, literary translation, Spanglish, identity.

Multilingual Literature

Multilingual Literature is prone to become a phenomenon on the increase now that migrants are flooding into countries where a language is spoken which these people seldom or never had any contact with before. However, whereas in the past, exiles or other migrants used to either adapt their writings to the language of their new environment or have their work translated, many examples can now be found where the foreign language is left as such, as a testimony of the fact that the writer is not a native.

An early and eloquent example of this is Emine Sevgi Özdamar in the nineties, who mixed copious examples of her native Turkish with the German in her novels. Around the same period the Iranian author Kader Abdolah started including lengthy passages in Persian in his books, whereas more recently Fouad

Laroui, who writes in French, regularly uses Arabic. In the United States, the presence of Hispanic immigrants led to the birth of Spanglish, of which Junot Díaz, the object of this article, makes copious use. "Spanglish" here is used as short for "using Spanish in an English context," since the definition of what exactly Spanglish is is subject to debate.

In an attempt to understand this phenomenon and its implications, the concept of "identity" is a recurring one (Stavans 2008). But defining "identity" is notoriously difficult. Writers come from a culture, have an identity, but how do these concepts express themselves? Few studies have been conducted on the way in which identity comes to expression in the literature of migrant writers who, *par excellence*, are the ones among their kind who would vocalise this search for a new identity, or the impossibility of relinquishing the old one. Identity as going together with language is taken for granted, but should it? Or should we consider it a consequence of the romantic vision of "mother tongue"? (Grutman 183) It is a concept used profusely and discussed even in newspapers, but notoriously difficult to define.

The reasons why a literary work ends up being "multilingual" can be various, but the affirmation of a specific identity is one that is often mentioned and the identification of language with identity, and culture, is one of the most frequent. So much so that people can feel they have lost their identity when they lose their "original" language. In the case of migrants, this condition seems to be even more visible, as we can see in the success of so-called "heritage schools." This link between identity and language, and preferably the language of the "forefathers," is felt as so essential by second and third generation immigrants that they claim "not even to know their own language," if they have no control of the language of their kinsmen who emigrated (Samata 2014). Strange though this might sound, facts suggest that identity does not depend on language. ETA-members, to cite an extreme example, felt very much like having a distinct Basque identity, even though many, maybe the majority did not speak any Euskara. American Indians still feel "Indian" in spite of having lost their language. Deaf people obviously have an identity, even if they cannot speak any language at all. Even so, the identification of language and identity is very strong and Junot Díaz, the author who is the subject of this article, seems to think the same: "The code switching can also imply a political act, since its deliberate use signifies a reaffirmation of Latin identity within the United States."¹³ Within the purpose of this article I do not want to debate the question of whether identity and language really coincide, but I do want to draw attention to the fact that it is a common belief, but that apparently only groups of people who can be

¹³ El cambio de código también puede implicar un acto político, ya que su uso deliberado significa una reafirmación de la identidad latina dentro de Estados Unidos (Díaz in Cresci 2014, no page numbers, my translation).

deemed to be discriminated against mention this as important. Descendants of Germans, Swedes or Italians in the United States do not seem to feel the urge to reclaim the language of their ancestors. In the case of Hispanics, the strong feeling to be differentiated from the others, to stick out, seems to be a consequence, just as much from the wish not to be confounded with the "whites" and the "blacks," as to react against the rejection of (preponderantly) the "whites." Bailey (2002), on whom I draw heavily here, gives a detailed overview of the particularities of the language spoken by the Dominican community in the United States and its sociological embedding. Dominican immigrants come from a society, where there is racism, but where this racism occurs along the lines of a colour "gradation." "Black" are the Haitians. When settling in the USA, they find themselves in a society where the divide runs between whites and non-whites, which makes them stress the importance of Spanish, in order not to be confounded with the African Americans, with whom they share neighbourhoods and schools, for economic reasons. Authors who come from these Latino communities have frequently made use of Spanish in their writings, and this in several different ways. Authors like Julia Álvarez or Sandra Cisneros will use Spanish words and expressions, but in a transparent way, possibly with a translation (López and Requena, Jiménez Carra). Junot Díaz is peculiar in the sense that he takes it further and uses quite a lot of Spanish in his books, without any translation. Junot Díaz sees this in the following way:

I feel I'm not a voyeur nor am I a native informer. I don't explain cultural things, with italics or with exclamation marks or with side bars or asides. I was aggressive about that because I had so many negative models, so many Latinos and black writers who are writing to white audiences, who are not writing to their own people. If you are not writing to your own people, I'm disturbed because of what that says about your relationship to the community you are in one way or another indebted to. You are only there to loot them of ideas, and words, and images so that you can coon them to the dominant group. That disturbs me tremendously. (Céspedes 900, cited in Boyden & Goethals 22)

Junot Díaz apparently writes "for his own people," giving something back, by expressing himself in the way they do. We understand that mixing Spanish words, sentences, expressions in his literature would thus not add to some "couleur locale," but express in some way the Dominican identity, give it voice. If this is true, then a translation of his works would mean an almost 'ethical' challenge for his translators, especially in the case of a Spanish translation which will automatically eliminate all traces of this identity. The German and Dutch translator of *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, which is the novel we will scrutinize in more detail, played safe, and simply left all the Spanish

occurrences in the novel intact, and translated them in a glossary. The Spanish translator did the same, but that meant that the text became uniformly Spanish. In order to gauge what the impact of this was, we listed all the instances of Spanish in the original English novel. The question for us was to know what these passages meant. Were they more than some "couleur locale," adding flavour to an otherwise homogeneous literary discourse? Does something essential get lost, or is the text simply coming back to its homeland?

Junot Díaz

Junot Diaz is an American novelist and short story writer, born in 1968 in the Dominican Republic. When he was six years old his parents moved to New Jersey, following the example of thousands of other Dominicans.¹⁴ Junot Díaz's best language now is English and he has some difficulty in expressing himself in Spanish, as can be inferred from a number of YouTube interviews. Nevertheless, the use of Spanish is one of the main characteristics of his books and maybe one of the reasons for his success. He also identifies himself as an immigrant, as a Latino, as a Dominican, and he often seems to speak about 'them' when he speaks about the Americans. Junot Díaz is also a very political figure always speaking out on civil rights and against "white supremacy."

Spanish, thus, or Spanglish is a characteristic ingredient of Diaz's prose. It makes his books sound very "real," a reflection of how "his people" speak. This is an example:

They drove past a bus stop and for a second Oscar imagined he saw his whole family getting on a *guagua*, even his poor dead *abuelo* and his poor dead *abuela*, and who is driving the bus but the Mongoose, and who is the *cofrador* but the Man Without a Face.

Spanglish is a less recent phenomenon than some people think. There has been contact between Spanish-speaking and English-speaking communities ever since the sixteenth century, but contact between both languages has intensified mostly after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848, when Mexico sold Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Utah and Nevada to the US. Suddenly the Spanish-speaking inhabitants were forced to use English as the language of

¹⁴ "Huge numbers of Dominicans have moved out of their home country in search of a better life in North America. According to the U.S. Census, in 1990 511,297 Dominicans were living as permanent residents in the United States; over 65% of them were residing in the state of New York. The rest of the Dominican population in the United States is spread throughout the country, with the most numerous contingents residing — in descending order — in the following states: New Jersey, Florida, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, California, Maryland, Texas, Pennsylvania, and Washington." (Torres-Saillant 1998: 61)

administration and education. Evidently most of them wanted to retain their identity. But even if Spanglish is not a recent phenomenon, only some sixty years ago has the term been coined and have there been people in favour of it being recognised as a language. The staunchest defender of this stance is Ilan Stavans (2013), himself originally a Mexican of Jewish descent, but now residing in the US.

Multilingual Novels

Our question is "what happens to a multilingual novel when it is translated into one of the languages that is used in it as a stylistic device?" We use the word "stylistic" in its most general sense of "not pertaining to the denotational message of the novel."

The use of Spanglish in literature is a bit different in the whole of multilingual literature, and not very typical of it since, in mainstream multilingual literature, languages are separated. A Turkish writer such as Emine Sevgi Özdamar uses Turkish and German alternatively. The same happens with Kader Abdolah, who intersperses his Dutch novels with citations in Persian. Spanglish is different in that it intermingles Spanish and English, often in the same sentence. Sometimes whole Spanish words or sentences are used in a predominantly English text, sometimes English words are hispanicised in a predominantly Spanish text. In the case under scrutiny, only the first procedure is used as there are no occurrences of English words that have been transformed into Spanish. The bulk of the text is in English, but there are numerous occasions in which Spanish is used.

Now "what is the function of this kind of code-switching and what is the relationship with Diaz being a migrant?" Does this choice of words tell us something about the migrant condition, about the identity of a migrant in the USA and in the world in general? And if it does, is it something essential and should it be preserved in a translation?

There have been a number of research articles on the translation of dialects, but few on the translation of interlanguages such as Spanglish. First of all we could ask ourselves what the legitimacy of Diaz's Spanglish is. To what extent is it "real"? It is beyond doubt that there are several Spanglishes. There is a Puerto Rican Spanglish, a Cuban, a Dominican, etc. They are *identifiable* by a "native" Spanglish speaker. But even so, Junot Diaz is writing in English for a basically American public and wants to be understandable by this public. In the opinion of Michiko Katukani, Díaz's Spanish is "a sort of streetwise brand of Spanglish that even the most monolingual reader can easily inhale" (2016), so Junot Díaz is not really writing for a Spanglish-speaking Dominican audience. Díaz's Spanglish is indeed mostly transparent, there is an evident will to communicate. Even when he says "Forget that *hijo de la porra*, that

comehuevo," it is obvious that both of these substantives refer to someone in a not so gentle way, even if the reader doesn't know exactly what it means.¹⁵ In spite of an apparent desire to address his own community, Junot Diaz wants to communicate with "the others" and tell the reader something about this community. When one speaks about the multiplicity of languages in a novel, one does not necessarily speak about migration. Beckett, for example, probably never considered himself an exile. In the case of Junot Diaz, however, it is an issue. Here migration expresses itself linguistically.

The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao

The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao consists of 352 pages (93,000 words) and there are around 924 occurrences of Spanish, words or whole sentences, an average of somewhat less than three occurrences a page. A few examples, apart from the ones already mentioned:

Unlike his sister, who fought boys and packs of morena girls who hated her thin nose and straightish hair.
--

And since her mother was una maldita borracha (to quote Oscar's mom), Olga smelled on some days of ass, which is why the kids took to calling her Mrs. Peabody.

Oye, parigüayo, y qué pasó con esa esposa tuya?

These are three types of occurrences here: a word, a series of words and a whole sentence. The occurrences can be classified in various ways. One of them is the origin of the words: standard Spanish or Dominican. Most of the Spanish in Oscar Wao is standard Spanish while words like *parigüayo*, *fukú*, *guangua*, *toto* are Dominican.

Another way of classifying the Spanish items in the book is by what they refer to.¹⁶ We found that a few categories stand out: family, history and politics, bad words, names to refer to women, names to refer to men, food and religion.

1. Family items are the expected ones:
tío, tía, abuelo, abuela, madre, mi'ja, hermanita, papá, mamá, bebé, hermanas, Papi, mi'jita, mi hijo, madrina.
2. There are several different words that refer to women:

¹⁵ Having said that, there is an internet site dedicated to meticulously explaining some unclear words and expressions in Oscar Wao: <http://www.annotated-oscar-wao.com/>

¹⁶ I would like to thank Lara De Wilder for compiling this corpus of occurrences.

guapa, señora, muchacha, muchachita, loca, diosa, campesina, la grande, la pequeña, media-campesina, criada, princesa, mesera, chica, "mujer alegre," bailarina, La Fea, doña, mi monita, negrita, mi negrita, belleza, mujeres, flaquita, mujer, criada, criadas, bellezas, pobrecita, china, mulata, india, negra

3. Strangely, names that refer to men are much less:
macho, muchacho, guapo, caballero, hombre, un buen amigo, guapo
4. Words related to love:
un beso, mi amor, novia, novio, novios, Casanova, ex-novio, amor.
5. History plays an important part in the novel:
Palacio, El Jefe, caudillo, sindicatos, comunista, políticos, Partido Dominicano, Jefe, democracia.
6. Terms of abuse are rife:
puta, animal, benditos, bruja, bruto, cara de culo, caramba, cochinos, cojones, coño, desgraciado, diabla, diabluras, esponja, fea, femenino, gordo, hija de la gran puta, hijo-de-la-gran-puta, idiota, infelices, infierno, jodido, ladroncitos, ladrones, maldita borracha, maldito, maricón, puerca, puta mayor, sucias, sucio, tacaña, zángana.
7. There is also a strong racial aspect to the story, so names referring to the ethnic origin of people are important. Sometimes they double with other aspects, mostly femininity or masculinity:
mulato, moreno, morena, latino, morenito, caribeña, cubana, india, sureño, mulatas, haitiano, boricua, negra, yanquis.
8. Terms referring to religion or superstition, Voodoo and others, are also mentioned in Spanish:
fukú, fufus, zafa, la Ciguapa¹⁷, hija de Liborio¹⁸, baká¹⁹, guanguas, azabaches,

¹⁷ A Ciguapa is a mythological creature of Dominican folklore. They are commonly described as having human female form with brown or dark blue skin, backward facing feet (to mislead those that would follow their tracks), and very long manes of smooth, glossy hair that covers their otherwise naked bodies. They supposedly inhabit the high mountains of the Dominican Republic, and are commonly assumed to derive from the Maboya of Taino mythology.

¹⁸ Dominican voodoo religious leader said to have performed miracles

¹⁹ En la magia del vodu haitiano y dominicano, el Baká o Bacá, es un ser poderoso, maligno, de apariencia animal: perro, chivo, caballo, becerro, gallo... que protege y multiplica las propiedades de su amo. Así como es encarnación de una energía superior, también "trabaja" desde la más sucia oscuridad de lo terrestre. Un Baká se adquiere mediante un pacto "sagrado" donde el dueño compromete la entrega, en un plazo fijado, de una víctima, del alma de un ser querido o de su propia vida. De cualquier forma que el pacto sea violado, el "punto caliente"-como también se le dice en Haití-se volverá contra su amo. Se trata de una fuerza dual, perversa, inestable, peligrosa; manipulada solamente por avezados hechiceros a cuyos clientes, casi siempre, juegan trampas terribles e inefables. En la obra de Bedia, el Baká se materializa y se impone como imagen infalible, bestia telúrica, eléctrica, fabulosa y terriblemente fascinante.

9. But there is also the rest of the Spanish vocabulary that does not suit immediately any category but seems to burst out all of a sudden from the mouth of the protagonists of the novel:

(27) de Febrero, (la) muda, "la clase alta," abrazo, acabar con you , adiós, ajustamiento, alegre, alguien, amiable, anciano, ay sí, bata, blanca, boleros, braceros, bravo, Brillantes, burbuja, burro, caballo, cabaña, cabeza dura, cadenas, camarada, canciones, capaz, capitán, ciclón, ciegos, cobrador, colegio, colmadero, colmado, colonias, compañero, conjunto, coraje, corneas, correa, cuerno, cuerpo, chanclas, chancletas, chiste, chulo, delincuencia, doctora, El Dentista, elegante, escopeta, esto, exigente, factorías, fincas, fuego, fuera, fuera de serie, fulano, galería, ganas, gente de calidad, guanaba, hamaca, Hijo Bello, iguana, imaginate, ingenios, jueguito, lana, líos, loco, los hijos de mami y papi, lucha, maestra, mansa, milagro, moteles, nada, niño, novela, oye, página, página(s) en blanco, paliza, paquetes, pasos, patio, patio de atrás, peledista, pelo, perejil, persona, piñata, pista, Plátano (Curtain), Policía Nacional, primavera, promesas, puntos, querido, rabia, rada, rayano, río, sala, sinvergüencería, socorro, soy ..., suave, tal-and-tal, taxista, taza, tertulia, tertulias, toma, tranquila, tranquilidad, un cigarro, vales, váyanse, vergüenza, versos, veterano, vieja, viejas, viejito, viejo, viejos, yola, zapatero.

The words of this last section are actually as telling as the rest, since they testify to the fact that no highbrow vocabulary is used, but only common everyday words, as one would expect. They signify what characterises people as members of a group. Migration, and 'exile' for that matter, is not so much about changing places as a change of everything that Junot Diaz classifies as "belonging to the other language": family, conflicts that express themselves in swearwords, food, a common history. Everything that Junot Diaz shares with his familiar surroundings has something Spanish. Now how does this end up when the text is "brought home," in this case repatriated to Spanish?

The Spanish Translation of *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*

Oscar Wao was translated by Achy Obejas, herself of Cuban origin, but living in the United States since she was six. She is a profuse translator and a prolific writer in her own right.

On her Wikipedia page she says:

I was born in Havana and that single event has pretty much defined the rest of my life. In the U.S., I'm Cuban, Cuban-American, Latina by virtue of being Cuban, a Cuban journalist, a Cuban writer, somebody's Cuban lover,

a Cuban dyke, a Cuban girl on a bus, a Cuban exploring Sephardic roots, always and endlessly Cuban. I'm more Cuban here than I am in Cuba, by sheer contrast and repetition.²⁰

The interesting aspect of this self-definition is that it coincides with the way Junot Díaz defines himself. Obeja's translation is excellent, but she obviously had to take into account the wishes of her Spanish publisher *Debolsillo*. Accents were corrected, one of the very few anglicized words "cursiness" was put into "proper Spanish": "de lo cursi." A few other words were given a more peninsular touch like '*sombrero de ala*' instead of '*fedora*'.

Translating a multilingual novel is in itself a challenge. Translating it into one of the languages that are used in this novel is even more of a challenge. Cincotta (1996) summarises the possible solutions available to the translator as follows. The translator can:

- 1) make no distinction between the two different source languages and keep the entire text in the same target language;
- 2) keep the transfer in the original source language, i.e. the original second source language;
- 3) use a slang or colloquial form of the main target language;
- or 4) find another language or dialect, i.e. a "second" target language for the passage (Cincotta 2-3)

Achy Obejas chose the first option. The translated text sounds very different from the original, as these passages will show:

His tío Rudolfo (only recently released from his last and final bid in the Justice and now living in their house on Main Street) was especially generous in his tutelage. Listen, palomo: you have to grab a muchacha, y metéselo. That will take care of everything. Start with a fea. Coje that fea y metéselo! Tío Rudolfo had four kids with three different women so the nigger was without doubt the family's resident metéselo expert.

El tío Rudolfo (que recién había salido de su última residencia carcelaria y ahora vivía en la casa de ellos en Main Street) fue particularmente generoso con su tutela. Escúchame, palomo, coge una muchacha y méteselo ya. Eso lo resuelve todo. Empieza con una fea. ¡Coge una fea y méteselo! El tío Rudolfo tenía cuatro hijos con tres mujeres diferentes así que no había duda alguna de que era el experto de la familia en lo del méteselo.

²⁰ Gregg Shapiro, "In 'AWE': Achy Obejas on her new work," *Windy City Times*, August 8, 2001.

In this passage there is the occurrence of family relationships (tío), personal relationships (muchacha), abuse "coje," "fea," "méteselo" which, if translated into English would sound slightly vulgar but, given the current standards in English-speaking movies, acceptable. The Spanish version, however, sounds a lot more coarse, since the Spanish utterances do not stick out as something picturesque, as something of which the reader can only guess the meaning. Within the Spanish context, the text is just plain vulgar, whereas it is "couleur locale" in English.

There was apparently more tolerance towards sexually than politically risky language. Notably, the word 'nigger' was not translated. Obviously, this is a word only someone considered non-white in the United States can use, and no one else.

Another example:

Her advice? Forget that hijo de la porra, that comehuevo. Every desgraciado who walks in here is in love with you. You could have the whole maldito world if you wanted.

The world! It was what she desired with her entire heart, but how could she achieve it? She watched the flow of traffic past the parque and did not know.

¿Su consejo? Olvídate de ese hijo de la porra, ese comehuevo. Todo desgraciado que entra aquí se enamora de ti. El maldito mundo entero es tuyo si quieres. ¡El mundo! Era lo que deseaba de todo corazón, pero ¿cómo lo lograría? Miraba el flujo de tráfico en el parque y no entendía.

In this case we have more swearwords and it is obvious that the author is quoting the character. When the character is mad, she thinks and speaks in Spanish and takes her distances from the English-speaking world that surrounds her. She returns to being an immigrant. In the translation she is just a Spanish girl expressing herself in Spanish. In some cases there is an obvious shift in connotation, as in the following passage.

But she'd forgotten that our girl had been a *criada* in her first life; for half her years she'd know nothing but work. (104)

And what does this express?

Pero se le había olvidado que nuestra muchacha había sido criada en su primera vida, que durante la mitad de sus años no había conocido nada sino trabajo. (El. ed.)

In the original sentence the world of the typical Mexican servants, with all their misery and their almost slave-like oppressed existence, springs to life. It is the presence of a Latino in an English-speaking, superior world. In the Spanish translation, there is nothing special about someone being a servant, she speaks the same language as her masters, reflecting a common practice in the whole of South America and, till recently, also in Spain.

In the case of this Spanish translation, there was probably no other solution for the translator than to stick to a strictly Spanish text. It would have been senseless to do a "mirror-translation" and put all the Spanish sentences in the original in English, since there is no community on earth that expresses itself like that, and certainly not the Dominicans that Junot Díaz wants to portray. But even so, the story as it is embedded in a particular context got lost. Only the plot remains.

Conclusion

One would like to conclude that in the translation of a Spanglish novel into Spanish something essential gets lost. An academic article is too short to analyse in detail the many Spanish occurrences in the novel, so the reader will have to rely on our impressions. These are that everything that is expressed in Spanish takes the English-speaking reader closer to the original characters that are Dominicans. The fact that Spanish is used in the novel might indicate that the audience of the novel which Junot Díaz had in mind is not necessarily Dominican. In that case the presence of Spanish would probably be much more prevalent. Granted, in Díaz's case it is less obvious than in the case of other Latino writers who limit their use of Spanish to a few sentences and words and make sure the reader understands them. In the case of the Spanish translation, the audience misses out on the hybridity of the text since this is homogeneous. The segregation of the characters as pertaining to a different ethnic and social group is lost on them. The migrant aspect of the novel, its possible political intent, its racial statement, gets entirely eliminated. Does something gets lost that is essential and would not have been if the occurrences of Spanglish had been maintained in one way or another? We can ask ourselves what a Dutch- or a German-speaking audience gets from reading the Spanish words and sentences in their translation, since they were maintained? The odds are that the impact will be even different from what it is for the English-speaking readers of the original and also of the Spanish-speaking audience. It will probably remind them of their holidays and not bring them in touch with the "soul" of the Dominican migrant. In the end, what counts is the plot. The rest is "couleur locale."

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LA TRADUCTION DE LA LITTÉRATURE MULTILINGUE DANS UN MONDE DE MIGRATION. LE CAS DE JUNOT DIAZ

En raison des vagues d'émigration des dernières décennies, la littérature multilingue est devenue de plus en plus courante (Knauth, 2007). Il est donc naturel qu'il y ait une augmentation de la recherche sur ce type de littérature (Grutman, 2009). Des pays comme les États-Unis ont été un pôle d'attraction économique pendant longtemps et ont été le berceau d'une littérature 'Latino' vieille de plus d'un demi-siècle. Étant l'un des groupes de migrants les plus représentatifs aux États-Unis, la communauté latino-américaine a donné naissance à une langue propre: la *spanglish*. Au cours des cinquante dernières années, un groupe d'écrivains a fait usage de cette 'langue', emblématisant une sorte d '«identité latine». Leur littérature est multilingue en ce qu'elle est un mélange de deux langues, même dans une même phrase (Stavans 2013). Ces expressions de l'appartenance à un groupe sont-elles préservées lorsqu'elles sont traduites? Peut-on découvrir une sorte d '«identité» lorsque nous recueillons les expressions Spanglish dans la littérature et cette identité disparaît-elle quand elle est traduite? Dans cet article, nous analysons les traductions en espagnol de l'écrivain émigré dominicain Junot Diaz. Nous essayons de répondre à la question si la composante Spanglish dans sa littérature est essentielle à son art et si elle est une expression essentielle de l'identité de l'écrivain lui-même? La réponse à cette question pourrait ne pas être si simple.

Mots-clés: Junot Díaz, Migration, Traduction littéraire, Spanglish, Identité.

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Abstract: The Balkans as a location inspires researchers with its concoction of nations, languages and cultures, so interwoven and intrinsically unique at the same time, that it is almost impossible to separate the ingredients from the whole without losing its original taste and attraction. The exploration of a spatial area presented as one woman's voyage from her native Thessaloniki to Belgrade, with a dash of freshness from Croatian shores depicted via the character of Stipe, makes Marija Knežević's *Ekaterini* (2013) an excellent challenge for pursuing the possibility of seeing whether it is plausible to feel an unequivocal inborn sense of longing in the translated text, a longing which the main character carries with her during her displacement from Greece to Yugoslavia, a longing which represents the mythical characteristics of the Balkan peoples.

By understanding the translated text as yet another transfer of culture, this time through the translator's understanding of Balkanness, this paper will try to track the line of longing for one's place of origin through the senses, smells and language the characters possess. Moreover, by investigating the target language text not as a product, but as a process, the research will apply the apparatus of cultural translation theories in order to establish the presence (or absence) of the translator's self and to elicit examples of possible cultural borders or border zones, cultural hybridity and other issues which are the results of the material movement of the characters from one spatial point to another.

Keywords: translation, language, transfer, longing, movement, space, culture, hybridity, Balkanness.

Introduction

In an effort to address the issue of translation into minority languages, the space of the Balkan Peninsula offers itself as an excellent ground for research. Namely, the area populated with such a mixture of nations and languages, most of which belong to infamous minority groups, just calls for consideration of its peoples and languages, so historically and culturally interwoven and linguistically colourful that it is impossible to draw a clear line between them. The vibrant sound of the mixture of different Indo-European and Turkic languages and even more vibrant visual, aural and gustatory experiences of the peninsula invite researchers to immerse themselves into its richness and try to address the notion of Balkanness over and over again.

Space within the concept of cultural translation

The emergence of post-colonial studies called for different approaches to the translation of the works produced in them. Bhabha (1994/2004) reaches into translation theory to provide us with a somehow fuzzy understanding of the phrase, for in various places he uses the term in a blurry metaphorical manner. Relying on Benjamin's (61) posit that "translations themselves are untranslatable," Bhabha reminds us that understanding the translation depends on the subjective understanding of an individual. Playing on different notions proposed by Benjamin and Derrida, Bhabha decisively chooses one term, survival, as the best depiction of the process:

If hybridity is heresy, then to blaspheme is to dream. To dream not of the past or present, nor the continuous present; it is not the nostalgic dream of tradition, nor the Utopian dream of modern progress; it is the dream of translation as "survival," as Derrida translates the "time" of Benjamin's concept of the after-life of translation, as *sur-vivre*, the act of living on borderlines. Rushdie translates this into the migrant's dream of survival; an initiatory interstices; an empowering condition of hybridity; an emergence that turns 'return' into reinscription or re-description; an iteration that is not belated, but ironic and insurgent. (Bhabha 324)

The notions introduced by Bhabha which fit into the investigation of Balkanness as a spatio-cultural frame are hybridity and migration. Bhabha sees the discourse used in translation as the generator of hybridity, not the usual understanding of a translator as a mediator and interpreter of source- and target-language cultures. On the other hand, he emphasises material movement of people as the source for translation, as well as the fact that it is the translation which crosses the established borders, thus disputing them.

On the other hand, Itamar Even-Zohar (1990: 74) notices that one should consider translation as a movement of "textual models" and claims that

some people would take this as a proposal to liquidate translation studies. I think the implication is quite the opposite: through a larger context, it will become even clearer that "translation" is not a marginal procedure of cultural systems. Secondly, the larger context will help us identify the really particular in translation. Thirdly, it will change our conception of the translated text in such a way that we may perhaps be liberated from certain postulated criteria. And fourthly, it may help us isolate what "translational procedures" consist of.

Nevertheless, in his later work, Even-Zohar (2008) acknowledges the importance of human intermediaries and the necessity of transfer for cultural survival.

What distinguishes this approach the most is the actual point-of-view that translation should be regarded as a process not a product. Namely, constant market needs for fast translation and the sellout of translated works are narrowing the market and forcing the practitioners to fulfil the publisher's requests, sometimes without paying attention to the variety of the translated texts. Therefore, it is extremely difficult for authors belonging to "smaller cultures" to get translated into the market-dominating languages like English. The drive for profit and the urge for quick answers sometimes allow for the translation of works of authors from such backgrounds who are considered well established or profitable. If the product of the translation process is regarded under such criteria, then the whole idea of using the translation as an aid for cultural bonding may be considered dubious, if not futile.

When talking about the concoction called the Balkans, the echoing aural mixture of languages crammed in the peninsula is usually one of the first things that come to mind. Even though the space is quite wide, the mixture is not consistent. The existing borders kept on changing in the twentieth and the twenty-first century, thus inevitably establishing the existence of parallel cultures, linguistic isoglossic inter- and intra-borders and a specific feeling of both unifying past and possible futures. The geographically diverse landscape is even more linguistically diverse. Therefore, the way one lives has to be with the aid of translation. Balkanness calls for a translation of cultures, customs, and languages in general. With these necessary translation activities, there comes inevitable contact, which is evident in every pore of life, no matter how strong the denial of its existence may be. When discussing the notion of linguistic landscape, Backhaus reminds us that

[T]he linguistic landscape not only tells you in an instant where on earth you are and what languages you are supposed to know, but it [...] provides a unique perspective on the coexistence and competition of different languages and their scripts, and how they interact and interfere with each other in a given place. (2007: 145)

The mixture of scripts used in the Balkans, Latin, Cyrillic, Greek alphabet and Arabic, may provide one with the sense that it is impossible to draw straight borders between cultures. Nevertheless, however different languages may be in their script and their origin, the closeness in vocabulary and presumable understanding always offer themselves as answers to the conundrum called Balkanness.

Cultures and languages live through mutual interpretation and translation, and translation is the way of living. Cronin and Simon state that

translation, which throughout its history has been as implicated in the dissemination and the advancement of science and technology as it has been in the development of languages and cultures, is particularly well placed to pioneer new forms of dialogue between science and technology and the humanities and social sciences in the multiple translation zones of our cities. (2014: 127)

Narrowing the space into a city or broadening it into a peninsula for a researcher means employment of the same approach, but tackling the problem from a different angle. Furthermore, when one deals with a translation of spatio-cultural issues from one culture into another, it is essential to create a frame which will enable a connection with the target-language culture, be it known or unknown to the intended reader, parallel with the possibility for creating one's own experience and flavouring the presented issues with a particular savour.

There is one thing which ought to be noted. Authors have a choice of being monocultural, multicultural, intercultural or acultural. They choose the presence or absence of their personal self and create the environs they want to portray. On the other hand, the translator's task is to negotiate and juggle in the space created between cultures and languages, using different approaches and strategies in order to narrow the gap which exists between the source and target languages. Cronin (2000: 150) calls it a dialogue with languages and other cultures, and makes a parallel between a travel writer and a translator. It was the cultural turn, namely the appearance of cultural translation that opened the possibility for such a way of looking at the issue. The problem which is felt is the insistence of putting culture in focus, not language. Still, it is clear that the inseparability of language and culture is a notion that is embraced and acknowledged through the recognition of the complexity of the textual transfer in circumstances which keep on changing on a daily basis.

It is important to mention that cultural translation, whose focus is on translation as a process not a product (or processes, as emphasised by Pym, 138) and which excludes a linguistic basis, possesses quite a few negative sides if taken as the only approach in research of various translational issues. Nevertheless, it is vital for considerations of hybridity and intercultural influences, both those attached to the translator and readers as receivers of the product of this skill or art.

The Longing and the Belonging

Translation of the contemporary novel from Serbian into English called for consideration of the visibility of the translator in the target language text. Marija Knežević's novel *Ekaterini* (2013) provided an opportunity to examine the cultural layers and their transfer. The setting of the novel, the cities of Thessaloniki, Belgrade, Vršac, Karlobag, Bar and Orfani (Tuzla), provides a multicultural setting for the multicultural set of characters: Greeks and Yugoslavs. Haunted by the wars of the 20th century, the two Balkan wars, the two world wars, and the recent bombing of Serbia, characters are set in a frame of the Balkans as an epitome of the area of unrest. Burdened by the notion that every generation has to live through at least one war, they also have to face the clash between the beauty of the environment and the ongoing societal unrest.

We are introduced to Ekaterini, a Greek girl from Thessaloniki, through her depiction of her parents and siblings. The translator is barely visible in the offered depictions, still the strength of some specific cultural notions are more vivacious to the readers in the source language. For instance, at the very beginning when we encounter the depiction of life in Thessaloniki, we are confronted with the following comment:

Somewhere in the panorama of those walks, she could make out that stretch of Paralia where the Free Trade Zone was situated. She had heard of the Yugoslavs who earned very good pay there because their currency was stronger than the dollar. "Quite incredible!" she thought in passing. "Can there be anything stronger than America?"²¹ (Knežević 154).

The naïveté of a child's understanding of a life in her home town will undoubtedly provoke a smile, if not laughter, with readers in Serbian, for their understanding of their own history and culture asks for such a response to the comment made. Nevertheless, it is not quite clear whether the same effect can be expected from the readers in the target language, even though the generalisation of the notion of America as the promised land of plenty is evident in most cultures. The irony is surely going to be felt, but the subtle tone of bitterness and longing for past times may be the thing which is going to remain in Bhabha's area of untranslatability, or to be more precise, his understanding of the creation of a norm as "a *creation* of cultural diversity and a *containment* of cultural difference" (Bhabha 209).

This fine, almost invisible division is the first obstacle Ekaterini's future husband comes across when he courts her. When his colleague and the future

²¹ The labels are marked according to location numbers from the Kindle Edition of the novel.

godfather of their daughter, Mr. Božović, provides the explanation for the cold reception of the possible proposal to Ekaterini with

They are Greek, after all! [...] They're dyed-in-the-wool Greek Orthodox, that's what they are! And you're a Roman Catholic. Don't you realise what a problem that is for them? They love you, and Kata loves you, but their religion is stronger. (Knežević 271).

Stipe, without any hesitation, proposes to convert in order to be with the woman he loves. The genuine easiness with which the Karlobag native decides to do everything in his power sounds a bit naive in English, but the overall feeling is that the author's decision to portray the female character's family as traditional, almost mythically old-fashioned Greek is equally dubiously understood in Serbian, for the strength of a preconceived idea of traditional Greekness juxtaposed with the contemporariness of the Yugoslavness is somehow closer in the source language text, if not merely because of the fact that the notion of this new nation and its birth is something that is considered a general truth to source language readers.

The longing of the displaced may be the universal longing, but also the distinctive feature of Balkanness, together with yearning. Knežević claims "nostalgia pursues us in different forms: disguised in a single smell, in a pictorial superstructure like Lucija's gobelin of the river Mlava, in the word 'family' or in a longing for particular people who remind us of the deep loss" (595). The space smells and burns with the longing of those involuntarily displaced, and the longing is a generational trait, brought into existence by the restless circumstances in which the peoples of the Balkans have been living. Longing is also the issue through which the presence of the translator is clearly seen in the translation. For a speaker of Serbian, the passages which depict different kinds of longing read clearly as if they were written in Serbian. The linguistic transfer is rarely seen as a word-for-word type of translation, but the translator managed to follow the rhythm of the source language sentence and still create lines in English which do not lose the inherent characteristics of the target language even for an instant.

The longing is represented in various forms. The most vivid one is language. The author warns us that "the world is sometimes beautiful, but language is always a miracle," (Knežević 602). And all the characters are exposed to this type of longing in one way or the other: Ekaterini by not being able to use either Greek or Serbian properly; Ekaterini's daughter by being exposed to English jokes in America, which were not as humorous as those in her mother tongue according to her friend Carol's claim; Stipe by his slight, but still noticeable Dalmatian accent. Thus, it is not surprising that Knežević elaborates her posit even further by claiming that "language is pure longing. Our first and

final love, although we only discover it through its lack” (611). The characters long for the sound of their mother tongue when they are abroad. Still, we see that the mother language or dialect of the main characters is not the same. Ekaterini is Greek. Her husband Stipe is from Karlobag, but his vocabulary is also full of Italian words. Moving from Karlobag to Thessaloniki, then to Vršac and Petrovac on the Mlava, he changes the linguistic identity by being exposed to new dialects. Knežević, quite shrewdly and honestly, gives a diagnose of the linguistic space she is describing: “Serbia was always one big kitchen of languages. Foreigners came and passed through, or stayed, becoming ‘domestic foreigners’, and later even greater Serbs” (Knežević 742). The attachment of the quote to all the characters depicted is even more vivid if one considers the fact that they do not lose their text specificities in the target language. We can genuinely picture them in the way the author intended them to be portrayed and that is definitely one of the major positive impressions one has after reading the novel. The symmetry between the needed visibility of the translator as mediator between the languages and cultures and the sense of the author’s presence in the source language text enables readers to build their own understanding of the issues presented, and yet retain the smells and sounds so innately attached to the environs described.

Still, it is language which also creates a connection between the two rival cultures which struggle in the depth of Ekaterini’s soul. The negatively charged noun phrase “this accursed language” (Knežević 493), pronounced in despair when challenged with all the intricacies which the Serbian *slava* (the celebration of the patron saint), changed together with the good times she encountered. The way usage of language and immersion into culture changes a person is seen in Ekaterini’s change of heart and utter surrender to the course of life: “It struck her in those carefree years that Serbian really is a very physical, even sensual language” (Knežević 1078). The aural experience in years became corporal, thus enabling her to experience finally the culture as a whole, the culture stripped of prejudice and preconceived labels, the culture she has started belonging to without even being aware of it.

The second form of representation of longing is olfactory. The sweet smell of the Mediterranean connects the characters and brings them together. Luka feels it wherever he goes: “all the time he was really sailing on the air and smelling that one smell – that scent of childhood, of orange and lemon groves near the sea” (Knežević 2013: 433). Ekaterini teaches her daughters how to preserve the smell of oranges and lemons she got from Greece: “The beauty of the south lies also in the unforgettable. Once scented with the orange and yellow peel, the house remembered that smell forever” (Knežević 941). Carol longs for the smell of American food when she travels to Greece. Ekaterini brings a pot full of sweet scented Greek soil from her last visit to her homeland. “Marilyn” (the anonymous narrator) longs for the smell of cigarettes when she

goes to America. The craving for ordinary, everyday things which surround us only comes to surface once we are deprived of them or when we are dislocated from them.

It is natural that the longing evoked by the presence of certain sweet odours instantaneously provoked the need for visual experience. The connecting thread of Ekaterini's and Stipe's life, their love, is based on the unique view of the sea they had from their house in Thessaloniki. The accompanying scent of citrus and Mediterranean plants, wine and olives found in the house of "Marilyn's" grandparents is paralleled by the orange and lemon villa garden of Luka's parents in Montenegro. The inevitability of their relationship is vivid in the source language culture, for the common sensational experiences seem to have an imminent effect on the Balkan people. It would be extremely bold to predict whether the target language text bears the same amount of weight and meaning, for the starting point of the source and target cultures is different. Still, one should note that, in these cases, the translator decides to remain cloaked behind the common narrative, thus enabling the readers to experience the setting in their own way or to pursue exploring the possible deeper layers of the linearly presented text.

Other senses are also vividly present in the description of multifaceted layers in which the longing is represented, and this representation carries the very essence of Balkanness in itself: the mixture of cultures yearning for their singularity. How else would one understand the incessant line of dishes and drinks the author keeps showering her readers with in order to provide her own understanding of the space encircled by the gustatory experiences as well? The smells of different types of pies, so intrinsically Balkan in origin, but so profoundly understood as a connecting point between the East and the West lures readers to dig into their childhood memories and discover their favourite flavour. Even the very proposal of Stipe to Ekaterini is spiced with the luscious warmth and aroma of Poriazis' kitchen. We are meticulously loaded with the greeting customs which are followed to the letter, customs which are considered a must in most Balkan countries: a welcoming coffee accompanied by a glass of water, fruit preserve, a cup of alcoholic drink, then a feast of different types of food. The food connects the peoples of the Balkans, gives them a unifying line of belonging to the same gustatory space. It is not surprising, therefore, that Knežević concludes "food hasn't changed so much. Housewives still consult the old cookbooks, and there's no generation which hasn't had to queue for food. A heavily laden dinner table is part of tradition; hunger is individual destiny" (449). The statement sends a message to native speakers of Serbian that their almost pious adoration of food and drink roots in their historical mixture of agricultural abundance and personal poverty. The yearnings for things which surround them and immoderateness yet again prove to be the characteristics of all the peoples, but the overt in avoidance of accept

the present state of things can sometimes be understood as a distinctive feature of a specific nation. Otherwise, the underlined uneasiness, even disbelief which can be felt both in sentences spoken by Ekaterini and the sentiment with which they are translated into English could not be interpreted as yet another example of the text translator's profoundly explicit visibility.

Sounds, buzzes, hums of crowds, echoes of music and laughter present the aural components which contribute to the sense of belonging. One immediately has to emphasise the fact that the translator decides to approach the immense amount of culturally-specific data either just by translating them directly (names of artists and their works) or by giving us some quite scarce directions for understanding the issues. Namely, we encounter lists such as "*Dnevnik jedne ljubavi* (The Diary of a Love) by Josipa Lisac and Karlo Metikoš, [...], *Ti nisi sam* (You're Not Alone) [...] Bisera Veletanlić, *Još uvijek želim za te biti lijepa* (I Still Want to be Beautiful for You Tonight) by Gabi Novak" (Knežević 1450). The artistry of the translator here is quite vivid. Namely, the quoted artists present culture which is not overtly recognisable to all readers in Serbian. The younger generations would probably have to look up most of the names mentioned, even though we expect that they represent household names for their parents. This is just one of manifold examples of touching points of both cultures and generations, which in translation are presented through guiding points that enable the interested parties to search for clues if they choose to, and yet provide enough information (i.e. the translation of the name of the songs in this case) for disinterested readers to continue their reading without obstacles. The space here narrows not only geographically but also temporally, thus allowing the readers to have their own experience of the time depicted.

Finally, the strongest longing which echoes through the novel is for the people who are not with us any more, for a dead husband, a father, a relative. The translator manages to transfer the feeling of tranquility and imminent settlement with life, even happiness which is portrayed at the end of the novel:

I walk home with my friends, with a wide and grateful smile. We chat, and I can talk about absolutely anything and at the same time hear the flutter of fans, without missing a single word of Greek, Serbian, English or Spanish – always intelligible and wondrously beautiful. (Knežević 2003)

We are told that, eventually, the longing turns into belonging, and that belonging is not a singular but a universal quality. Our singularities are gathered together in a whole, which is accessible and acceptable and appraisably human.

Coda

Every movement brings multiple experiences to its participants. Physical movement through borders, existing or imagined, is bound to be the movement through culturally drawn boundaries. For cultures are spaces with their own borders, where languages and other codes used for communication can be numerous, and, therefore, add a spicy zest, sometimes sweet, sometimes sour, to the overall experience of the bordered space. Simon claims that whether

used as an implicit mode of literary creation in post-colonial writing or as an explicit source of inspiration in various modes of "border writing," translation and plurilingualism inhabit many contemporary texts. As a consequence, the place of the translator is no longer an exclusive site. It overlaps with that of the writer and, in fact, of the contemporary Western citizen. (59)

The notion of "contemporary Western citizen" seems rather provoking, but the translation of the researched novel is precisely aimed at that market. Nevertheless, it is evident that the translator never ceased to be aware of the immense responsibility of transferring the source language culture to future readers, as well as of dissolving the possible prejudice and myths connected with the Balkans and its inhabitants.

It is clear that cultural translation not only enables emphasis on essential characteristics of the present-day society, but also on the linguistic specificities, which a distinct dialect or a speech community exhibits. It is important to note here, especially bearing in mind the fact that this paper is written by a linguist, that there still exist voices who claim that translation is all about language, not culture, and therefore it is essential that, when considering translation, one focuses on unfolding various linguistic issues which arise as the product of the translation process. Still, those voices are nowadays quite weak and rarely heard, for it is impossible to separate the two. The basis of a language is in the culture of its speakers, in specific circumstances which the author of the source and target texts have been living in, the contexts which they were put in during their creative process, or as Bassnett (23) emphasises the posit of Tymoczko and Gentzler (2002), "translation is implicit in processes of cultural transformation and change."

Finally, no matter whether the borders in the Balkans change or not, it will continue to be considered as one encircled space where languages and cultures are in unrelenting contact. The physical movement of people within and out of its space just adds more flavour to already tempting and attractive colours and tones which present its genuine allure. The analysis of translation offers us a translator's model or version of the translated culture. Therefore,

there must be something created, understood, or fabricated in every translation, however successful or unsuccessful it may be. Still, the aim of the paper has not been to provide a measurement, but a personal account of the analysis of a translation from a minority language. The characters in the target text excel with their strength and uniqueness and what the translation offers us is their sense of belonging to one and all the languages and cultures they were exposed to.

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JUSTE DÉPLACÉS, NULLEMENT DÉNATIONALISÉS OU DÉMORALISÉS

Les Balkans comme lieu inspirent les chercheurs pour leur mélange des peuples, des langues et des cultures si étriés et à la fois essentiellement unis qu'il est quasiment impossible de séparer les parties d'un même tout sans qu'on lui ôte de son goût d'origine et de son attrait. La recherche du lieu représentée sous forme de voyage d'une femme de sa ville natale, Thessalonique à Belgrade, avec un peu de fraîcheur de la côte croate décrite à travers le personnage de Stipe, fait que *Ekaterini* (2013) de Marija Knežević représente le défi extraordinaire dans le dessein de détermination de la possibilité d'un sentiment de désir inné et sans ambiguïté dans le texte traduit, du désir que le protagoniste principal porte avec lui tout le temps que dure son déplacement de Grèce à Yougoslavie, du désir qui est la caractéristique mythique des peuples balkaniques.

En comprenant le texte traduit comme un transfert de la culture de plus, ce voyage à travers l'appréhension du traducteur de la notion de balkanité, ce travail tâchera de suivre la ligne de désir pour le lieu de naissance à travers les sens, les parfums et les langues que les protagonistes portent en eux. De plus, en analysant le texte en langue-cible non comme un produit mais comme un processus, l'analyse appliquera les théories de la traduction culturelle afin d'essayer de confirmer la présence (ou l'absence) du « je » de traducteur, et de donner des exemples des limites culturelles possibles voire des domaines limitrophes, de l'hybridité culturelle ou d'autres caractéristiques en tant que résultats d'un mouvement matériel des protagonistes d'un cadre spatial vers un autre.

Mots clés: traduction, langue, transferts, désir, déplacement, espace, culture, hybridité, balkanité.

BILJEŠKE JEDNOG PISCA KAO AUTOPOETIČKI, MEMOARSKI I PUTOPISNI TEKST SIMA MATAVULJA

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UDK 821.163.4.09 Matavulj S.

Apstrakt: Princip organizacije *Bilježaka jednog pisca* objavljivanih od 1898. do 1903. godine podrazumijeva hronološko nizanje događaja i likova iz različitih sredina koji su obilježili formiranje Sima Matavulja kao pisca. On je životom i književnim stasavanjem bio vezan za mnoga mjesta: od Šibenika, Krupe, preko Islama, Herceg Novog, Cetinja do Pariza.

Simo Matavulj (1852-1908) je bio nomad, Levantinac, putnik i boem koji je ovom, za srpsku književnost 19. vijeka neobičnom knjigom, potvrdio da su njeni topusi: put, trg i kafana, za realizam kao književnu epohu tipična opšta mjesta. On je nastojao da razotkrije protivrječnosti unutar pojava čime je razobličavao i svijet i sebe sama. Rado je birao tačku gledišta koja omogućuje humorističko, ironično, parodično ili satirično izokretanje pojava i ljudskih osobina.

Pišući o mjestima i njihovim uticajima, otkrio je portrete likova (konte Ilije Jankovića iz Dalmacije, Duke od Meduna iz Crne Gore, Špira Poznanovića rodom iz Herceg Novog i dr.) kao optimalnu formu koja je uspjela da objedini kako analitičke, tako i umjetničke zahtjeve i pretenzije *Bilježaka jednog pisca*.

Ključne riječi: portreti likova, humorističko-ironična stilizacija, anegdota, pripovjedačka strategija, autopoetički stavovi, memoarske intencije, putopisni zapisi, hibridnost žanra.

Simo Matavulj (1852-1908) je jedan od najreprezentativnijih pripovjedača srpske književnosti epohe realizma u koju je unio duh modernog evropskog realizma, kako je to primijetio još Jovan Skerlić. U njegovom se djelu mogu uočiti elementi različitih etapa ove, inače, vrlo dinamične književne epohe, od folklornog realizma, preko kritičkog, zrelog i klasičnog do faze dezintegracije. Književno djelo mu je vrlo bogato i sačinjava ga stotinak pripovjedaka, dva romana (po *Bakonji fra Brne* iz 1892. godine je najpoznatiji), jedna dramu, dva autobiografsko-memoarska teksta, putopisna proza i više prevoda s italijanskog i francuskog jezika. Već naslovi zbirki u kojima su objavljivane njegove pripovijetke ukazuju na njegovu zaokupljenost pitanjem granica i prostora, odnosa između mora i kopna: *Iz Crne Gore i Primorja* (1888, 1889), *Iz primorskog života* (1890), *Sa Jadrana* (1891), *Iz beogradskog života* (1891), *Iz raznih krajeva* (1893), *Primorska obličja* (1899), *Tri pripovijetke* (1899), *S mora i s planine* (1901), *Beogradske priče* (1902), *Život* (1904) i *Nemirne duše* (1908). Sve one otkrivaju tematsko-regionalnu raznovrsnost njegovih proza koja je između ostalog proizašla iz razli-

čitih sredina u kojima je Matavulj živio i stvarao i koje su na njega uticale: porijeklom iz Dalmacije (u Šibeniku je rođen), nastanio se i zaposlio u Herceg Novom gdje je proveo najljepše mladičke godine, sa Cetinja otkrivao magiju Crne Gore, a puni književni uspjeh ostvario živeći u Beogradu, odakle je odlazio da upozna svijet.

Povodom stote godišnjice Matavuljevog rođenja Ivo Andrić u „Književnim novinama” ističe da je upravo „on proširio geografsku osnovicu srpske pripovetke, dotle isključivo balkanske i srednjoevropske, i u nju uneo elemente pomorskog života, mora i svih daljina i mogućnosti koje more čoveku otvara”. Taj Matavuljev mediteranski raskošni duh i vitalizam su istakli i prvi istraživači njegova opusa (Marko Car, Milan Savić, Đuza Radović i dr.) kao njegovu sklonost prema spontanoj životnoj radosti i neposrednosti koja ne prihvata zabrane i predrasude. Otud je njegov tipični književni junak običan čovjek iz naroda „koji voli život iznad svega” (Deretić 864) što je znak da Matavulj nije podlegao idealizaciji niti lažnom moralisanju. Rano je, iako mukotrпно stekao nauku da svaka stvar, ma i najozbiljnija i najsvetija, mora imati svoju smiješnu stranu, ali, takođe, da i „najsmešnija mora imati svoje druge strane”, kako je sam o sebi zapisao u *Bilješkama jednog pisca* (16). Pripovjednu vještinu Simo Matavulj je shvatao kao ukrštanje običnog sa neobičnim ili, u parafrazi stava kojeg je prihvatio od francuskog pisca Pjera Lotija, kao „vešt navrtaj neobičnog, neslućenog, preko mere čudnog na ono što je preko obično, svakidašnje”. Ovaj iskaz bi se dao tumačiti kao žiža njegove poetike, eksplicitne i implicitne.

I *Bilješke* su potvrda da je Matavulj ličnu sklonost ka humorističkoj stilizaciji znao da suspregne izrazitom samokritičnošću prema književnoj radnji. Iako je sebe smatrao lijenim i samoukom, on je pokazao lucidno interesovanje i širinu čime je stekao status jednog od najobrazovanijih pisaca svoga doba. Zahvaljujući tome što je savladao italijanski i francuski jezik, uz ruski, u originalu je čitao Flobera, Mopasana, Alfonsa Dodea, italijanskog veristu Đovanija Vergu, naturalistu Emila Zolu, neke od njih kasnije i prevodio, neprekidno čuvajući svoju stvaralačku samobitnost.

O svom književnom stasavanju i traženju puta, u prostoru i vremenu, društvenom i ličnom, u pokušaju da se nadiđu granice, Simo Matavulj je ostavio traga u žanrovski teško odredivoj knjizi - *Bilješkama jednog pisca*. One su u novosadskom *Letopisu Matice srpske* objavljivane od 1898. do 1903. godine da bi prvi put ucijelo bile objavljene tek 1923. godine. Odabrani naslov otkriva intenciju lakonskog zapisivanja u kojem ne postoji neki čvrsti organizujući princip niti načelo. Štaviše, dopušta se izvjesna unutrašnja „neuređenost” teksta u smislu žanrovskih ukrštaja i mješavina čime se iznevjerava čitalački horizont očekivanja. *Bilješke* su autoru poslužile da miješajući fakticitet i fikciju progovori o krupnim, nikad do kraja odgonetnutim, a za stvaraoca uvijek intrigantnim pitanjima, spoljašnjih i unutarnjih prostora, onoga što je konotativno i denotativno. Specifična je ta retorta duha koju je Matavulj posjedovao i neprestano bogatio alhemijskim

ukrštajima. Na jednoj strani on bilježi svoje zapise o mjestima, sredinama i znamenitostima, a paralelno sa memoarskim i putopisnim upisuje zapise svojeg unutarnjeg „plavog kruga“, prostore preobražaja iz perspektive biografskog lica sebe kao pisca.

Bilješke jednog pisca Sima Matavulja su uspjele da otkriju kako nastaje jedan pisac, da nam ukažu na složenost procesa čiji su činioci izukrštni i teško dokučivi međusobni uticaji, da osvijesti trenutke u kojima pisanje jednog lucidnog čovjeka postaje književnost, iako je on primarno sklon usmenoj predaji priče. Ispisivanje prostora samoga pisca u smislu modelativnog pritiska pod kojim on postepeno nastaje, preispituje se i sumnjiči, analizira i procjenjuje (osobito u kontaktu sa drugim ljudima), jeste jedna od nevidljivih zlatnih žica koja djelu obezbjeđuje zanimljivost i savremenost. U predgovoru je pisac obećao da će napisati svoju književnu autobiografiju. Zadatog cilja se pridržavao samo u prva tri poglavlja od ukupno deset koliko ih je uspio napisati. U nastavku nije, i to već od onog trenutka kad ga je obuzela magija crnogorskih prostora, od trenutka kada je iz Herceg Novog prebjegao na Cetinje. O četvorogodišnjem boravku u Crnoj Gori je pisao neuporedivo više i življe nego li o svekolikom dvadesetogodišnjem životu do tada. Koncept *Bilježaka* sam pisac je ovako zamislio i u *Predgovoru* naveo:

Namjera mi je da pišem o sebi i svojim, koliko je to u tijesnoj vezi sa mojim radovima, koliko je potrebno da se sa više strana objasni postanje i razvitak njihov; da pomenem ljude i prilike koje su ranije uticale na mene kao na potonjeg pripovjedača i one, koje su docnije činile da mijenjam prvobitni način i smjer; da dopunim ono što su drugi previdjeli ili netačno prikazali, pišući o mojim radovima; da istaknem neke svoje misli o lijepoj književnosti. (*Bilješke* 7)

Simboličkog je značenja činjenica da knjiga nije završena. Prekinuta je kao kad se iznenada prekine putovanje, kao kad se skrene u neko novo istraživačko polje jer je radoznalost zavela istraživača, po ko zna koji put do te mjere da zaboravi na ono što je započeo. No, svi kvaliteti Matavuljeve pripovjedne proze su ovdje došli do izražaja: „dokumentarna, autobiografska osnova pričanja, oštro posmatračko oko, analitičke i deskriptivne sklonosti, kritički odnos prema društvenim pojavama, humor, plastični portreti živih ljudi s pronicljivim opaskama o našim regionalnim psihološkim tipovima” (Deretić 868). *Bilješke* su osvijestile Matavuljevu spoznaju da su izraziti karakteri na njega uticali više nego bilo šta drugo. Kod „izvanjaca” je cijenio njihovu upućenost u svjetske tokove književnosti i kulture koja mu je otvarala nova saznanja obzorja, a kod Crnogoraca vještinu usmenog pripovijedanja i ratničko-patrijarhalni doživljaj života koji su ga nadahnjivali. Pišući o mjestima i njihovim uticajima, otkrio je portrete likova kao optimalnu formu kojom je uspio da zabilježi svoje kako analitičke, tako i umje-

tničke zahtjeve i pretenzije (u prvom redu portret konte Ilije Jankovića iz Dalmacije, pustolova Duku od Meduna iz Crne Gore i lucidnog radoznalca Špira Poznanića iz Herceg Novog, a zatim i portret profesora Ilije Beare, čestitoga Steva Vickovića, prognanog Maše Vrbice, blagog učitelja-popa Stjepana Buzolića, serdara Vukotića, Lazara Tomanovića, Pavla Rovinskog, Marka Miljanova, Visariona Ljubiše, Laze Kostića i dr.).

Portretisanje likova je zaokupilo gotovo svu Matavuljevu memoarsku pažnju. Birao je ličnosti koje su ga u realnom životu na neki način dotakle, koje su probudile njegovu pažnju, bilo da su bile značajne za njega lično ili za život Crne Gore. Ono čime ih Matavulj povezuje jeste njegovo humoristično-ironično osjećanje svijeta i ljudi. Matavulj je namjerno distanciran - opisuje ljude i događaje onakve kakvim ih je on vidio sa nagnućem da se čitaocu ponudi cjelovita slika obogaćena množinom pripovjednih perspektiva. Upravo zbog sveobuhvatnosti pristupa i izvanrednih jezičkih vještina, Matavulj je bio kadar da stvori smijeh ni iz čega, tj. iz protivurječnosti koju je sama slika iznijela na površinu. Ono čime su se portreti nametnuli njegovoj pripovjedačkoj optici jeste njegova moć da u čovjeku uoči unutrašnju diskrepancu. Za poetiku realizma je inače specifična tehnika modelovanja književnih junaka zahvaljujući kojima se ono individualano uopštava i čini tipičnim.

O Matavuljevom premještaju iz rodnog Šibenika u ravne Kotare i doživljaju mjesta Islama, postojbine konta Ilije Jankovića-Dede Mitrovića, piše se kroz prizmu uspomena na narodne pjesme. Epska tradicija čini da mu pred očima oživljavaju slike uskočkih svatova „od Zadra Todora”, koje se pojavljuju, „u oblacima od prašine ispod kopita njihovijeh konja” (*Bilješke* 20). U proznom iskazu je sačuvan epski deseterac koji je pohranio pjesničku istoriju naroda toga kraja, njihove borbe, nadanja i opredjeljenja. Utoliko je drastičniji kontrast koji Matavulj gradi slikom savremenog trenutka i iznevjerenog očekivanja „jer na mjestu gdje bi trebalo da bude kakav svenarodni i veličajni spomenik sad je smrdljiva krčma, puna raskalašnijeh pijanijeh Kotarana, na svako zlo gotovijeh” (*Bilješke* 21). Na razvalinama nekad znamenitih dvorova epski slavjenog Smiljanić Ilije, njegov saputnik može da očekuje „lihvarsku zasjedu, gdje bezdušni lakomci truju i gule narod prodajući piće na veresiju” (*Bilješke* 21) i gdje su „mučka ubistva obični događaji” (*Bilješke* 22).

Mjesta kroz koje putopisac prolazi u njemu bude radoznalog posmatrača, ali i živu aktivnost njegovog „unutrašnjeg oka”. Slike konstituisane u folklornoj tradiciji dobijaju svoj zakrivljeni odraz u ogledalu savremenosti. Struktura bliska ovoj prepoznaje se i u Matavuljevom portretisanju likova. Legenda vrijedna pomena je ono što je prethodilo njegovom upoznavanju sa konte Ilijom, posljednjim potomkom čuvenog kotarskog uskoka Stojana Jankovića. Matavulj je svojom prozom sačuvao formulu primarnog folklornog modela pripovijedanja. Zabilježio je ono što je on lično, ili kogod drugi, slušao od starijih ljudi sklonih prenošenju usmenih tvorevina, kao i njihovoj improvizaciji. Konte je i fizičkim, i psiho-

loškim portretom izjednačen sa očekivanjima koje jedan kolektiv ima povodom statusa epskog junaka koji se doživljava kao kulturni heroj. Ovakav kakvim nam ga Matavulj opisuje, neodoljivo podsjeća na hajduke i uskoke iz onih epskih pjesama u kojima su njihove epske biografije usklađene sa očekivanjima kolektiva:

Konte je mjere Stojanove. Sablja, oklop i čizme šukundedove, taman za njega. Kad se naljuti, može da prelomi potkovicu; kad je dobro žedan, može da popije u dušak kabao vina; kad samo nazrije orla pod oblacima, pogodni ga iz svoje šišane! [...] Na carevom divanu sve ih je u tuljak saćerao. Ali se zavadio s carem zato što je car uveo soldate (tj. regrutovanje) i što je oduzeo stare pravice od naroda. (*Bilješke 24-25*)

Matavulj ovaj opis dopunjuje gotovo etnografski vjernim zapisom o kotarskoj narodnoj nošnji, u kojoj se, po pričanju, konte pojavio u pozorištu usred Moskve u carskoj Rusiji: „sa skrletnijem vezenijem koporanom, pod tokama, sa pištoljima i jataganom za pojasom, sa vezenijem dokoljenicama i u opancima, vas u srmi i u čistu zlatu” (*Bilješke 25*).

Druga pripovjedna ravan koja se uočava u postupku portretisanja je Matavuljevo lično iskustvo. On u autobiografskom maniru opisuje blagotvorno dejstvo koje je konte Ilija imao na širenje duhovnog vidokruga njega kao budućeg pisca. Gotovo da mu je bio neka vrsta mecene najplemenitijih manira kod kojeg je tek stasali mladić učio francuski jezik, koristio bogatu biblioteku njegovog dvora, sa njim igrao šah i komentarisao pročitano. Uporedo sa viteštvom Kotarana iz drevnih porodica, Matavulj je imao prilike da spozna i njihove mane kao što su zlopamćenje, bezdušnost i osvetoljubivost, tipične za „izrođeni ratnički narod” (*Bilješke 31*). On preispituje svaki događaj i problematizuje njegovu istinu. Zavodi čitaoce, vodi ih kroz njemu znane prostore, a otkriva ono što je na prvi pogled neuočljivo - kontradiktornosti koje su skrivene unutar pojave čime demistifikuje i pokazuje sklonost ka raskrinkavanju iluzija. *Bilješke* imaju posebno mjesto u srpskoj nacionalnoj književnosti i stoga što ističu „autorsku samosvijest sklonu gotovo potpunoj relativizaciji do odbacivanja ideologizovanih sistema” (Ivanić 309).

Autopoetički sloj bilježenja se takođe da uočiti kada je o riječ o Matavuljevom postupku portretisanja likova. Koliko god ovaj tekst kao cjelina ostavlja utisak nekoherentnosti, minuciozne analize otkrivaju postupak naslojavanja kojeg je autor već predgovorom najavio. U vezi sa uticajima konte Ilije Jankovića, čitaoci saznaju za Matavuljeve prve okušaje pera. Povlađujući ukusu ondašnjih stihotvoraca, rimom poneseni dvadesetogodišnjak je 1873. godine objavio svoje prvo umjetničko djelo - lirsku pjesmu u kojoj je opjevao narodne običaje uoči Ivanjdana. Svoju nedoraslost literarnom majstorstvu potvrđuje i Matavuljev prvi prozni pokušaj pisanja „humoreske iz narodnog života” (*Bilješke 36*) zasnovane na anegdotskom predlošku. Nedostatak osjećanja za kompoziciju i jedna vrsta

raspričanosti ga je navela na pisanje „beskrajnog uvoda, [...] na trčanje za zvučnom frazom, za čestijem efektom” (*Bilješke* 37), što su mane kojih se u svom stvaralačkom vijeku zadugo nije mogao osloboditi.

Na sreću, on je, kao rijetko koji pisac toga doba, pokazao izuzetnu samokritičnost i uvjerenje da istinski rad na rukopisu, čini boljim svaku sljedeću verziju, što su i potvrdile brojne redakcije u kojima su se pojavljivala njegova književna djela. Pri tom, Matavuljeva autoironija ukazuje na vrlo kompleksan proces sazrijevanja pisca koji sebe procjenjuje i nad svojim stvaralaštvom ostaje vječno upitan, čak i pošto okusi književnu potvrdu i slavu: „I ko zna, najposlije, da za mene ne bi bilo bolje da sam otplovio, pa se iskrcao negdje u dalekom svijetu, [...] – pa ma i ne postao srpski kantastorie!” (*Bilješke* 41).

Posebnu privlačnost za Matavulja, i ne samo za njega, imala je Crna Gora i Crnogorci. On sam ističe kako je u Crnu Goru otišao bez iluzija jer ju je donekle upoznao živeći na njenim granicama: „Nijesam se, dakle, uputio u Crnu Goru suviše mlad, ni optimista, niti sam ponio djetinjasta nadanja, kao mnogi drugi, i mlađi i stariji, kojima je poslije, zbog neostvarivanja tih nadanja, bio zagorčan život” (*Bilješke* 84). „Umjesto potrage za esencijalnim i idealnim, realizam je izgradio postupke otkrivanja protivurječnosti, nepodudarnosti” (Ivanić 311), što se u Matavuljevom svekolikom opusu lako da uočiti. Njegov primarni literarni cilj je i bio traganje za kontradiktornostima unutar prostora ličnog i društvenog. Takvo se stanovište izrodilo kao neka vrsta otklona od romantičarske apsolutizacije vrijednosti kakve su nacija, ljubav i vjera. Kod romantičara je globalna opozicija postavljena između „mi” i „oni”, najviše stoga što je književnost služila nacionalnom buđenju. U realizmu se taj zahtjev drastično mijenja te zahvat u iskustveno i referencijalni okvir podrazumijeva stavljanje u fokus opozicija unutar nas samih, prepoznatih po mnoštvu različitih stavova, mišljenja, društvenih ideja, profesija, karaktera. Nekadašnja romantičarska cjelovitost, opštenacionalno osjećanje kao žiža svih ostalih, u realizmu biva rascjepkana na regionalne raznolikosti i oprečnosti.

Tako kao opozit kulturnom heroju Iliji Jankoviću iz Ravnih Kotara u Dalmaciji stoji legenda o Duki od Meduna, rodnom iz Bjelopavlića, nastanjenog na Cetinju u Crnoj Gori. Prvi sloj portretisanja ovog junaka pustolova se odnosi na glas koji se o Duki širio, na sjećanja onih koji su se s njime sretali i pronosili njegovu slavu „lažnog cara”. Znalo se da je još kao mladić napustio Crnu Goru, pa se iz Srbije uputio u poharu po svijetu, u Italiju, Francusku, Njemačku i Grčku. Avanturista Duka samoproklamovane plemićke titule – od Meduna, lažno se predstavljao u stranim zemaljama kao crnogorski knez i prestolonasljednik i tako na prevaru uzimao novce. Tehniku obmanjivanja je usavršavao, mijenjajući svoje maske i oprobavajući ih kroz različite krajeve koje je pohodio. Tokom suđenja u Crnoj Gori, na glavnu optužbu - njegov moralni delikt lažnog prikazivanja u svojstvu kneževog brata, odgovarao je kneževim naukom iz djetinjstva: „da smo mi Crnogorci braća”. Iz tog stava proizilazi da su svi drugi „bestije” – u značenju

onih koji se daju varati. Matavulj je u svojoj prozi varirao nekoliko izvanrednih književnih likova koji počivaju na ovom folklorno-literarnom motivu avanturiste, lažova, hvalisavca, prznice, pretencioznog čovjeka, pustolova, osvajača, poliglote i prevaranta (npr. Đukan Skakavac u istoimenoj pripovijeci ili Škorančin otac iz romana *Bakonje fra Brne*).

U *Bilješkama* je o ovom junaku pustolovu Matavulj pisao i iz pozicije ličnog iskustva, u svojstvu svjedoka Dukinih psiholoških majstorluka. Na vrhuncu uspjeha on je u nepoznatom svijetu mogao biti „duka, princ, graf – sve što hoćete” (*Bilješke* 199), a u trenutku demaskiranosti i oronule životne snage na Cetinju je sa ženom i punom kućom djece „životario (je) pišući molbe i žalbe Crnogoraca knezu” (*Bilješke* 200). Literarnu privlačnost ovakvog tipa junaka Matavulj je osjetio i u romanu *Tartaren od Taraskona* francuskog pisca Alfonsa Dodea (1847-1897). Smatrao je da je Duka od Meduna morao biti prototip za lik princa Grgura od Crne Gore kojem je Dode dao status privilegovanog junaka. Sižejna okosnica ovog teksta-ogledala se tiče avanture Dukinog varanja na kartama gdje on uvijek uspijeva da za sebe izvuče dobit, prevashodno zahvaljujući beskrupuloznom nagonu za samoodržanjem, ali i jedne mentalitetske prilagodljivosti situaciji. Zbog neuzvišene etičke pozicije književnog junaka čije je porijeklo vezano za Crnu Goru, ovaj roman je izazvao nemir i tjeskobu na cetinjskom dvoru knjaza Nikole Prvog Petrovića. Druga strana tog čitalačkog ogledala sačuvana je u varijaciji Dodeovog mota. On ukazuje na komično-satiričnu ravan iskazanu kroz znakovit komentar da je „u Crnoj Gori svak (je) pomalo princ Ggur!” (*Bilješke* 201). Zapis se vezuje za izvjesnog Francuza koji je Matavulju na Cetinju i pozajmio dotičnu knjigu.

Kroz komično-ironični portret Duke od Meduna, Matavulj je progovorio o prostoru ondašnje Crne Gore koju je karakterisala plemenska organizacija života. Osobine njenih ljudi su bliske tipu koji je predstavljen u liku Duke od Meduna, a koji „osuđuju samo strašljivost, precjenjivanje života, nemanje junačkog ponosa kad ustreba” (*Bilješke* 202). Potvrđuju to i značenja izraza koji su bili aktualni u Crnoj Gori toga doba, a koje je Matavulj svojim jezičkim osjećanjem nepogrešivo registrovao:

„Riječ „dobar” znači samo junak, a što je u nas dobar čovjek, to je u njih „lijep”, a „lijep” je zgodan. Riječ „lupež” doskora nije bila pogrдна. „Bestija” je onaj ko se da varati; to je najobičnije značenje, pored onoga „lud”. „Lukav” je ne samo hitre pameti, prepreden, nego poglavito mudar; nije uvrjeda, nego je pohvala reći nekome u oči da je lukav!” (*Bilješke* 202).

Dobro pronađeni jezički oblici se u Matavuljevim *Bilješkama* pokazuju u svojstvu sočiva kroz koje se poima život jedne sredine i jednog vremena. I ovaj portret pokazuje da „Matavulj rado bira tačku gledišta koja omogućuje kritičku distancu, humoristički efekat ili satiričko razobličavanje pojava i ličnosti” (Ivanić 308). On je kao realista nastojao da dezintegriše utvrđene i ideologizovane predstave o svijetu, osobito, te ih je suočavao sa iskustvenim i savremenim.

Geopoetiku mjesta prati piščevo dubinsko osvjetljavanje lične stvaralačke laboratorije u kojoj se zahvaljujući moći imaginacije, savremeno i osvjedočeno pretaču u književni tekst. Prati se linija Matavuljevog kretanja kroz geografiju prostora, i to iz pravca priobalnog pojasa Mediterana, od jadranske obale sve dublje ka unutrašnjosti kopna, a onda i u inostranstvo. Idući u tom smjeru, autor u tekst upisuje putopisni sloj značenja koji tekstu daje svojevrsnu dubinu.

Putopisnog je karaktera obimna peta glava *Bilježaka jednog pisca*, posvećena Matavuljevom putu kroz Italiju i boravku u Parizu. On sam je ovdje osjetio da se udaljio od zacrtane intencije pisanja o stasavanju jednog pisca, određujući ovo poglavlje kao „putopis, u kome ima svačega pa i suvišnog” (*Bilješke* 166). Istovremeno je upravo proživljeno iskustvo putopisca označio kao najdjelotvornije kada je u pitanju formiranje njegovog književnog ukusa i opredjeljenja. Njega je kao čovjeka rijetkih duhovnih vidika izabrao crnogorski knjaz Nikola I Petrović da na školovanje vodi crnogorske đake u „latinske zemlje” - Italiju i Francusku. Matavuljev izvanredni analitički dar dolazi do izražaja u opisima prvih sretanja sa morem u iskustvu djece krševitog podneblja. Neizmijerna začuđenost i strepnja su bile prve reakcije mladog Kuća pred čijim se očima otvorila nepregledna morska pučina: „Pa nećemo, valjda, onudije, sve onudije, b e z s t r v a !?” (*Bilješke* 126). Neobičnu družinu je put vodio sa Njeguša za Kotor, preko Zadra do Milana gdje se najstariji među đacima pridružio alpiskom bataljonu radi vojne regrutacije. Ostale đake je Matavulj sa puno peripetija i neočekivanih prolongiranja smjestio u pariski licej u kojem je sam knjaz Nikola proveo godine svoga mladičkog školovanja. Ta činjenica je umnogome uticala na pretenciozna očekivanja crnogorskih „kućića” koje je Matavulj svojim iskustvom i pragmatizmom morao da uravnoteži.

Interesantno je da je Matavulj i ove nadahnute bilješke posvećene iskustvu tijela i duha u prostorima sasvim drugačije civilizacije, strukturirao portretišući osobene ljudske pojave. Najistaknutija figura među Parizlijama je njegov znanac Špiro Poznanović, porijeklom iz znamenite hercegnovske porodice čiju životnu istoriju Matavulj literarno rekonstruiše. Plemenitost Špirove duše potvrdile su brojne generacije Crnogoraca koji su se dolazili u Pariz ili se preko Pariza otiskivali u veliki svijet. Oneobičenost njegove pozicije počiva na njegovoj opsesivnoj zanesenosti književnošću, umjetnošću, stranim jezicima i istorijom velikih civilizacija uprkos položenom kapetanskom ispitu koji je bio nedosanjani san mnogih muških glava u Boki Kotorskoj. Špirovo iskustvo života u Parizu ostavilo je neizbrisiv trag na Matavulja, žednog svijeta. Zajednički su neumorno upijali damare Pariza, „grada svjetlosti” i „svjetskog mozga”. Matavuljeva neutaživa radoznalost duha podrazumijevala je danonočno obilaženje i nadahnjivanje ljepotama koje Pariz čine jedinstvenim, kako geografskih, tako i kulturoloških, institucionalnih, građevinskih i brojnih drugih. Svijest o neočekivanosti prilike koja mu se pružila, dodatno je intenzivirala Matavuljevu lucidnost i energiju kojom je za nepunih tri mjeseca u se upio što drugi za mnogo duže vrijeme bora-

vka ne bi kadar bio. Na osnovu toga je između ostalog, i Milan Kašanin izveo sud da „život Sime Matavulja više liči na život junaka francuskih romana nego na život srpskog pisca” (Kašanin 16-17).

Sadržaj putopisa o Parizu Matavulj bogati i anegdodom posvećenom njegovom više nego uspješnom prezentovanju svojeg dara za pričanje „naših narodnih suviše masnih umotvorina” (*Bilješke* 155). Te „golicave” narodne priče Matavulj je sa neobičnim uspjehom kazivao pred izvjesnim muškim društvom u kojem je bio i Anatol Frans, francuski „poznati književnik velikoga dara” (*Bilješke* 155). Svoj dar rođenog pripovjedača sklonog da zasmije, uspješno je demonstrirao i pred francuskim damama. Prozvan „Montegrenom” (*Bilješke* 156) kojeg bi one voljele da čuju i da ih zabavi, Matavulj kazuje o narodnim svadbenim običajima i neobičnostima vezanim za ženidbu Marka Mailjanova, kao i o događaju koji će kasnije sižejno obraditi u pripovijeci „Kako se Latinče oženilo” (*Bilješke* 156). I u velikoj sredini se pokazuje immanentnom ta Matavuljeva potreba da živim i humoristički obojenim kazivanjem zabavi publiku. Na predlošku folklornih oblika (anegdote i šaljive priče) koje rekonstruiše, nastaju njegova osobena umjetnička rješenja. Tako se *Bilješke* formotvorno ne daju precizno odrediti upravo zbog prepleta elemenata različitih književnih postupaka kojima je Matavuljev neugasli pričalački nerv bio sklon.

Bilješke jednog pisca Sima Matavulja imaju jednu osobitu tipološku raznorodnost i hibridnost koja se kreće unutar autopoetičkog-memoarskog-putopisnog, bez apsolutne dominacije bilo kojeg od njih. Portreti su rađeni na principu ulančavanja anegdota o stvarnim istorijskim ličnostima sa kojima se Matavulj susretao i koji su na neki način, i njega oblikovali. Ali portreti nijesu ostali samo zahvat u istinitost, rekonstrukcija trenutka družbe i srži dramatike koji odnosi među ljudima obično imaju. Zahvaljujući Matavuljevnoj imaginativnoj snazi duha, oni su postali mali literarni medaljoni koje svaka nova generacija čitalaca za sebe otkriva.

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A WRITER'S NOTES BY SIMO MATAVULJ: LITERARY TEXT AS AN AUTOPOESIS, A MEMOIR AND A TRAVEL TEXT

The principle of the organisation of *A Writer's Notes*, which were published in the period from 1898 to 1903, involves the chronological arrangement of events and characters from different backgrounds that affected the shaping of Matavulj as a writer. Through his life and literary work, he was connected to many places: from Šibenik and Krupa, through Islam, Herceg Novi and Cetinje to Paris.

Simo Matavulj (1852-1908) was a nomad and a Levantine, traveller and a bohemian, and thus this book whose main topoi are roads, square and cafés, confirmed, was so unusual for the 19th century Serbian literature, but were typical of realist literary epoch. He had a tendency to discover discrepancies between issues in a way that unmasked the world he lived in, but often himself as well. He gladly concentrated on a point of view that made possible a humorous, ironic, parody-based or satirical subversion of issues and human characteristics.

Writing about places and their influences, he discovered portraits of different people (of Count Ilija Jankovic from Dalmatia, the Duke of Medun from

Montenegro, Spiro Poznanovic originally from Herceg Novi, etc.) as an optimal form which succeeded in synthesising the analytical as well as artistic demands and pretensions of *A Writer's Notes*.

Key Words: portraits of different people, humorous and ironic stylization, anecdote, narrative strategies, autopoetic attitudes, memoir intentions, travelogue notes, generic hybridity.

ALHAMBRA – AFEKTIVNI PROSTOR U ŠATOBRIJANOVOM DJELU

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Apstrakt: Prošlo je više od dva stoljeća od Šatobrijanovog putovanja od Pariza do Jerusalima na kojem autor kao eruditski poznavalac velikih antičkih djela in situ uspostavlja literarni dijalog sa toposima koje obilazi: prisutna je opčinjavajuća moć imena, svojevrsna poetika toponimije, estetika detalja, moralizatorska snaga pejzaža. Dimenzija hodočašća daje dodatnu obojenost prostoru svetih mjesta naznačenih u samom naslovu, tako da *Itinerer od Pariza do Jerusalima*, kao i *Mučenici i Pustolovine potonjeg Abenseraža*, djela inspirisana velikim putovanjem, kroz multiplikaciju tonova i registara predstavljaju osoben pogled na svijet. Izuzetnom stilistikom i istovremeno spontanošću putopisnog rukopisa, autobiografski sloj je pod prividno prigušenom svjetlošću, ali su senzibilnost i uzajamna prijemčivost čula i prostora omniprezentni u djelu. Takva je i autorova fascinacija geografijom i arhitekturom Alhambre kao vrhunskim estetskim i afektivnim topoom, mjestom ljubavnog sastanka sa Natali de Noaj.

Ključne riječi: *Itinerer*, Šatobrijan, Natali de Noaj, Orijent, Alhambra, interiorizacija, afektivni topos.

Prije više od dva vijeka Šatobrijanovo putovanje po Mediteranu i Orijentu, započeto jula 1806. godine, krunisano je zadivljujuće plodnim književnim opusom, u prvom redu djelom između putopisnog i autobiografskog žanra, pod nazivom *Putovanje od Pariza do Jerusalima*²². Ovaj putopis vodi čitaoca kroz kompleksne orijentalne prostore od spoljašnjeg ka unutrašnjem, od vanjskih pređenih prostora, preko književnog doživljaja do unutrašnje samospoznaje čovjeka - pisca i čitaoca.²³ Interesantno je da je sam *Itinerer* bio određen potpuno svjesnim planom pisanja jedne druge knjige, hrišćanske epopeje *Mučenici*²⁴, a ne ove koja će u francuskoj književnosti XIX vijeka postaviti model koji će mnogi pisci nastojati da oponašaju. Osim toga, novela *Pustolovine potonjeg Abenseraža*²⁵ predstavlja, prema autorovom iskazu u prologu djela, svojevrsnu dopunu *Itinerera*, stvorenu dvadesetak godina prije objavljivanja.

²² *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem*, objavljen 1811.

²³ „Opis putovanja ostvaruje i iskazuje dvostruki put, koji predstavlja samo čitanje. Putopis može da podrazumijeva i vertikalni put koji će dovesti čitaoca do mentalnog, a ne samo fizičkog pomaka“ (Butor 1974 : 13).

²⁴ *Les Martyrs ou le triomphe de la religion chrétienne*, djelo započeto 1804. i objavljeno 1809. godine.

²⁵ *Les aventures du dernier Abencérage*, 1826.

Parafrazirajući Mišela Bitora, možemo reći da su, ukoliko putopise proučavamo prema stepenu njihove književne vrijednosti i eruditske podloge, sva romantičarska putovanja knjiška: Lamartin, Gotje, Nerval, Flober, svi samo ispravljaju, dopunjuju i variraju temu koju je dao Šatobrijan. U svim slučajevima, u srži putovanja su pročitane knjige (naročito *Putovanje od Pariza do Jerusalima*). Intenzivno prekopavanje po sopstvenim književnim i umjetničkim izvorima unutar samog djela karakteriše i Šatobrijanovu poetiku do te mjere da njegov putopis postaje istovremeno arheološki itinerer i putovanje kroz književnost i istoriju.

Prestao sam da radim na planu za *Mučenike*; većina svezaka za to djelo samo su skice. Nijesam mu mogao dati krajnji oblik prije nego što vidim zemlju u koju sam smjestio radnju i događaje. [...] Dakle, kada se u *Putovanju* ne nađe opis nekog posebnog čuvenog mjesta, valjalo bi ga potražiti u *Mučenicima*. Pored glavnog motiva zbog kojeg sam primoran da poslije tolikih napora opet napustim Francusku, tu su i druga razmatranja: jedno putovanje na istok upotpunilo je studiju koju sam oduvijek želio da dovršim. U pustinjama Amerike posmatrao sam spomenike koje je priroda dala; među spomenicima koje je stvorila ljudska ruka, poznajem samo dva tipa antike: keltsku i rimsku. Preostaje mi obilazak ruševina Atine, Memfisa i Kartagine. Želeo sam takođe da ostvarim hodočašće do Jerusalima:

.....*Qui devoto*

*Il grand Sepolcro adora, et scioglie il voto.*²⁶

Priča o zavjetima i hodočašćima danas može izgledati čudno, ali u ovom trenu ja se ne ustežem, jer me već odavno smatraju sujevjernim i slabim. Možda ću biti poslednji Francuz koji kreće prema Svetoj zemlji sa idejama, ciljem i osećanjima nekadašnjih hodočasnika. (Chateaubriand 2005 : 75)

Dimenziju hodočašća, naznačenu već toposom Jerusalima u naslovu, Mišel Bitor dalje analizira:

Prije svega, ta riječ označava putovanje do groba nekog sveca, a zatim i do mjesta njegovog prikazivanja, mjesta prorokovanja. Hodočasnik tamo nosi pitanje na koje očekuje odgovor, lijek za tijelo i dušu. Usred neposvećenih područja, sveto mjesto se izdvaja kao prozor u raj. Potom, hodočašće postaje putovanje na mjesta koja govore, koja nam pričaju o našoj istoriji kao i o nama samima. Ona su ponovo rođena rimska hodočašća. Kao što grad širi svoje semantičko djelovanje na sela, tako i izvjesna mjesta donose riječ o nekom važnom istorijskom trenutku koji se ističe među nejasnim i mračnijim epohama, a koji svijetli sve do našega doba. Sva velika ro-

²⁶ Na ovom mjestu, pobožan čovek klanja se velikom grobu i raskida sa svojim zavjetom - Šatobrijan ovdje svakako govori o sebi citirajući završni dio *Oslobođenog Jerusalima*.

mantičarska putovanja jesu put tamo i nazad, dakle, oblik hodočašća. Čini mi se da Šatobrijanovo *Putovanje od Pariza do Jerusalima* to najjasnije ilustruje. (Butor 20)

Ovom putopisu, dugom hodočasničkom putovanju kroz istoriju i vječna počivališta velikana, pravac trasiraju tri osnovna središta - Rim, Atina, Jerusalim, „*tri ideogramska grada*“ (Butor 21), punktumi praćeni brojnim naizgled sporednim, satelitskim *destinacijama*. Osim ova tri najvažnija magična toposa iz *Mučenika* i *Itinerera* i pored njihove istorijske, dubinske, podzemne (u doslovnom i figurativnom značenju) simbolike, nas je u Šatobrijanovom djelu zanimalo afektivni prostor Alhambre kao punktum ljubavnog hodočašća, stvarnog iako skrivanog sastanka sa Natali de Noaj.²⁷

Osim svih višeslojnih raznolikih predstava prostora u djelu koje su pojedini kritičari smatrali čak i *narativnom fikcijom*²⁸, a autora *planetarnim geometrom*²⁹, interesovala nas je perspektiva interiorizacije u Šatobrijanovom djelu u kojem je, izuzetnom stilistikom i istovremeno spontanošću putopisnog rukopisa, autobiografski sloj dat pod prigušenom svjetlošću, ali je evidentno da mu susret sa udaljenim prostorima spoljašnjeg svijeta omogućava rekonstruisanje sopstvenog, duboko ličnog identiteta. Ovaj afektivni topos karakterišu ekstremna konciznost u deskripciji Granade i Alhambre i začuđujuća uzdržanost koje nam tek korespondencija, proučavanje paralelnih biografskih podataka iz datog perioda i samog pisca i njegove najveće muze, otkrivaju kao svjesnu tišinu ili prećutkivanje velikog putnika. Ako izuzmemo stihove iz Kornejevog *Sida*³⁰ (Chateaubriand 541-542), koje možda u svojstvu alegorijsko-aluzivnog poetskog priznanja pisac navodi u *Itinereru*, o Alhambri saznajemo samo da je bila dostojna posjete i posmatranja i pored toga što su već viđeni grčki hramovi, a pogled na posebno lijepu dolinu u kojoj se nalazi Granada pojašnjava duboki žal Mavara za takvom zemljom.³¹

²⁷ Natalie de Noailles, rođena Labord, Šatobrijanova velika strast i nadahnuće za brojne ženske likove (Velléda, Cymodocée, Bianca) u najplodnijem autorovom stvaralačkom periodu koji koincidira sa njihovom ljubavnom vezom.

²⁸ *Putuju da bi pisali, ili putuju pišući, a sve zbog toga što i samo pisanje za njih predstavlja putovanje.* (Butor 16)

²⁹ Jul 1806. krenuo iz Venecije prema istoku preko Sparte, Atine, Smirne, Konstantinopolja, Jerusalima, Kaira, Aleksandrije, Tunisa ... 12/13. aprila boravak u Granadi; povratak u Pariz 5. juna 1807.

³⁰ Ističe vrline i slavno porijeklo Don Rodriga, a u završnom stihu i njegovu ljubav prema Himeni.

³¹ « Je remontai jusqu'à Andujar et je revins sur mes pas pour voir Grenade. L'Alhambra me parut digne d'être regardée, même après les temples de la Grèce. La vallée de Grenade est délicieuse, et ressemble beaucoup à celle de Sparte : on conçoit que les Maures regrettent un pareil pays ». (Chateaubriand 541)

Tek će mnogo godina poslije prekida veze sa Natali, a godinu dana nakon njene smrti, Šatobrijan u jednom često ispravljanom i skraćivanom odlomku *Mémoires d'Outre-tombe* u tzv. ženevskom rukopisu iz 1834. godine, napisati:

Ali da li sam baš sve rekao u *Itinereru* o tom putovanju započetom u Dez-demoninoj luci, a završenom u Himeninoj domovini? [...] Samo jednom mišlju obuzet, nestrpljivo brojeći minute, pogleda uprtog u sjevernjaču sa palube moga broda, molio sam je za vjetrove da bih brže plovio [...] Kako mi je samo srce lupalo na domaku španskih obala!³²

Ono što je želio i donekle uspio da prikrije i diskretni memorijalista, nadahnuti stilista i romansijer je snažno prikazao u noveli *Pustolovine potonjeg Aben-seraža*, djelu koje može djelovati lišeno originalnosti na osnovu tzv. dvostrukog književnog okvira u koji bismo ga mogli smjestiti: preuzima utvrđeni žanr gradskog-avanturističkog romana, ima elementarnu jednostavnu potku i zaplet i ličnosti koje mogu pripadati rasinovskom svijetu, mada Kornej u prvi mah izgleda bliži. Drugi kadar nametnut je samim autorovim upozorenjem u posveti gdje kaže da ova novela predstavlja dopunu ili nastavak *Itinerera* sa ciljem da fikcija popuni prazninu iz putopisa nastalu izuzetnom konciznošću kojom je evocirano putovanje kroz Španiju.

Prostor Granade i Alhambre determiniše inspiraciju u djelu i iako ga sam autor ističe kao dopunu ili zapis na marginama *Itinerera*, upravo je najdublji lični unutrašnji prostor, ne samo projekcija autobiografske, čak psihoanalitičke dimenzije, već izražava suštinsko traganje Šatobrijanovo za onim uzvišenim i transcendentnim, poput traganja za Gralom koji može dosegnuti jedino nadilaženjem ljudskih mogućnosti. Ovu vezu sa uzvišenim *sacre* Šatobrijan, kao i često ranije, izražava kroz relacije ličnosti sa prostorom koji ih okružuje. Naime, potonji *Aben-seraž* kulminira naporom koji daje sublimaciju strasti uz poštovanje drugoga i beskrajnu lojalnost i vjernost sopstvenom poimanju svetog i uzvišenog. Upravo prostori/mjesta simbolički predstavljaju ili ubrzavaju taj napor u samosavladvanju i odricanju na putu ka uzvišenom.

Priča o *Aben Ahmetu* i donji *Blanki*, priča je o nemogućoj ljubavi dva bića koja pripadaju sukobljenim svjetovima, različitim vjerama i prostorima (Tunis-Španija), koja, dakle, dijele i razdvajaju istorija, religija i more. Ova priča je poetsko-romaneskna transpozicija impresija sa jednog dijela putovanja, onog

³² «Mais ai-je tout dit dans *l'Itinéraire* sur ce voyage commencé au port de Desdémone et fini au pays de Chimène ? Une seule pensée m'absorbait; je comptais avec impatience les moments : du bord de mon navire, les regards attachés sur l'étoile du soir, je lui demandais des vents pour cingler plus vite [...] Comme le cœur me battait en abordant les côtes d'Espagne!» (Jardin 2008: 143)

istog opisanog u *Itinereru od Pariza do Jerusalima*, ali ovaj afektivni topos *nije mogao stati u Itinerer*.

Poetičnost novele inspirisala je kralja Nikolu I Petrovića, francuskog đaka, da je prepjeva na crnogorski jezik kao spjev pod nazivom *Potonji Abenseraž*³³, ne mijenjajući značajno sadržaj Šatobrijanovog djela. Atmosfera djela i ličnost Aben Ahmeta koji je žrtvovao ljubav da bi ispunio zavjet svojih predaka, bili su bliski mentalitetu i junačkom duhu Crnogoraca i njihovom kultu dužnosti prema otadžbini i tradiciji.

Odnos prema prostoru Granade, ne samo centralnog, već isključivog toposa u ovoj noveli, svakako ne može biti isti za donja Blanku i Aben Ahmeta, budući da je ovaj mavarski grad u nedavnoj istoriji u odnosu na vrijeme u kojem pratimo protagoniste, pokorio španski kralj Ferdinand. Donja Blanka živi u čvrstom uvjerenju uzajamne pripadnosti sa prostorom, dok je potonji Abenseraž rođen u izgnanstvu i u svojoj dvadeset drugoj godini dolazi u prapostojbinu sa željom da je upozna i pokuša da shvati razlog prolivene krvi predaka. Aben Ahmet prelazi dug i težak put u nadvladavanju nostalgije za izgubljenim rajem i naročito nadvladavanju mržnje prema osvajačima. Prateći Šatobrijanovu deskriptivnu tehniku, možemo se uvjeriti da se prvi opis pejzaža na obalama španskim ne može u potpunosti konstruisati; dat je u sporadičnim djelovima budući na neki način sakriven i potisnut duševnim stanjem junaka kojim dominira gorčina nostalgije.

Aben-Ahmet prolazaše
 Nekom gorom od Palmira
 Duša mu je puna tuge,
 Puna tuge i nemira.
 Na pomisa“ da tu goru
 Đedovi mu zasadiše
 Pa njih nema, nema krune,
 Niti ima išta više.
 Na izmaku od te gore
 Neke stoje razvaline,
 Po ukusu i načinu
 Arapske su građevine
 Mladom srcu Ametovu
 Ti prizori teški biše,
 Često u džep ruku tura
 Ubrus vadi, suze briše. (Petrović 1969 : 28-29)

³³ Iako je ranije započeo rad na spjevu, kralj Nikola je prepjev završio u zimu 1888. godine.

Sljedeći značajan prikaz prostora – opis grada Granade pokazuje gotovo namjernu putopisnu tehniku; akumulacijom topografskih podataka, toponimijom, dobijamo tehnički opis ovog grada, opis koji ga, kako Berchet kaže, više maskira nego što ga otkriva, jer Šatobrijan želi da istakne osjećanje distanciranosti nekoga ko je stranac-izvanjac. Ovdje je daljina mentalna i vremenska, a ne prostorna. Opis grada ostaje u jednom spoljašnjem sloju, a taj utisak je potvrđen i Ahmetovom neophodnošću da potraži vodiča stranca koji će mu pomoći da sazna nazive znamenitosti grada svojih predaka.

U podnožju vrlovitog
I sniježnog Sjer Nevada
Gdje brdašca dva se dižu
Sazidan je grad Grenada.
Na bokove tig brdašca
Sagrađen je dvor do dvora,
A podnožja kupaju im
Dvije rjeke ka dva mora.
Čemu slični taj grad srećni
Gdje se srećni broje dani
Po obliku bi se reklo
Da je šipak razrezani
Oko kojeg Ksenil valja
Zlatne mrve s valovima
A u modroj suknji Dura
Srebrnoga pjeska ima
Zagrljene krivudaju
Niz dolinu kitnog Vega
Kao da se pokraj zmije
Bezazleni gušter slega,
Murve, smokve i naranče,
Loze, šipci Vega krase;
Pretilu mu okolinu
Pretilije živo pase. (Petrović 30-31)

Iako postepeno uspostavlja odnos uzajamnog poštovanja sa stanovnicima, teškoće u integrisanju sa prostorom grada vidne su i kod Ahmetove prve samostalne šetnje Granadom. U pitanju je prikaz noćnog šetača koji ogromnim naporom čula vida i dodira pod plaštom i okriljem tame pokušava da rekonstruiše kraljevstvo svojih predaka. Rekonstrukcija je i dalje samo na imaginarnom, fantazmagoričnom nivou, bez uporišta u stvarnosti i sadašnjosti.

U noć mrklu on izađe

Da tumara kroz sokake
 Dolje-gore niz Grenadu
 Želje te ga vode jake...
 Mrak, samoća i duboka
 Tišina je zamjenila
 Cjelu živost, cio vrvež
 Koja' no su prije bila.
 Aben Ahmet po Grenadi
 Sad nijemoj sjetno šeta
 Nit se kime razminuje
 Niti koga putem sreća. (Petrović 35)

Zora, međutim, i konkretno i simbolično uklanja pomrčinu, sumnje, srdžbu i žal za izgubljenim rajskim prostorom. Susret sa Blankom (Himeninom plemenitom i otmenom unukom) u svitanje dana označava preokret u Ahmetovom doživljaju Granade koja više nije „pusta, samotna, ostavljena zavisno od udovice“.

Lako li je ljudskom srcu
 Da izvjesni pokoj sruši
 Ljubav za rod u Arapa
 Nije sama sad u duši;
 Pri spomenu đedova mu
 Miješa se sad čar nova;
 Dani su mu mnogo bolji
 A noći mu ljepših snova! (Petrović 39-40)

Od sada osjećanje ljubavi ublažava gorčinu, ali to osjećanje može i mora živjeti u okviru, odnosno postepeno rekonstruisanom i prihvaćenom prostoru, kako bi se omogućio ponovni, ovoga puta voljni i željeni susret sa „hurijom“. Drugi opis Granade u kojoj Ahmet traga za Blankom dobija na zgusnutosti, humanosti, emotivnosti; toponimija je ista kao u onom prethodnom, ogoljenom, ali ovoga puta padina je prekrivena cvijećem, brežuljak na sjeveru ukrašen ili urešen Albaizinom, voćnjacima koji se vesele i pećinama koje nijesu prazne. Ahmetu ne treba više vodič, toponimi su dekriptovani i poznati. Ahmet je i dalje ravnodušan prema prostoru koji ga okružuje, ali ovoga puta zato što ga jedino interesuje ženski glas koji pjeva, a koji prepoznaje kao Blankin. Vođen zanosnim glasom sve do jedne visoke žive ograde, preskače je jednim skokom i upada u Blankino dvorište. Čini se da Šatobrijan, bez brige o vjerovatnosti, prepušta junaka samom prostoru da ga vodi i da, na neki način, preuzima funkcionisanje narativne strukture. Onaj skok kojim Ahmet uskače u samo središte Blankine

privatnosti, metaforički predstavlja njegovo posvajanje i prisvajanje granadskog prostora.

Simbolika skoka i uzdizanja ili uzvisivanja naglašena je i u narednoj zajedničkoj posjeti Alhambri, uzvišenju iznad Granade. Blanka je vodič, a ova posjeta je u skladu sa rasplamsavanjem njihove ljubavi. Uzvišenost arhitektonske ljepote predačke mavarske izaziva naglašeno divljenje i poštovanje na estetskom planu sa kojim se stapa snaga uzajamnih emocija brišući ideološko-vjerske nepomirljivosti. Šatobrijan u opisu palate postiže ekspanziju lirizma i afektivnosti unutrašnjim pogledom, interiorizaciju i atmosferu onirizma. *Uobrazni samostan* se iz razvalina uzdiže snagom duha i zanesenosti čula i postaje hram ljubavi i tajanstveno pribježište čarobnjaka. Mnoštvo deskriptivnih detalja izaziva efekat de-realizacije, udaljavanja od stvarnosti, izviranja prošlosti i njenog preklapanja i dominacije nad sadašnjošću.

To je pravo svetište
 Hrama boga od ljubavi
 Nad kojijem vješta ruka
 Poput neba svodić savi
 I ka nebo plavom bojom
 Molovan je svodić mali
 Stubovi ga pozlaćeni
 Više sebe održali. (Petrović 53-54)

Na snazi su izražena senzibilnost i uzajamno preplitanje čulnog, emocionalnog i ambijentalno-prostornog. Alhambra postaje vrhunski estetski i afektivni topos, mjesto gdje se obrisi nebeskog svoda i zasvođenih građevina, eksterijer i enterijer stapaju pod mjesečinom koja je čipkom ocrtavala vazдушnu arhitekturu. U ritmu neočekivanih srećnih trenutaka (*bonheurs imprévus*), postaje konačno jedinstven pejzaž u kojem snaga ljepote kojoj se zajedno dive Ahmet i Blanka poništava sve razlike i dozvoljava ljubavi da preplavi sav prostor.

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ALHAMBRA – THE AFFECTIVE PLACE IN CHATEAUBRIAND'S LITERARY WORK

More than two centuries have passed since Chateaubriand's last travel through Mediterranean and the East took place, culminating in the presentations in an incredible literary work under the title *Travel From Paris to Jerusalem*, and bordering, generically speaking, on the thin line between travel writing and autobiography. This travel leads the readers through the complex Eastern spaces (both geographical and spiritual), while the literary impressions lead to the inner reflexion of both the writer and the reader.

Exceedingly stylistic and spontaneous in the manner of the best travel writing, it leaves the autobiographical level nuanced and mysterious. Still, this travel writing overshadows the picturesque presentations of uncultivated and cultivated spaces, due to the sensibility and reciprocal susceptibility of the senses and the background, that remain omnipresent in this literary work. It is the same with the author's fascination with the geography and architecture of Alhambra as the utmost aesthetical and affective topos, place of the love union of the author and Natalie de Noailles. In the rhythm of the unexpected blissful moments, under the sensorial effect of the moon, shape of the sky and domed parts of the buildings, as well as the interior and the exterior spaces that merge, the deep cogition of the affective inner space takes place.

Key Words: Travel, Chateaubriand, Natalie de Noailles, East, Alhambra, interior space, affective topos.

ULOGA PROSTORA U REDITELJSKOJ POETICI ŽIVKA NIKOLIĆA

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UDK 791(497.16)

Apstrakt: Estetski neutemeljena nagađanja kojima se na nedosledan način ističe ignorantski odnos prema prostoru, Nikoliću su bila strana. On je u svojim filmovima uspijevaao da obogati prostor na osoben način, ukoliko sam prostor svojom cjelovitošću i vizuelnim punoćom to nije pružao. Prostor u njegovim filmovima nije pasivni refraktor kroz koji se prelama mnoštvo dramskim događanja, utiskujući ili neutiskujući, ostavljajući ili neostavljajući u njemu trag. Prostor je tu da bi i sam utisnuo i ostavio trag na dešavanjima u kojima *učestvuje*. Dakle, istaći suštinske vrijednosti prostora kao aktivnog katalizatora dramskih događanja, jasno ga definisati, dati mu ulogu dijegetičkog katalizatora, oživjeti ga, dozvoliti mu da i on *igra*, to je u osnovi bila Nikolićeva polazna premisa. Vođeni promišljanjem Žana Mitrija, reći ćemo da ne postoji apsolutni prostor, ni apsolutno vrijeme – prostiranje je uvijek ograničeno, a trajanje konačno. Uz to, prostor koji je uvijek dio nečega, postoji jedino na osnovu pojava prisutnih u njemu, što je zapravo estetički obrazac koji u potpunosti odražava Nikolićevo poimanje prostornih i vremenskih odnosa na filmu.

Ključne riječi: prostor, vrijeme, naracija, vizuelna punoća, dramska događanja, dijegeza

Prostoru, kao fundamentalnoj konstituenti dijegetičkog iskaza, Nikolić je posvećivao posebnu pažnju i nije dozvoljavao da u bilo kom segmentu, bilo kog njegovog filma, on bude marginalizovan. Bila su mu neprihvatljiva i ona promišljanja koja su išla u pravcu pojednostavljanja prostorne karakteristike i, uopšte, ambijentalnog okvira i njihovog dovođenja u ravan neposredne i lako *čitljive* datosti, koja se sama po sebi podrazumijeva i kojom se, stoga, ne treba odvojeno baviti i na taj način *ugroziti* ili *poništiti* snagu njenog autentičnog *pasivnog* djelovanja. Takva i slična hipotetička i estetski neutemeljena nagađanja, kojima se na nedosledan način ističe ignorantski odnos prema prostoru, Nikoliću su, takođe, bila strana. On je prostor, ukoliko sam prostor svojom cjelovitošću i vizuelnim punoćom (pikturalnošću, živopisnošću, predmetnim rasporedom i arhitektonikom) to nije pružao, obogaćivao na svoj osoben način. Nikolić je, zapravo, nastojao da prostoru *udahne dušu*, da ga animira, a ne realativizuje.

Prostor u Nikolićevim filmovima, dakle, nije nikakav pasivni refraktor kroz koji se prelama mnoštvo dramskim događanja, utiskujući ili neutiskujući, ostavljajući ili neostavljajući u njemu trag. Prostor je tu da bi i sam utisnuo i ostavio trag na dešavanjima u kojima *učestvuje*. Dakle, istaći suštinske vrijednosti prostora kao aktivnog katalizatora dramskih događanja, jasno ga definisati, dati mu

ulogu dijegetičkog katalizatora, oživjeti ga, dozvoliti mu da i on *igra*, to je u osnovi bila, i iz filma u film se potvrđivala, Nikolićeva polazna premisa. Pomenimo i u ovom kontekstu samo neka od dragocjenih promišljanja Žana Mitrija, po kojemu, naime, ne postoji nikakav apsolutni prostor, ni apsolutno vrijeme. „Prostiranje je uvek ograničeno, a trajanje konačno” (Mitri 71). Uz to, prostor, koji je uvijek dio nečega, postoji jedino na osnovu pojava prisutnih u njemu – estetički *obrazac* koji u potpunosti odražava Nikolićevo poimanje prostornih i vremenskih odnosa na filmu. Prostor kod njega nikada nema naglašeno ilustrativnu, već više simbolički aktivnu i kognitivnu funkciju, u onoj mjeri u kojoj je to neophodno za nesmetano praćenje dramske radnje. Zapravo, prostor je u Nikolićevim filmskim pričama autentični i aktivni učesnik u dramskom događanju. Njegova dinamizacija, kontinuitet i ritmičnost ostvaruju se uz upotrebu minimalnih, iako ne i infinitezimalnih, po svom obimu i značaju, filmskih izražajnih sredstava.

Pa ipak, prostor se relativizuje i dijegetički *segmentira*, jednako kao i vrijeme, slijedeći psihološku nit radnje. Karakteristični prostorni segmenti i njihova *mreža* međusobnih odnosa i simboličkih značenja, ritmički se i dinamički usklađuju po principu primordijane zasnovanosti, ali i konceptualno-strukturalne uslovljenosti.

Problem stilizacije prostora i upotreba trikova, izuzev u rijetkim slučajevima (kao što su to, primjera radi, pojedine sekvence u filmovima *Beštije* i *Smrt gospodina Goluže*), kod Nikolića niti je izražen niti je on, kao reditelj, nalazio za potrebno da se njime posebno bavi. „On [prostor] je sistem odnosa, skup svih mogućih odnosa, svih vidova, svih mesta, svih uzajamnih kretanja. Bolje rečeno, to je funkcija odnosa između diskontinuiranih sistema, geometrijska funkcija skupa odnosa *polja*” (71). Jasno je da prostorni kontinuitet, ukoliko reditelj svjesno ne *rizikuje* da naglasi njegovu funkciju vizuelno nepromjenljive konstante koja će biti po strani aktivnih dramskih zbivanja, u cjelosti zamjenjuje vremenski diskontinuitet.

Takav *rizik* u Nikolićevim filmovima nije bio pravilo. A kakav je, zapravo, taj prostorni kontinuitet, taj okvir, koji je opsjedao Nikolića i neprestano bio u fokusu njegovih mizanscenskih *provjeravanja*? To je prostor surovih crnogorskih vrleti, onaj u kojem se prelamaju sva *punoća* jednog, takođe, surovog života i mnoštvo čekanja: čekanje sjutrašnjeg dana koji će biti još neizvjesniji, čekanje namjernikâ, od kojih bi, samo rijetki, mogli da donesu dobro, čekanje nečastivog koji takve, od života *otkinute* prostore često i rado posjećuje, čekanje patnje, suše, oskudice, čekanje kraja mučenja, ali i čekanje probuđenih strasti, onih rijetkih trenutaka koji potiskuju ostala čekanja. Čekati zbog njih za junake Nikolićevih filmova vrijedi svekolikog čekanja. Ne čekaju samo oni koji su zatečeni u tom prostoru *čekanja* – i sam prostor čeka!

Nadalje, to je prostor preplitanja mediteranske blagosti i gorštačke isključivosti, prostor ostrva nastanjenog beštijama, izgnanicima i zatočenicima koje nekud i u nekakvu, samo njihovom vidovitom Miletisimusu znanu neizvjesnost,

samo od sebe pluta, Goluzin prostor klaustrofobije i kafkijanskog straha i neizvjesnosti, kada vas optuže i ubijede da morate biti krivi, prostor usamljene kuće *okovane* kamenom koju ne mogu da promaše spodobe, čudaci, probisvijeti i nakaze, prostor jezera u čijem se brdu, onom okrenutom moru, probija tunnel da bi se ostvarila zamisao suludog gazde i *arhitekta*, prostor nudističkog kampa, prostor kamenih zidina oko kojih se glože oni koji dobro znaju da im one nikada i ni zašta neće trebati, prostor histerije službe državne bezbjednosti, lova na glave *izdajnika, bandita i ubačenih elemenata*, koji je istovremeno i prostor divljačkog izivljavanja i silovanja, opšteg stradanja i degradacije moralnih i ljudskih vrijednosti. Sve je to, taj nikolićevski prepoznatljiv prostor i *razigrani* i paspolučeni svijet u njemu, prostor sa svojom osobenom vizurom, svojom određenosti, svojim zakonitostima, svojim bestidnostima, svojim apsurdima, riječju, prostor svekolikih poniranja na granici realnog i onostranog. Ali, to je u Nikolićevim filmskim pričama i prostor nadanja.

Samo naizgled malim temama, smještenim u prepoznatljiv prostorni okvir, ljudima i sudbinama iz svog sjećanja, bavio se Nikolić, neprestano imajući u vidu kob njihovog biološkog, ali ne i duhovnog bića, i okrenutost onostranom u pokušaju odgonetanja *tajne*. Vrijeme kao eternalna kategorija Nikolića je interesovala samo u onoj mjeri u kojoj je to dovodilo njegove junake do pitanja vjere u Boga, kao zaloge pobjede nad prolaznošću. Vjera u Boga kao odbrana od neblagonaklone i, nerijetko, surove zbilje, zapravo je bila i jedino utočište u koje su Nikolićevi junaci mogli da se sklone. Stoga, kako kaže Mitri, treba ostaviti po strani proučavanje kosmičkog vremena i ograničiti se na proučavanje *proživljenog* (87). To upravo i radi umjetnost i Nikolić u umjetnosti. Iako ga nije isticao, usuđujemo se reći da je kod Nikolića upravo u ovom segmentu njegovog svekolikog traganja za *velikom tajnom* prisutan Šekspirov latentni uticaj. Treba se samo prisjetiti Hamletovih dilema, Lirove utučenosti, Magbetovih posrtanja, Otelovih patnji, ali i Falsafovog obješenjaštva i *misije* Henrija V, pa shvatiti koliko je tematika kojom se Šekspir bavio bliska Nikoliću i njegovom poimanju čovjekove uloge u kosmosu. No, za razliku od Šekspira koji je u čovjeku prepoznao opasno, gotovo apokaliptično biće koje bi jednog dana moglo da uništi i sami taj kosmos koji ga je stvorio, Nikolićevo viđenje te prekognicije donekle je umjerenije. On nije toliko istraživao čovjekovu patološku iskvarenost i zlo pritajeno i *nestrpljivo* u njegovom biću, koliko je njega samog ostavljao da se s tom pokvarenošću i zlom u sebi i oko sebe bori. Uostalom, to je radio i Šekspir, ali ovdje govorimo o različitim formama umjetničkog ispoljavanja naznačenih problema, različitim poetskim fakturama i, jasno, različitom aksiološkom kodu.

Psihološki problem ponašanja Nikolićevih junaka u vrijeme/prostoru, onako kako ga vidi Pol Fres, a vidi ga kao objektivno dešavanje u koordinatama spoznate stvarnosti, za Nikolića je uvijek predstavljao kreativnu inicijaciju, otvoreno polje umjetničkog djelovanja iz koga proističe ta stvarnost koja, kako kaže Bašlar, „stalno treperi oko naših apstraktnih orijentira. Vreme vrvi od malih kvan-

ta" (Bašlar 88). To vrijeme koje *vrvi od malih kvanta* i velikih zabluda predstavlja Nikolićev suštinski referentno-estetski okvir i vidljivo je u svim ravnima dijegetičke objektivacije njegovih filmova. Pri tom, njihova hronološka vremenska struktura, sa logičnim i kontinuiranim slijedom, objedinjuje pojedinačna vremenska trajanja, *psihološko* vrijeme aktera dramskih zbivanja ili, kako kaže Mitri: „Trajanje je osećanje. Osećanje koje zavisi od psihičkog intenziteta proživljenog vremena, a ne od njegovog stvarnog trajanja. [...] To što trajanje, kao Vreme, ne može da se prevede na jezik prostora, upravo je zato što ono nema objektivnu stvarnost" (89). U filmskom vrijeme/prostoru ne postoje, dakle, neka univerzalna konstanta kao pokazatelj intenziteta njihovog psihičkog života (njihovih emocija, preživljavanja, sukoba i slično) niti, pak, neki mjerni instrument kojim će se egzaktno utvrditi stepen i obim njihovog dještva. Za razliku od *mehaničkog* vremena sa uspostavljenim numeričkim jedinicama kojima se precizno može utvrditi trajanje nekog događaja, psihološko vrijeme je apstraktna kategorija i vezano je za unutrašnji život junaka. Utoliko je teže fiktivni vremenski okvir prevesti u *numeričku* hronološku ravan i vremenske koordinate podesiti tako da se u potpunosti uklapaju u njegovu dijegetičku teksturu, između ostalog i zbog diskontinuiteta filmske naracije kao njegovog osnovnog svojstva (dužina jednog kadra može se vremenski precizno izmjeriti, ali ne i *dužina* emocije ili unutrašnjeg preživljavanja aktera dramskog zbivanja u njemu).

A kako se sve to, zapravo, reflektuje na Nikolićevo poimanje vremensko-prostornih odnosa? Istaknimo, kao prvo, da se Nikolić nije odveć bavio, pogotovu ne teorijski, problematikom o kojoj je ovdje riječ. U fokusu njegovog interesovanja bio je, isključivo, onaj vremenski tembr i dimenzija u koju su smješteni njegovi junaci. Dakle, konkretno vrijeme, konkretni ljudi i konkretan prostor. Stoga je njegova filmska priča, bilo da je okrenuta legendarnom ili pseudo-mitskom, ili je u vezi sa aktuelnim trenutkom, posebno ako se radi o savremenim temama, što nije bio čest slučaj, neizostavno uvažavala duh vremena u koji je radnja smještena. Prefiks *pseudo* koristimo imajući u vidu Nikolićev odnos prema mitu kao alegoriji, u čija se tumačenja, uglavnom, nije upuštao, ali i faktografiju, kojoj nije pridavao gotovo nikakav značaj.

U zavisnosti od teme kojom se bavila, priča je dobijala svoj specifični narativni diskurs. Pravac njenog kretanja u Nikolićevim filmovima uslovljava i njen vremenski kontinuitet. Dislociranje vremenskih odnosa i prostornih relacija, pripovjedni ekskursi kojima se *remeti* linearno i logično odvijanje radnja, njeno svođenje na ono što se desilo ranije (narativni *flashback*), a pogotovu ono što će se tek desiti (narativni *flashforward*), kod Nikolića gotovo da ne postoje. To nedvosmisleno ukazuje na činjenicu da je njegovo viđenje vremenskog odvijanja radnje i prostora u kom se ona odvija, okrenuto ka onim odrednicama narativnog iskaza koje upućuju na konzistentnost, logički slijed, sukcesivnost i hronološko dijegetičko strukturiranje.

Svemu ovome su, kao osobeni znaci prepoznavanja, prilagođeni dekor i kostimi. Nikolić je posebno vodio računa o mogućnosti pojave anahronizama, ma o kako *beznačajnom* detalju da se radi, koji bi mogli da naruše vjerodostojnost prikazanog događaja. Na osnovu toga u koji su ambijentalni okvir junaci *locirani* i kako su *kostimirani*, prepoznaćemo (ili, bar, naslutiti) i vremenski okvir odvijanja radnje. U tako definisanoj i projektovanoj stvarnosti, osobenom dijegetičkom kontrapunktu, Nikolić preuređuje vremensko-prostorne odnose, čuvajući, pri tom, njihovu uvjerljivost i autentičnost, oblikuje jedan novi svijet, koherentnu i skladnu cjelinu, ali istovremeno i svijet čije su vizuelne i auditivne refleksije i ritmičke pulsacije nerazlučivo povezane. Navešćemo u tom smislu i jedno zanimljivo zapažanje Albera Lafea: „Niz neumoljivo tačnih slika čini da sadašnje vreme neprestano proganja sadašnje vreme. Postojeće, ono što ima tri dimenzije, u isti je mah i ono što se ograničava samo na sebe” (Lafe 15).

Nikolić, rekli bismo, na sartrovski uvjerljiv način, opažajne odnose i prostorne relacije shvata kao *rastjerivanje* njihovog zamišljanja. Tu u prvom redu imamo u vidu onaj segment Sartrove filozofske doktrine koja u cjelosti inklinira pozitivizmu. Čini se, upravo iz tog razloga, da je u Nikolićevim filmovima gotovo nemoguće pronaći kadrove u kojima se njegovi junaci nečeg *vizuelno* prisjećaju ili o nečem maštaju. Za to je, kao što je poznato, potrebna i tehnička *podrška* koja uključuje – dvostruku ekspoziciju, redukciju oštine, izmjenu svjetlosnih valera, zvučnog plana i slično, što je Nikolić odlučno odbacivao.

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THE FUNCTION OF SPACE IN ŽIVKO NIKOLIĆ'S DIRECTORIAL POETICS

Aesthetically unfounded speculation, which emphasizes ignorant attitudes toward space in film, was unknown to Nikolic. He managed to enrich space in his films in a specific way if it, with its integrity and visual fullness, didn't provide it. The space in his films is not a passive refractor through which rupture a variety of dramatic events, imprinting or non-imprinting, leaving or non-leaving a trace on it. It is an active participant which imprints and leaves a trail on the events in which it *takes part*. So, to emphasize the core values of space as an active catalyst of dramatic events, clearly define it, give it a role of diegetic artifex, to revive him, let him *play*, was basically Nikolic's starting premise. Guided by the thought of Jean Mitry, say that there is no absolute space nor absolute time – spreading is always limited, and the duration final. In addition, space which is always a part of something, exists only on the basis of phenomena present in it, which is, actually, an aesthetic form that fully reflects Nikolic's understanding of spatial and temporal relationships in film.

Key Words: space, time, narration, visual fullness, dramatic events, diegesis.

A SENSE OF HOME: ORAL HISTORY PRESENTATION – WRITING PLACE

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82-83

Oral History is a personal account of an event or an experience; it has sometimes been described as unreliable: how do people remember? And how true is this memory years after the event? Oral History is democratic, giving a voice to people who are often not heard. Taking this into account, I believe that oral history provides a unique perspective; no two people remember things in exactly the same way. Oral history is like a puzzle, collecting the pieces and then assembling a new picture. An oral history interview is intimate, just you, your recorder and your interviewee. It's all in the detail and the expression.

As well as providing a point of view on events or experience, oral history is also about the voice. You can understand and interpret a great deal from listening to somebody tell their story. The tone of voice, the accent, the way the story is told, sometimes the pauses are as revealing as the narrative.

For this presentation I selected some pieces from my previous oral history projects which I felt would echo the conference themes.

I began with recordings that I had made with Native Americans in Rhode Island USA. I was working with a film maker on a project for our Masters Degree at Central St Martins, London, in partnership with The British Museum. Our brief was to collect material for a proposed exhibition about a Native American sense of home and identity. We were taken by bus for a visit to a reservation; my colleague and I felt we would never understand anything in such a short visit so we missed the bus home and stayed on the reservation for several days filming and interviewing. We were very fortunate in being taken in and introduced to all sorts of people who contributed to our project. Interviewees spoke about perception of physical identity, their harsh history, and the vital connection with the land and their original tribes.

Rather than let people find their own labels that I might not approve of, I decided that the correct label that sums up who I am is – I am a survivalist. (Tall Oak Weeden, Rhode Island – Pequot and Wampanoeg ancestry)

I moved away from the area to go to college and I said I am never coming back here never, but the family just pulls you back whether its your

parents or whether its your tribe I will always have a home here it will always be part of who I am. (Interviewee, A Sense of Home)

The second piece I played was part of a soundscape from work on *Breaking the Chains*, an award-winning exhibition at the former British Empire and Commonwealth Museum. The exhibition explored themes of slavery, abolition, post slavery, and contemporary culture. I was curator of sound for the exhibition, and in the Caribbean gallery the narrative was told through voices and archive photographs. There are no audio recordings of slaves in the Caribbean, but I did draw on the extraordinary recordings in The American Library of Congress – Born into slavery – <https://www.loc.gov/collections/slave-narratives-from-the-federal-writers-project-1936-to-1938/about-this-collection/>.

I felt it important to illustrate the legacy of slavery and empire through the rich mix of cultures in the Caribbean. I interviewed first generation Caribbean immigrants in the UK and was fortunate to be able to draw on the Commonwealth Literature library and sound archive, a wonderful collection of spoken word, poetry, calypso, and folk songs.

I also wanted to play a piece from the poetry collection in this archive. This collection has some early recordings of African, Indian and Caribbean writers. I chose a recording from the poet (Edward) Kamau Brathwaite reading *Ancestors* which explores the enduring connection between the Caribbean and the UK.

Every Friday morning my grandfather left his farm of cane fields chickens,
cows
and rattled in his truck down to the harbour town to sell his meat
He was a butcher six foot three and very neat
high collar winged and grey cravat
a waistcoat watch chain just above the belt
thin narrow bottomed trousers
the shoes his wife would polish every night
he drove the truck himself
slap of the leather reins along the horse's back
and he'd be off with a top hearted homburg on his head
Black English Country Gentleman.

For my last piece I played a recorded narrative which I had written for a short film. *Created by Me* is about how we live in a city and make it our own, how we become part of the rhythm of a city.

I could walk it with my eyes closed, I could feel the pavement under my shoes, I knew the broken bits and the bits that collected water, I knew where the curb sloped away [...] like a blind man, I knew when to cross, I listened to the traffic, I knew the noises of the buses, the taxis, the bikes, the cars, I knew exactly when I passed the offices where they smoke outside, at the same time, every afternoon, regular as clockwork, I felt the weather on my face and felt the light, I could tell when it was blue and bright or when it was grey and damp, I could walk it, every afternoon, two hundred and thirty paces to the right of Russell Square, two hundred and seventy to the left, I could walk it with my eyes closed, every afternoon, to here, this corner, right here, at the same time, every afternoon, regular as clockwork.

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