THE UNIVERSITY OF

WARWICK

University of Warwick institutional repository: http://go.warwick.ac.uk/wrap

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of Warwick

http://go.warwick.ac.uk/wrap/57199

"Arising from the depths" (Kupala):
A Study of Belarusian Literature in
English Translation

by

Svetlana Skomorokhova

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy in Translation Studies

University of Warwick,
Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies

October 2012

Падымайся з нізін, сакаліна сям'я,
    Над крыжамі бацькоў, над нягодамі;
Занімай, Беларусь маладая мая,
    Свой пачэсны пасад між народамі!..
                    Янка Купала, *Маладая Беларусь* **(1909-12)**

Arise from the depths, thou of falcon-born race,
    O'er sires' crosses, their woes, degradation,
O young Biełarus, come thou forth, take thy place
    Of honour and fame among nations.
                    Janka Kupala, *Young Biełarus* **(1909-12)**
                        (translated by Vera Rich)

Arise from the lowlands, my family of falcons, arise!
    Above your fathers' grave, above woes untold,
And take my young Byelorussia, your rightful prize,
Your honoured place among peoples of all the world!
                    Janka Kupala, *Young Byelorussia* **(1909-12)**
                        (translated by Walter May)

Contents

Acknowledgements

Equal thanks are expressed to friends and family for their support throughout the project, first and foremost to Mr Paul Luckraft for his continuous encouragement and endless patience, particularly with proofreading several drafts of this manuscript for spelling and grammar. Hugh and Sue Beyer have been incredibly supportive from the very start of this research and our conversations on the theory and practice of translation have been most appreciated. I would also like to thank Ms Lynn Liagas whose generous hospitality allowed me to combine teaching experience with intensive writing during the last two summers at the University of Birmingham. Finally, I would like to thank my mother, Liudmila Ivanauna Tolchykava, for encouraging me to explore Belarusian at the time when it was an optional school subject, for being my first English teacher as well as the first critic of my initial research attempts in Belarusian-English literary translations and for sharing her life-long interest in literary research.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for a degree at another university. All the translations within are mine unless otherwise stated with the originals provided in the footnotes. Some of the ideas from Chapters One, Five and Six have been explored at conferences, but during the course of this research they have been significantly reworked and, as a result, have been expanded both theoretically and factually, and rewritten to fit the general structure of the thesis. Small sections from 5.3 and 6.1, namely the factual biographical data on pages 219, 220, 245 and 246, have been mentioned previously in my Candidate of Philology thesis (2005), however, the bulk of these chapters, including the analysis and the general argument, have been rewritten specially for this thesis.

Abstract

Using Belarusian as a case study of a 'minority' European literature, this thesis explores the role of literary translation in the negotiation and promotion of a national identity (represented by two opposing discourses of "Old/European" and "New/Soviet" 'Belarusianness') as accomplished through translation from a lesser-known European tongue into the current global hegemonic language. In so doing, the research provides a wide historical panorama of all known literary translations from Belarusian to English, focusing on those published in the 20th and 21st centuries. While outlining the major tendencies of the translation process, the study considers the issues of both reception (focusing on the TL literary system) and representation (focusing on the negotiation of a Belarusian identity), recognising complex ideological, historical and political processes which accompany and, in many cases, predetermine translations and translation strategies.

After examining the available terminology for the description of 'minority' in literary theory and translation studies, this research considers Belarus' position as an Eastern European, post-Soviet country and discusses the case for the adoption of a postcolonial approach to the interpretation of 'Belarusianness'. Another innovative aspect of the study lies in the contribution of a non-Western perspective to the current discussion of European minority languages in translation studies (Baer 2011; Branchadell and West 2005; Cronin 1995, 2003; Tymoczko 1995, 1999).

A pioneering work on the history of Belarusian-English literary translation, this research defines several periods of translation activities: the 'early' translations of the 1890s – 1940s which mark the discovery of Belarusian folklore; the translations of the 'Cold War' period (1950s – 1980s) with two opposing 'camps' producing works provoked by nationalist (Western-based translations) or socialist (Soviet Union) ideologies; and, finally, the current post-independence period of Belarusian-English translation (1991-2012), with an analysis of the reasons for a relative inactivity. The evidence is based on a wide range of translations published as individual books and anthologies of poetry and prose, as well as those found in periodicals. It also includes previously unpublished findings from materials located in personal and national archives in Russia, Belarus, and the UK.

Notes on Transliteration and Abbreviations

Currently, there exist three possibilities for English transliteration from Belarusian: firstly, the guidance outlined in the Library of Congress' Romanization tables (ALA-LC 2011), secondly, the Belarusian Roman alphabet (so-called *lacinka*), and, finally, the traditional historical transliteration for certain proper names. Thus, my own name can be spelt as *Skamarokhava* according to the Library of Congress, as *Skamarochava* in *lacinka*, and, finally, given its etymological root with Russian *skomorokh,* as *Skomorokhova* (the latter version being its legal transliteration). This is not a unique case as the Polonisation and Russification of legal documents have affected most of the Belarusian literati mentioned later, and this fact had to be taken into account in this research.

The transliteration of Belarusian used in this research follows the conventional Library of Congress rules for Belarusian, using diacritics for *ў* (pronounced as [w] and spelt as *ŭ*) and for the soft sound *ь* (spelt as *′*), though it omits diacritics over diphthongs (e.g. *i͡a* is written as *ia,* except for the initial letters in proper names, e.g. Janka). The "alternative", *lacinka,* favoured by Anglophone émigrés and Western-based scholars, is introduced in quotations. The traditional historical is reserved for proper names and toponyms in accordance with their existing English variants (e.g. Jan of Lettou), and Polonized/Russified forms are reproduced according to their usage in printed texts or legal documents (e.g. Hussowski, Iwanowska, Skomorokhova). Such forms are also sometimes accompanied by a Belarusian transliteration according to the Library of Congress rules – in cases where there is no accepted transliteration into English (Maraszewski/Marasheŭski), since both variants can currently be found in English sources. However, in cases where a name is not widely available in Anglophone sources, the Belarusian spelling according to the Library of Congress is used. In the case of multiple transliterations (e.g. Skaryna/Skorina/Scorina) all the variants are introduced in

the first instance, as at least at one point they would have been the subject of terminological debate.

The abbreviations used within are few and are mostly conventional for translation studies: ST and TT are used throughout and signify Source Text and Target Text. All other abbreviations (e.g. BSSR for Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic) are pre-empted by full titles first. The only exceptions to the last principle are abbreviations in common usage (e.g. USSR).

Introduction

> The concept of a new and undiscovered, and, furthermore, a written literature, right on our literary doorsteps so to speak, in Europe itself, seems to lie quite beyond the realms of fact [...]. Yet such lands, and such literatures exist, and if we do not know them, it is because our geographical consciousness still tends to rule off Europe at the eastern frontier of Poland, and to leave the former Soviet Union an undifferentiated landmass stretching eastwards to the Pacific. The new names which appeared in our atlases in 1991-1992 and the unfamiliar flags flying over international conferences, sporting events and pop festivals have not, largely speaking, found a resonance at the international literary level.
>
> <div align="right">Vera Rich (Skamarokhava 2005)</div>

In a recent discussion of the reasons for the "remarkable academic momentum" translation studies are currently experiencing, Harish Trivedi (2007) pinpointed three historic events in the 20th century as defining factors for the eventual establishment of the discipline.[1] According to him, the first of them was the 'discovery' of Russian fiction in the West. This process, which, in Trivedi's periodization, started in the 1880s and continued until the 1930s,

> revealed to readers in English a body of imaginative work from an area outside Western Europe which was so new and exciting as to be shocking and indeed to induce a state of what was then called the "Russian fever," with writers as diverse as Virginia Woolf and D. H. Lawrence not only enthusing about the newly discovered nineteenth-century masters of Russian fiction but actually helping to translate them (Trivedi 2007, 277)[2].

---

[1] While it may be argued that the following facts of the 'sudden discovery' of 'other' literatures by the speakers of hegemonic languages did not *de facto* lead to the foundation of the academic discipline of translation studies, it can be asserted that they have, nevertheless, contributed to raising Western literary awareness of the voice of the 'Other'. The growth of an international literary exchange expanded the horizons of previously narrowly understood *Weltliteratur* and led both to the rise of literary comparativistics and to a significant increase in literary translation flow. The escalation of the latter eventually necessitated a discipline of its own.

[2] The periodization is debatable. While Trivedi suggests it lasted several decades, other scholars attribute "the Russian fever" to the first two decades of the 20th century (Lusin 2008, 289). Discussing the period, May (1994, 30) describes it as "a renewed fervor for things Russian", which followed "a brief retreat from Russophile tendencies" during the Russo-Japanese War where the English allied themselves with the Japanese side, leading to a period of extraordinary interest in Russian literature "of, roughly, 1910-25" (*ibid.,* 31). At the same time, however, Phelps acknowledges the fact that "fresh translations followed at regular intervals throughout the 19th century, for example in 1886, which has been described

Traditionally, the start of the "Russian fever", or "Russian craze" in Gilbert

Phelps' terminology (1956, 13), is marked as having occurred in 1912, the year of the

publication of Constance Garnett's translation of *The Brothers Karamazov*. The very

fact that the start of an international cultural phenomenon is linked to the appearance of

a translation highlights the importance of literary translation in cross-cultural

communication and the wider literary processes of the "world republic of letters"

(Casanova 2007). Translation was part of the wider process of the reception of Russian

literature by the British public: in analysing the preconditions of the "fever" in his

article "The Early Phases of British Interest in Russian Literature", Gilbert Phelps

mentions an "important stocktaking article on 'Dostoyevsky and the English Novel'"

which was published in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 1930, and comments that the

article states that awareness of the Russians "seemed suddenly to communicate itself in

other countries; the infection spread" (Phelps 1958, 418). Phelps's later rhetoric

describing 'the fever' borders on a medical diagnosis[3]: "The fever it [the *infection –*

S.S.] engendered raged for a few years and then died away as quickly as it had arisen,

leaving many critics breathless and bewildered in the face of what appeared to be a

mysterious manifestation, without roots and without traditions" (*ibid.,* 418). In the rest

of the essay, Phelps continues to develop this metaphor further by employing medical

vocabulary: "this brief period of high fever", "genuine history ... behind it", "the

infection ... startling in its suddenness", "the patient's constitution", "predisposing

factors", "inherent [factors]" (*ibid.*, 418). Indeed, the very term identifying the

---

as 'the vintage year' of Russian translations and would seem to be another rival to 1912 as a 'starting-point'" (Phelps 1958, 431), therefore positioning the start of the 'Russian craze' within the timeframe of Trivedi's periodization.

    [3] The perception of foreign cultures through their association with either sickness or dirtiness is not an uncommon phenomenon. Examples of using similar rhetoric range from historical accounts of Westerners travelling to Eastern Europe (Wolffe 1996) to a recent discourse of the US government and media on refugees (Barsky 2011). Commenting on Churchill's rhetoric on Europe divided by 'the Iron Curtain', Wolff asserts: "Throughout the Cold War the iron curtain would be envisioned as a barrier of quarantine, separating the light of Christian civilization from whatever lurked in the shadows, and such a conception was all the more justification for not looking too closely at the lands behind" (Wolffe 1996, 2).

phenomenon, "the Russian craze", echoes a medical diagnosis in its etymology – or at least hints at a mental lapse in judgement on behalf of the 'patient', in this case the Western reader. The "infection" was indeed rather short-lived, and the Anglophone readers subjected to it were fully 'cured' with the rise of the Bolsheviks and, particularly, with the appearance of Stalin.

However, the 'virus' was to return. The two other major processes which Trivedi identifies as influential in the translation studies "boom" happened several decades later, in the 1970s-1980s, and involved South American and – yet again – Eastern European countries:

> The other two moments belong to the other end of the twentieth century, occurring as they did in the 1970s and the 1980s when two other bodies of literature from hitherto unregarded parts of the world were translated into English and caused a comparable sensation: from Latin America, and from the East European countries lying behind the Iron Curtain. Unlike with Russian literature, these latter literatures when made available in translation helped to transform globally our very expectations of what literature looks like or should look like (Trivedi 2007, 277).

Thus, the 'virus' mutated and penetrated the cell of European canonicity, causing, as Trivedi argues, irreparable changes to Eurocentric and structuralist approaches to literature[4].

---

[4] Trivedi goes on to compare this "shocked and exhilarated" condition experienced by the "readers in English and in other European languages" to that of 18th century Western European audiences reading translations from Sanskrit (*ibid.,* 278). He concludes, however, that unlike the 20th century 'discoveries', "*The Oriental Renaissance"* did not result in an upsurge in translation studies, but in "the founding of the discipline of comparative philology, and in […] further and more effective colonization" (*ibid.*). Thus, the initial perceptions of Eastern Europe and colonial India as "hitherto unregarded parts of the world" (*ibid.,* 277) by English audiences are not dissimilar. Taking this parallel further, it may be suggested that even though the postcolonial framework is currently not extended to include Eastern European experiences within the traditional postcolonial discourse, the initial perception of lesser-known Eastern European literatures entering the Anglophone market may undergo similar historic filters. These filters, which include stereotypes of Eastern Europe contained in the Western European cultural memory, are discussed later.

In this brief overview of events, Trivedi does not provide a detailed analysis of the influences or "expectations of what literature looks like or should look like" which were introduced as a result of this qualitative change. Is he referring to new genres, new themes or new paradigms of literary interpretation? While the sudden prominence of Latin American literatures and their influence on postmodern approaches to translation studies, such as 'cannibalism', have been directly acknowledged in translation studies (Vieira 1994; Bassnett and Trivedi 1999; Snell-Hornby 2006), the influence of Eastern European literatures is less overt – and is certainly less researched in Western translation studies[5]. It is also not entirely clear which countries behind 'the Iron Curtain' are discussed here, which writers contributed towards that shift of conscience, and, moreover, what their influence has been. In other words, was it the work of Franz Kafka, Milan Kundera, Alexander Solzhenitsyn or Czeslaw Miłosz which helped that aforementioned global transformation? Or was it the compilation of their work as the "combined" cultural capital of one cultural entity, i.e. that of Eastern Europe[6]? If so, what was the nature of that influence: political, aesthetic, or both – or neither of them?

While Trivedi's claim raises a few questions with regard to the details of how the three influences he offered were executed, if one agrees with it, at least partially, then it is noteworthy that two of the given reasons for the eventual upsurge of the discipline of translation studies are related to Eastern Europe. More specifically, they relate to the legacy of the Russian Empire and then the Soviet Union, if one considers 'Russia' as the major 'Other' power of the 'Evil Empire' (in Reagan's terminology) behind the 'Iron Curtain'. At the same time, interestingly, while the first wave of 'Russian fever' produced a wide and enthusiastic response in Anglophone literary

---

[5] While it may be asserted that Russian literature and Russian formalism have indirectly led to the development of the polysystem theory, the shaping of the actual theory took place within the confines of the Hebrew literary tradition.

[6] The evidence of the construction of such an entity is exemplified by Philip Roth's Penguin series in the 1970s, where several Eastern European writers are classified as *Writers from the Other Europe*. Today the series is termed *Central European Classics*.

circles, its second wave had a much more modest impact from a Russianist perspective. Thus, the first wave manifested itself in multiple translations and re-translations of Russian classics (mostly of 19th century prose), with Constance Garnett rising to a fame few translators ever achieve and dominating the Anglophone literary scene as the unquestionable authority on Russian classics (May 1994). The second one, on the other hand, had to operate within the confines of post-war political positionalities (Soviet vs. capitalist block) and ideological censorship as well as within more traditional linguistic and literary constraints. These included the institutionalised practices of translator's 'invisibility' (Venuti 1995/2008) and limited resources, both financial as well as professional, as comparatively few English native speakers were able to translate freely from Eastern European languages. One of the obvious reasons for this limited impact was that the languages in question were not widely studied in Western institutions. However, this research argues that the factors which prevented this wave having a lasting influence are rooted in the traditional reception of Eastern European countries in Western discourse. Therefore, before moving further to a direct discussion of the object of this research – Belarusian literature in English translations – it is deemed necessary to position it within the wider regional setting of Anglophone Eastern European studies.

Eastern Europe in Anglophone Translation Studies

> All these eastern Europeans what are coming in, where are they flocking from?
> *Gillian Duffy's question to the Prime Minister* (Weaver 2010)

> "International society", with its strong European historicity, had negotiated its own identity partly by differentiating itself from what it deemed to be its outside (Neumann 1999, xii).

The traditional Eurocentric cliché, which will be further discussed in Chapter One in application to postcolonial translation studies, equates 'Europe' with 'the West'

and tends to gloss over the internal differences within Europe itself, neglecting the former 'peripheral' Eastern European states. Moreover, the issue of Eastern European languages in Anglophone translation is further complicated by the political overtones of the term 'East'. The traditional dichotomy of "East vs. West" means that Eastern Europe is perceived as *the Other Europe,* as exemplified by *The Writers from the Other Europe* Penguin series, often imagined as a distorted mirror merely reflecting Western Europe in a backward and uncivilized manner[7]. In *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* Wolffe (1996) argues that the construct was imagined as the barbaric opposite to its Western counterpart during the Age of Enlightenment. In a way, this tradition seems to be still upheld in Western discourse, as highlighted by questions asked not only by the puzzled public, as in the case of Gillian Duffy's immigration question during the 2010 UK general election (Weaver 2010), but also by some of the leading academics in the field of Eastern European studies. Thus, Norman Davies' article challenges a long-lasting stereotype by rephrasing it as a question in 'West Best, East Beast?' (1997), while Leon Mark's monograph *What's So Eastern about Eastern Europe? Twenty Years After the Fall of The Berlin Wall* poses yet another rhetorical question: 'Will Europe ever give up the need to have an East?'(2009, 5)[8].

The reasons for the persistence of the East-West dichotomy are manifold and range from the centuries-old Enlightenment oversimplification of European complexities along the lines of civilization/barbarism (Wolffe 1996; Neumann, 2001; Wortman 2006), a current need of the EU to define its borders (Kuus 2008; Mark 2009),

---

[7] Here is a further similarity between the rhetoric employed for Eastern Europe and that for the colonised world by the Coloniser: "Europe was regarded as the great Original, the starting point, and the colonies were therefore copies, or 'translations' of Europe, which they were supposed to duplicate. Moreover, being copies, translations were evaluated as less than originals, and the myth of the translation as something that diminished the greater original established itself" (Bassnett and Trivedi 1999, 4). In this sense, Eastern Europe may also be regarded as the "imperfect translation" of its Western counterpart.

[8] The answer to that might have been given by Bernstein a couple of decades before the question was posed when he claimed that "the theme of 'the Other' – and specially what constitutes the otherness of 'the Other' – has been at the very heart of the work of every major twentieth-century Continental philosopher" (1992, 68).

a type of 'orientalism' and a type of postcolonialism (Thompson 2000; Chakrabarty 2008) or, more familiar to translation studies, a centre-periphery dichotomy (Even-Zohar 1978, 1990). At the same time, most scholars using the term (or, rather, several terms, such as "Western", "West Central", "East Central", and "Eastern" Europe)[9] admit their arbitrary nature. Thus, commenting on the coinage of the term "East Central Europe", Piotr Wandycz suggests that the invention of the term was deemed necessary in order "to define a region that is neither wholly Western nor Eastern, but represents a 'middle zone' or 'lands in between'" (Wandycz 2005, 1). At the same time, he expresses doubt whether it has been a successful solution either from the point of geography ("The term is borrowed from geography, yet neither geographers nor politicians would agree on the exact contours of the region" (*ibid.*)) or from the point of history: "The frontiers of these states have fluctuated a good deal throughout history. They expanded and contracted, comprising at various times the present day Lithuania, Belorussia[10], and the Ukraine, as well as parts of Yugoslavia and Romania" (*ibid.*). His healthy scepticism (which, nevertheless, does not prevent him from employing the term in the title of his monograph) is shared by many compilers of translation anthologies which aim to introduce works from "the Other Europe" to Western audiences. In his introduction to *The Traveller's Literary Companion to Eastern and Central Europe*, James Naughton admits there is no "unambivalent answer" to defining both Europe's Eastern and Central parts. His definition of Eastern Europe is rather symbolically carried through what it is *not*[11]:

---

[9] The division into these four parts was coined by Halecki, then subsequently reworked by Szűcs who kept all of the constituents apart from "West Central". Another division, more flattering for certain European countries, was argued for by Milan Kundera, Czesław Miłosz, and György Konrád (cf. the summary in Wandycz 2005), who offered a tripartite divison into Western, Central, and Eastern Europe – a division where their own countries occupied the central position.

[10] Here, the spelling of the country is, rather awkwardly, a Polonised version of a Russified English spelling. The Polish term for Belarus is "Białoruś", the Russified Soviet term is "Byelorussia".

[11] This is also the situation regarding the Belarusian national identity.

'Eastern Europe' is clearly perceived as 'not' Western Europe: for several decades the 'Iron Curtain' was the clearly recognized geopolitical border between the two. Another, rather more historical definition might be that of the 'lands between': between Germany and Russia (or the former Soviet Union), south of the Baltic and north of Greece (Naughton 1995, ix)[12].

The presence of 'Cold War' overtones and the mention of geopolitical borders in a book which was published *after* the fall of the Berlin Wall and the unification of Europe is not accidental. Seeking for an explanation as to why "the iron curtain is gone, and yet the shadow persists" (1996, 3), Wolffe turns to Churchill's image which, he argues, "concealed a part of what made Churchill's imagery so powerful, the traces of an intellectual history that invented the idea of Eastern Europe long before. [...] The "iron curtain" seamlessly fit the earlier tracing" (*ibid.,* 3 – 4), i.e. the one produced in the West at the time of Enlightenment. However, for most of the participants of literary translation processes, the presence of the "iron curtain" has been associated with specific post-Cold War conditions. Thus, the compilers of *The Reader's Encyclopedia of Eastern European Literature* explain their selection of entries as a political act:

The term Eastern Europe is not simply geographical. This Companion covers East European literature, and that is a political designation, for writers of the 'imperial' languages, e.g. Brod, Canetti, Kafka, Werfel, let alone Dostoevski, Pushkin or Tolstoy, are not included (Pynsent 1993, vii).

---

[12] The definition of Central Europe is equally vague: "That 'Central Europe', which also appears in our title, of 'Mitteleuropa', is hard to measure (where is Europe's eastern border?), but it eloquently insists on the non-peripherality of its (somewhat loosely defined!) area as a kind of crossroads between east and west, north and south; it is most favoured by those people who like to invoke the cultural inheritance of the former Habsburg Monarchy (Austrians, Czechs, Poles ...). Prague is west of Vienna, and so is Ljubljana in Slovenia..." (Naughton 1995, ix). Both definitions contain references to former Kremlin and Habsburg empires and their subjects.

The political decision in this case seems to be closely linked to the imperial legacy, where the literatures included in the Encyclopedia are all those representing the voice of the subaltern:

> Eastern Europe indicates those linguistic areas or nation-states which were or considered themselves oppressed by (or, in a 19th-century cliché, under the yoke of) one of the four great European continental empires (Austrian, Prussian, Ottoman and Russian) for anything from fifty to a thousand years. ... The 'intellectuals' (producers of literature) of these linguistic areas once felt politically or socially oppressed, usually by Germans, Turks or Russians[13] (*ibid.*).

Here, the authors follow a conventional representation of Eastern Europe as an 'oppressed' region, a comfortable category of a familiar binary in which Western Europe is regarded as 'saint and saviour' (Wedel 2001, 22). In his account of the consequences of World War I, Seton-Watson even excludes Russia from the powers that had a say in the geo-political redrawing of maps of the region: "in 1918, the statesmen of Western Europe and the United States proclaimed the ethnical principle as the basis on which the frontiers of Eastern Europe should be drawn, and the Treaties of Versailles, St Germain, Trianon and Neuilly were regarded as embodying that principle" (1946, 269).

This dichotomy, however, is slowly beginning to be challenged by voices coming from Central Europe who themselves have had an experience of being regarded as 'semi-European'[14] (Shkandrij 2001, 30) or of coming from 'lands in between'

---

[13] Similar grouping is pinpointed by Seton-Watson, who contends that "for long periods the whole of Eastern Europe was ruled by three Empires which, although not National States in the modern sense of the word, relied for their organisation mainly on the three nations which do not properly belong to the area we have taken as 'Eastern Europe', the Germans, Russians and Turks" (1946, 268).
[14] A vivid example of such an experience for Poland, for instance, is best illustrated by Russian Orientalist discourse. This particular example, in Elena Gapova's translation, is taken from an essay by a well-known Russian dissident writer, Victor Erofeyev, whose literary influence has been compared to the likes of Dostoyevski and Tolstoy. Erofeyev, a son of a Russian diplomat, who has a doctorate from the

(Wandysz 2005, 1). Scholars such as Kalinowska argue for caution in making a "neat, oversimplified division [...] between "them" and "us"", since such schemes do not "account for a whole range of transitory phenomena" (2004, 8). In discussions of the practicalities of EU expansion and, consequently, of the search for a definition of a "European" identity (Bruter 2005; Herrmann and Brewer 2004; McCormick 2010), voices from Eastern Europe are slowly beginning to be incorporated in the European polylogue. Most notably for translation studies these oversimplified binary definitions are being challenged in a recently published and, as some would argue, long-overdue volume published by Benjamins in their Translation Library series and titled *Contexts, Subtexts and Pretexts: Literary translation in Eastern Europe and Russia* (Baer 2011). In its definition of this region of numerous 'translation zones' (Apter 2001) "as a deliberate challenge to the romantic notion of Eastern Europe as a community of oppressed nations" the volume includes "Russia, an enormous multi-ethnic, multi-lingual empire, on the one hand, but one that has nonetheless experienced the inferiority complex of "smaller nations"" (Baer 2011, 2). The reasons for the inclusion of one of the former conquerors, or, as some argue, colonisers of that part of the world, together with its former subaltern subjects, lie in "the shared experience of "belated modernity" and the longstanding practice of repressive censorship", which resulted in "an incredibly vibrant, profoundly politicized, and highly visible culture of translation throughout the

---

Institute of World Literature in Moscow (1973), claims: "There were times when Warsaw was ours. Well, maybe not completely the way the Crimea or Gagry [famous resorts; the second is in the Caucasus – E.G.] were, though it used to belong to us in that way too, but that was long ago, during the tsars. But still, as far back as I can remember, it was almost ours, but not completely, and this had some special meaning to it. Overtly tame and submissive, Warsaw was still trying to run away from us or to hide, and we were trying to catch her by the hand, and she behaved strangely, trying to get loose and not trying to at the same time, and was laughing, as if a girl. [...] Now Warsaw has run so far away from us that Poles do not even think of themselves as Eastern Europe any more. Now they are Central Europe, and as for Eastern Europe – these are now Belarusians and Ukrainians…" (Erofeyev 2002, cited in Gapova 2004, 74). The adverse reaction to such statements has been quite strong in Polish discourse which is also often incorporated into the rhetoric of the loss of the empire 'od moza do moza'/ 'from the sea to the sea', i.e. that of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth which stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Referring to the 'national question' the maker of the 'Soviet nation' Lenin stated: «Весь народ польский пропитан насквозь одной мыслью о мести москалям. Никто так не угнетал поляков, как русский народ. Русский народ служил в руках царей палачом польской свободы» (All Poles are saturated with one thought of revenge on Moscovites. No-one has ever oppressed Poles as much as Russians did. The Russian nation served as an executioner of Polish freedom in the hands of the tsars) (Lenin 1917, 432).

region as a whole" (*ibid.,* blurb). If the high visibility of translation is the case (and this study supports this claim), then these issues of power, ideology, and the manipulation of texts in multilingual contexts in publication can pave the way for further studies and potentially significant theoretical applications of the translation legacy of this region, where "the persistence of large multilingual empires [...] produced bilingual and even polyglot readers" (*ibid.*), to translation studies. However, at the moment Eastern European discourse in global translation studies is in its infancy. Due to a number of reasons, such as language associated difficulties, unfamiliarity with the cultures, the absence of provisions for specialist training, available materials on Eastern European literatures in globalised translation studies are scarce. Apart from the aforementioned *Contexts, Subtexts and Pretexts: Literary Translation in Eastern Europe and Russia* (2011), the existing Anglophone studies include Popovic's typescript *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation* (c.l975), Zlateva's *Translation as Social Action: Russian and Bulgarian Perspectives* (1993), Friedberg's *Literary Translation in Russia: A Cultural History* (1997)*,* Králová and Jettmarova's *Tradition Versus Modernity: From the Classic Period of the Prague School to Translation Studies at the Beginning of the 21st Century* (2008) and a recent translation of Jiří Levý's classic work *Art of Translation* (1963/2011). While the list of the Eastern European traditions represented in the *Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (Baker and Saldanha 2009, vii) extends to include Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Russian, and Slovak traditions, the reasons for the selection of these particular perspectives rather than others are not stated. Apart from these publications, it is hard to think of any other within the discipline which include an Eastern European perspective. To give just one example: one of the few publications devoted to the issues of minority and translation, *Less Translated Languages* by Branchadell and West[15] (2005), does not include Eastern European languages in its

---

[15] Publication followed the Fifth International Conference on Translation "Interculturality and

range of entries. More examples of such omissions are discussed in Chapter One. These omissions may be explained by the fact that most Eastern European academic programmes are Russian-focused[16] and do not, therefore, produce enough specialists in a variety of Eastern European languages who would provide a more nuanced view of the countries' complexities.

Postcolonial, Postcommunist, Post-Soviet?

> Again with swollen oratory
> For Lithuania's hopeless cause
> You open fire at Russia's glory,
> Her sacred rights, and ancient laws. [...]
> Yes, envy gnaws you like an adder,
> And nothing could have made you sadder
> Than Russia with her glory new;
> The sheen in which the Tsar has clad her
> Eclipses Heaven's sheen for you.
> *Mikhail Lermontov* ([c.1835/6] 1983, 97)[17]

> The colonizer/colonized, hegemonic/subaltern relationship [...] is an appropriate lense through which to view the literatures of Eastern Europe, which have been heavily marked by a history of conquest and revolt, national self-assertion, and cultural competition (Shkandrij 2001, xi).

One area in which the recent *Contexts, Subtexts and Pretexts: Literary Translation in Eastern Europe and Russia* is potentially lacking is problematising the

---

Translation: Less-Translated Languages" at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona in October 29 – 31, 2001 as part of the EU European Year of Languages "in order to promote awareness of the great cultural and linguistic diversity in the European Union, and to encourage the learning of languages for personal and professional development" (Jover and Mogensen 2002, 43).

[16] Such a situation is not only typical of Europe: the authors of the Report by Next Page Foundation on 'Translations from East European Languages into Arabic, 1989-2010' state that similar problems are experienced in most Arabic-speaking countries, whose Eastern European language programmes are mostly oriented towards Russian philology (Next Page Foundation 2010). With the establishment of the Russki Mir Foundation, which seeks to contribute to the support of Russian language and culture within UK Universities and which has established centres in the University of Edinburgh and Oxford, such imbalances will probably grow.

[17] ST: Опять, народные витии,
    За дело падшее Литвы
    На славу гордую России
    Опять шумя восстали вы.
    Да, хитрой зависти ехидна
    Вас пожирает; вам обидна
    Величья нашего заря;
    Вам солнца божьего не видно
    За солнцем русского царя (Lermontov [c.1835] 1989, 276).

Russian presence (or lack thereof) in postcolonial discourse in translation studies. While recognising the country's imperialistic character, Baer, nevertheless, chooses to include it in the volume on the grounds that it would help "to resist the temptation of (re)imposing too coherent an identity on the region, challenging from the outset any direct and deterministic relationship between political formations and cultural identity" (Baer 2011, 2). While his efforts are commendable, the internal intricacies resulting from such a decision could have been afforded at least a brief mention. Despite recognising "the historic organization of Eastern Europe and Russia around large multi-ethnic empires" as "a second unifying factor in the region" (*ibid.,* 6), Baer's usage of the term 'postcolonial' with regard to Eastern Europe is tentative (*ibid.*). He does admit that this perspective "was brought home" to him over a decade ago through *Album,* a volume of "translations into Serbian, Croatian and the new national language of Bosnian, which to the untrained eye was utterly indistinguishable from the other two languages" [18] (*ibid.,* 7). Yet while for Baer the "story of *Album* underscores the problematic construction of national identity in the postcolonial context of the former Yugoslavia" (*ibid.*), his only conclusion with regard to "postcolonial" Eastern Europe is that "one aspect of this imperial legacy is that the nation-state remains a somewhat problematic concept throughout much of this region" (*ibid.,* 6). The only aspect he is willing to engage with in his discussion in the sub-section "Translation and Empire" is the example of the problematic construction of the Russian identity, a problem stemming from the interchangeable usage of the term 'Russian' to denote both 'ethnic Russians' and 'citizens of Russian Federation/ Empire'[19].

---

[18] It is interesting to note the condescending tone of Baer's description of 'the new national language of Bosnia'. It becomes particularly potent in the context of the discussion of postcolonial framework as being applied to Eastern Europe, a framework Baer seeks to disengage with.

[19] The discussion is given a much more detailed treatment in Thompson (2000) where she accounts for at least three Russian SL terms translated as "Russian" in English. Similar interchangeable usage of English instead of British is discussed in Talib (2001), Spiering (1992), et al. For Russia's problematic reconstruction of identity(ies) in the Post-Soviet era see Clowes 2011.

Baer's disengagement with the subject of Russia as a colonial power in Europe is not atypical. The Soviet Union's voice in support of anticolonial measures against Western colonisers was so strong that it succeeded in producing the impression of the absence of a similar problem in its own vicinities and "for most of Soviet history, the anticolonialist rhetoric provided a smoke screen[20] for the Soviets' own expansionist and colonialist endeavors" (Kalinowska 2004, 14). At the height of anticolonialism protests, the UN Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in 1960 (UN 1960) was deemed inapplicable to the USSR as, according to its Constitution, all the fifteen republics were considered equal and willing to remain in their Union, a legacy of its imperial past − and some argue − its colonial attitudes (Thompson 2000; Shkandrij 2001; Moore 2006). At the same time, the very first lines of the official anthem of the USSR established the undisputed leadership of Russia: "Союз нерушимый республик свободных (Unbreakable union of free republics) / Сплотила навеки Великая Русь! (Welded forever by the great Rus')"(Mikhalkov and El-Registan 2011)[21]. In the Belarusian case, that reliance on the 'Big Russian Brother'[22] was interwoven into their own identity: "We, Byelorussians, together with fraternal Rus'/ Were seeking roads to happiness together/ In battles for freedom, in battles for better life/ With her, we have obtained the victory flag!/ We were united by Lenin's name, / The Party is leading us on the walk to happiness. [...] / The people of

---

[20] Kalinowska (2004, 14) quotes the editors of an anthology of Russian and Western oriental poetry who "as late as 1985, [...] introduced the volume with the mandatory dose of Leninist holy water: "In 1918, upon meeting with S. F. Ol'denburg, the most remarkable representative of classic Russian orientalism, V.I. Lenin said: 'This is your task. Go to the masses, to the workers and tell them about the history of India, about all the ages of long sufferings of those multi-million masses, unfortunate, enslaved and oppressed by the English, and you will see how this will resonate with our proletarian masses'"(Vostochnye motivy 3)". Here, Kalinowska quotes and translates from Cherkasski, Muraviov, Grintser (1985).

[21] Leading, perhaps, to the blending of the USSR and Russia in a similar identity. Cf. Nadson's comments on the interpretation of the concept 'Rus' (1965).

[22] The discourse of "sibling unity" used for expansionist purposes is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

Byelorussia is drawing their strength / In the fraternal union, in the courageous family"[23] (Presidium 1956, 42).

Hence, while "postcommunism" is an accepted term in Western academic terminology[24], postcolonial studies are still largely hesitant to include Russia within their discourse as one the colonisers: Russia does not feature in *The Routledge Companion to Postcolonial Studies* (McLeod 2007) nor in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (Ashcroft et al. 2006). Paradoxically, there has been an extensive body of literature on Russia's imperialistic actions, which registers the fact of the empire's fast and forceful expansion in the 17th-19th centuries. They are mostly devoted to Russia's actions in the Caucasus and Central Asia (Baczkowski 1958; Bassin 2003, 2008; Hayit 1965; Luehrmann 2005; Martin 2001; Rywkin 1988). These geopolitical policies did attract a few studies of Russian colonialism in these areas through the literary postcolonial lens: Susan Layton's *Russian Literature and Empire: Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy* (1994) establishes itself as "the first book to provide a synthesizing study of Russian writing about the Caucasus during the nineteenth-century age of empire-building" (Layton 1994, dustjacket). The fact that Russia was quickly expanding in the 17th and 18th centuries to the west is left unnoticed in the book, even though Layton briefly acknowledges Russia's expansion to the south (*ibid.*, 4 – 5), i.e. in the direction of Ukraine. Her later article is also dedicated to the depiction of Caucasian peoples in Russian literature in Brower and Lazzerini's *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700-1917* (1997). A postcolonial perspective is employed in Isabela Kalinowska's *Between East and West: Polish and Russian*

---

[23] Translation is mine. ST: "Мы, беларусы, з братняю Руссю / Разам шукалі к шчасцю дарог./ У бітвах за волю, у бітвах за долю / З ёй здабылі мы сцяг перамог! Нас аб'яднала Леніна імя, / Партыя к шчасцю вядзе нас у паход.[...] Сілы гартуе люд Беларусі / У братнім саюзе, у мужнай сям'і" (Presidium 1956, 42).

[24] This research recognises its validity. However, it casts doubts on whether the two terms are mutually exclusive, particularly in a Belarusian context, as discussed later.

Nineteenth-Century Travel to the Orient (2004), although neither of the two subjects are actually dealing with Russian-Belarusian relations.

None of these works, however, places Russia's colonialism in Europe, particularly in relation to its western frontier lands. This view was first put forward by Ewa Thompson in *Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism* (2000)[25]. Having made the study of Russian colonialism her main research focus, Thompson finds puzzling the absence of Russia from international postcolonialism scholarly discourse:

> The cumulative contribution of Russian and foreign scholars discursively ignoring Russia's relentless acquisitions of non-Russian lands, and affixing in the authoritative historical narrative the image of Russian colonial innocence is one of the puzzles of modern history (Thompson 2008, 412).

Taking into consideration that the Russian Empire was the third largest in the world after the British and Mongol empires and outlasted the other two (Rywkin 1988), its absence from postcolonial discourse may be seen as rather mysterious. In his ground-

---

[25] Thompson's rhetoric attracted much attention in Russian studies. The book was widely reviewed in specialist literature (Lovell 2001; Hokanson 2001; Cassedy 2001; Barta 2002; Layton 2001). The prevalence of strong, often unmitigated, claims in Thompson's monograph brought her work under criticism. For instance, Hokanson's review can be seen as typical of such a critique. The reviewer recognises her limited knowledge of the foundation of the author's claims, which is actually most of the book, since "a large proportion of the book is addressed to the Polish, Ukrainian, and Belarusian conflicts, and assuredly the emotional and rhetorical tone regarding these areas is strongest" (Hokanson 2001, 266). In particular, she admits that "to discuss Russian/Polish relations would be to enter both a minefield and an area outside my purview" (*ibid.*). Nevertheless, she still feels to be in a postion to judge the book to be "a very mixed effort, advocating perspectives that are very worthy of being explored, but frustrating the reader who would like to see these perspectives situated in their proper scholarly and historical contexts" (*ibid.*). However, those scholars who are more familiar with the factual material still echo Hokanson's conclusions. In the preface of her own book Kalinowska's criticism is based on "epistemological deficiences" and "constricting militancy" of Thompson's work: "Thompson's study does adopt the legitimate perspective of a dispossessed Polish post-colonial-slash-post-Soviet subject for the analysis of Russian (imperial) culture. But the author's reliance on popular prejudice in place of a balanced analysis of the authors and the texts she discusses constitutes a major flaw. The forceful imposition of communism by Poland's eastern neighbor solidified the Poles' preexisting negative stereotype of Russia and the Russians" (Kalinowska 2004, 6).

breaking article on the application of postcolonial frameworks for "Russo-Soviet"

realities, Moore offers two reasons for such evasion: "the lack of ocean between

Russian and what it colonized; and in the way that Russia has long been typecast (and

has typecast itself) as neither East nor West" (Moore 2006, 22). Thompson's reasons for

the evasion are not too dissimilar: firstly, she highlights the close proximity of colonies

to the metropolis, i.e. the absence of visual separation "by a body of salt water" (2008,

412); secondly, the nature of oppression (religious and nationalisitic, rather than racial);

and, finally, "white on white" colonialism (Thompson 2000), i.e. the colonialization of

white people by white. While, undoubtedly, these reasons have contributed towards

Russia's long absence from Anglophone postcolonial discourse, they cannot be

considered unique as, technically, the same set of criteria can be applied to Scottish and

Irish cases[26]. Therefore, in the light of the Western knowledge of Eastern Europe

discussed in the previous subsection, two other factors for the exclusion of Russia from

Western postcolonial discourse may be suggested. On the one hand, one reason may be

the relative unfamiliarity of Western postcolonial theory with the Eastern European

(and, particularly, with Russian western) frontier[27]. Thus, most Anglophone histories of

Belarus, for example, have been written by Belarusians (or Belarusians by descent)[28]

while the two decades that have passed since the country gained its independence in

1991 means local scholars have only recently begun deconstructing the centuries of

previous pro-Russian history writing[29]. Another reason may lie in the Russian-based

perspective of Western academic programmes in Eastern European studies.

---

[26] In the case of the latter a thin strip of "salty water" is, nevertheless, present.

[27] Another factor here may be the geographical conservatism of the discipline. Challenging the existing postcolonial geopolitical academic axioms by arguing for the inclusion of the USA territories into their realms, Deborah Madsen states that "despite a great deal of discussion about metaphors of centre versus margin and metropolis versus outposts or offshoots, the postcolonial canon remains comprised both of privileged texts and also of privileged national and regional literatures: the English-language literatures of Africa, India, Canada, New Zealand, South-East Asia, and the Caribbean" (1999, 1).

[28] Some of the most famous ones include Vakar 1956; Zaprudnik 1993 and 1998; Savchenko 2009.

[29] The situation is further exacerbated by the fact that postcolonial approaches to analysing Belarus' relationship with Russia are currently not encouraged, and therefore some of the claims expressed in this

Thompson's work is beginning to make an impact, however, and her research is slowly starting to be included in publications on postcolonial discourse, such as *A Historical Companion to Postcolonial Literatures: Continental Europe and its Empires* (Poddar, Patke and Jensen 2008), which includes her entry "Postcolonial Russia" (Thompson 2008, 412-417), as well as appearing in peer-reviewed journals dedicated to Slavonic studies (Thompson 2003; 2005a; 2005b). At the same time, Russian former colonial subjects are gradually adding their voices to the discourse on the subject, though it is still yet done mostly in terms of history or political studies, rather than literary or translation studies. Predominantly, these voices are coming from the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (Küng 1980; Kelertas 2006), although some explorations of the coloniser/colonised dichotomy with Russia are beginning to be introduced in the Ukrainian context (Chernetsky 2003; Pavlyshyn 1992; Pavlyshyn and Clarke 1992; Velychenko 1993, 2004; Yekelchyk 1997). A literary exploration of the Ukrainian colonial condition and its resistance to Russification is the subject of a monograph by Myroslav Shkandrij (2001), which traces the emergence of an imperial discourse in 19th century Russian literature and rise of the subsequent counterdiscourse in Ukrainian. A recent monograph by Alexander Etkind, *Internal Colonization: Russia's Imperial Experience* (2011) raises the complex processes of Russia's own self-colonization.

In continuing the exploration of this approach in application to Russia's western borders, this research will discuss the relevance of a postcolonial framework to the description of the Belarusian literary landscape and its representation in English. Similar to Moore's approximation of postcolonial to post-Soviet (2006), this research sees the primary value of a postcolonial approach mostly in terms of a set of heuristic tools for the discussion of the Belarusian literary complexities rather than a full checklist of the

---

work would not have been possible to make had it been produced in Belarus.

Belarusian postcolonial condition. Throughout the thesis, similarities will be drawn and postcolonial concepts will be used to highlight Belarusian heterogeneity and the process of its representation for "dominant-culture" (Tymoczko 2003) audiences. Thus, Chapter One will raise some of the main issues that 'minor literatures' face when translated into a global language like English, which, as such, are not dissimilar to those raised on behalf of the subaltern in postcolonial discourse: the negation of subaltern identities leading to their confusion with other representatives from that region due to established stereotypes, the limited number of existing translations and the lack of training provided for professional translators working with the language pairs, the melee of languages involved in these 'contact zones'. Chapters Two and Three will engage with some of the concepts ('colonial', 'Orientalism', 'inbetweenness', etc.) in order to outline the heterogeneity of Belarusian identity(ies) as reflected through its/their history and literature. The subsequent chapters will use some of the tools and strategies explored within postcolonial translation approaches to discuss the practical aspects of a representation of a 'minority' culture for an Anglophone readership.

Positioning Belarus in Anglophone Translation Studies

> Where and what is Belarus, and why might one take an interest in it? Firstly, a reminder that Belarus is a landlocked country between Poland and Russia, with the Baltic lands to the north, and Ukraine to the south. It is also often referred to as the last dictatorship in Europe and, more frivolously, as Soviet Jurassic Park. But, on a personal level, it is a charming place to visit, and the country's culture, for all the obstacles placed in its way, is flourishing (McMillin, 2006, xxxiii).

The only currently available volume on several Eastern European languages and literatures in translation studies, *Contexts, Subtexts and Pretexts: Literary Translation in Eastern Europe and Russia,* admits "some glaring omissions, which, I hope will be corrected in future studies of the region: Ruthenians, Albanians, Belarussians,

Moldovans, and Slovaks, to name but a few" (Baer 2011, 12). It is symptomatic that,

even in specialist discourse on Eastern European translation, "Belarusians" as a nation

is still spelt as "Belarussians", an awkward remnant of the country's subjugated

position within the Russian Empire[30]. Even in today's 'transnational era' the only

constant feature of the country's cultural and political geography appears to be its

changeability: during the last century alone its borders, together with its official name,

changed five times. Since the country's landscape is that of a great plain, its borders, as

is the case for many nations of that region, are not defined by geography, for instance

natural features such as mountains or seas. Thus, the frequent redrawings of its borders

have been clearly politically motivated. Established as an independent state in 1991, the

Republic of Belarus borders on five different nations: Russia, Poland, Ukraine,

Lithuania and Latvia. At various points in its history, Belarus has been a part of a

unified state with each one of them. The political and geographical transformations have

been reflected in numerous alterations of the country's names: *The Grand Duchy of*

Lithuania (c. 13th c.), *The Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland*

(1596), *The North Western Territory [of the Russian Empire]* (1840), *The Belarusian*

People's Republic (1918), *The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic* (1919), *The*

Lithuanian-Byelorussian Republic (for 6 months in 1919, until it was again reinstated as

BSSR), *The Belarusian Central Rada* (1943-1944), and, finally, as *The Republic of*

Belarus (1991). As all the name changes have been accompanied by redrawings of its

borders, over the last twenty years since the country gained its independence Belarus

has been involved in a complex process of redefining its identity by reassessing its

cultural and literary landscape. These complexities have largely passed unnoticed by

Anglophone translation studies specialists (the only reference to them is provided in the

---

[30] The awkwardness is further developed by the prevalence of "Byelorussia", rather than "Belarus",
in the Russian mass media and the continuous usage of the term by Russian diplomatic bodies. Belarusian
diplomats, while adhering to the correct name of the country, nevertheless, sometimes use
"Byelorussian", rather than "Belarusian".

above-mentioned quotation in Baer 2011), as Belarusian-English can hardly be considered a translation-intensive language pair. Moreover, serving as a "buffer" between Russia and the EU (the country borders with three EU member countries), Belarus is relegated to the position of the 'periphery's periphery'[31]: not belonging to Russia (and therefore not clothed in 'mystery' or 'wrapped in enigma' to use another powerful exoticising western cliché) and yet not belonging to the EU either (Polish historiography traditionally describes the region as *kresy,* i.e. the eastern borderlands). Thus, by being neither an exotic Orient conveniently located close at hand nor an easily recognisable tourist destination, since the country requires EU citizens to obtain visas prior to their visit, Belarus fails to provide an attraction for the Western general reader. A telling example of this is the very first paragraph which introduces Belarus as a country to an Anglophone traveller in The Lonely Planet Guide *Russia, Ukraine and Belarus* (Ver Berkmoes et al. 2000, 891): "For many travellers, Belarus is a lot like that carton of spoiled milk at the back of the fridge – everyone knows it's bad, but they want to smell it for themselves". The book then recommends a visit to Belarus "if for no other reason than stepping back in time to an era [...] all but lost in the modern world" (*ibid.*). This unflattering image is not untypical. For instance, two other portrayals of Belarus, as disseminated by the Western mass-media, present the nation as a victim[32]. The first is associated with the Chernobyl disaster, where the view of Belarus as a

---

[31] If Eastern Europe is considered Europe's periphery, then Belarus, being to the East of Poland, i.e. east of the EU border, can be described as 'the periphery of Europe's periphery'. On the other hand, it is not only peripheral to the EU, but is also considered a periphery of Russia: "Ukraine and Belarus [...] were at the same time "the edge" of the Eastern Slavic lands in official Soviet (and pre-Soviet) historiography. Rus' was the heart of those lands, of course, and our school history textbooks (in fourth or fifth grade) explained the "emergence" of the Belarusian and Ukrainian languages in the following way. At first, all Slavic tribes (*polyane* who lived in steppes, *drevlyane* who inhabited forests, and other nymphs and dryads) were speaking the same language, but eventually the people at the edges (krai) of that territory started to pronounce some words and sounds differently ('h' instead of 'g,' for example), and thus the Belarusian and Ukrainian languages emerged. This implied first of all that they "emerged" later, as derivative dialects; second, that they were formed out of Russian (like a woman from a man's rib), which "was there" from the very beginning instead of emerging as dominant (linguistically and politically) during nation building, and, third, that they are in some way "different," a deviation from the "correct language," which, of course, is Russian" (Gapova 2004, 73).
[32] This view is also supported by some of the leading academics within the field. For instance, David Marples' monograph is titled *Belarus: From Soviet Rule to Nuclear Catastrophe* (1996).

casualty is propagated by Chernobyl-related charities. The second is that of a suffering people under the last remaining dictatorship in Europe, a regime which is involved in human rights abuse. This perspective is shared by policy-makers such as the UN and EU, and propagated through news organisations and human-rights groups. This image of a victimised Belarus currently used in the Western mass media is a convenient cliché previously used by both Russian imperialism and Soviet ideology (cf. Chapter Three). The additional allure of this stereotype for the Anglophone audience could be the fact that such typecasting fits within the traditional Western framework as applied to Eastern Europe's description.

Its literature, which follows the country's turbulent history, contains a set of names which would only be recognized by a rare specialist in Eastern European and/or Russian philology – provided they did a short course on USSR's "multinational literature". Moreover, in contrast to one-dimensional Englightenment schemes equating a nation with a titular ethnos and its language, the literature of Belarus has been written in a number of languages, such as Old Slavonic, Old Church Slavonic, Old Belarusian, Latin, Polish, Russian, Belarusian, Yiddish and Tatar. Being part of the Jewish Pale, these lands have been a safe harbour for many of the 'Others' of Europe, particularly the Jews and Tatars, with the former using the Belarusian alphabet to write their *al-kitabs* (Akiner 2009) and the latter giving numerous talented polyglot writers to Belarusian literature[33]. Thus, much like the case of mediaeval Toledo, Belarus represents a rare European oasis of tolerance where the fairly peaceful co-existence of several nationalities and religions, which had elsewhere exhibited antagonistic attitudes towards each other, has been possible for centuries. Thus, its politics defeats the oversimplified postcolonial tendencies of seeing all of Europe as one entity, namely that of a colonising oppressor, and calls for greater attention to its internal cultural and political divergences. At the same time its

---

[33] Belarusian Jews have also provided a number of celebrities in art. One of the most famous cases of international significance is Mark Chagall who was born and raised in Vitsebsk.

rapid Polonization and then appropriation by Russia calls for its inclusion in the

postcolonial discourse as one of the subaltern nations, whose elites would often have no

choice but to emigrate or assume either Polish or Russian identity[34]. The practicalities of

dealing with the country's complex intertwining of linguistic, political, ideological and

cultural factors leave advocates of simple political and linguistic schemes at a

disadvantage as these factors require a more nuanced approach (which may be provided

by localisation as suggested within the postcolonial translation approaches[35]). From the

standpoint of translation studies, the richness of local cultural traditions expressed

multilingually provides an interesting perspective on tensions between linguistic unity

and heterogeneity as experienced by recently independent European states.

Using Belarusian as a case study of a 'minority' European literature, this

research explores the role of literary translation in the negotiation and promotion of a

country's identity(ies) through its (their) translation into the dominant international

language of today's society. In doing so, it outlines two traditional discourses of

'Belarusianness' negated through literature and traces their occurrence in English

translations of Belarusian literary source texts. Thus, the primary aim of this research is

to identify and compile a history of literary translation from Belarusian literature into

English, outlining the specifics of translation from a lesser-known European language. In

doing that, the research seeks to identify and analyse the significant milestones in the

history of literary translation from Belarusian into English by positioning them in the

---

[34] Cf. an example from Karatkevich's *Wild Hunt* (1989), where the main protagonist recollects his struggles for identity: "For me at that time it was much more important to understand who I was and which gods I should pray to. My surname, people said, was a Polish one, though even now I do not know what is Polish in it. In our high-school [...] our nationality was determined, depending on the language of our forefathers, "the eldest branch of the Russian tribe, pure-blooded, truly Russian people!" That's right, even more Russian than the Russians themselves!" (1989, 9). In another work, Karatkevich turns to discuss the effects of Polonization, where Belarusian school children learned by heart slogans like "Who are you? A lesser Pole. / What's your badge? A white eagle. / Where d'ye live? Among our folk. / In which country? In a Polish land" (Karatkevich 1982, 157) as that was the only identity they were allowed to express.

[35] Cf. Tymoczko's argument regarding localism being the only way out of overgeneralizations in both postcolonial and translation studies (1999, 31).

wider political, cultural and literary context of both the target and source language[36]

cultures. At the same time it aims to evaluate the role of literary translation in assisting a

"border" culture to attain a voice of its own in the surrounding polyphony of others in the

"world republic of letters" alongside the "Greenwich literary meridian" (Casanova 2007).

More specifically, the research is structured in the following manner.

Chapter One, *'Minority' Literatures in Translation*, discusses the issues of

lesser-known literatures and cultures entering the 'world literature' (power imbalances,

quality/quantity of translations, the existence of an intermediary language in translation).

It examines the terminological issues of 'minor' and 'major' in literary and translation

studies through the prism of translation from 'minority' languages.

Chapter Two, *Belarusian Literature and Its Story*, provides an historical survey

of major developments in Belarusian Literature, giving an overview of the Anglophone

research in this area. After the discussion at the end of each historical period the literary

works of the time which have been translated into English are listed, thus providing the

necessary context for the discussion of translation periods and refractions in the

representation of Belarusian literature in the four final chapters. It also looks ahead to the

two discourses of Belarusianness discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

Chapter Three, *Representing 'Belarusianness' in English,* outlines two

discourses in the definition of 'Belarusianness' formed as opposing views in the 20th

century and currently dominating the Belarusian cultural and political scene. These two

discourses are termed as "Old/European Belarus" and "New/Soviet Belarus" and

represent different visions of Belarus: the first suggests the tradition of lost ancient

European statehood linking Belarusian sovereignty to that of the Grand Duchy of

Lithuania. The other one, on the other hand, sees Belarus as land with a long history of

---

[36] Since most translations from Belarusian produced in the West were done by British translators, the research will mostly focus on the issues of British reception of Belarusian literature, although some translations published in the USA will also be mentioned.

oppression until it received its statehood in 1919 during the formation of the Soviet Union. In outlining the two discourses, the Chapter relies on existing prefaces to literary translations from Belarusian into English, thus setting the stage for later discussions of the two discourses through the translations and meta-translation practices analysed in the subsequent sections. Aiming to set the theoretical background for the following practical chapters and to present the translation process from the perspectives of both the SL and TL literary polysystems, the chapter finishes with the discussion of the strategies for rewriting 'Belarusianness' for the English-speaking reader. Foregrounding some of the practical data contained in the following chapters, it explores and then questions some of the strategies currently suggested for 'minority' literatures within translation studies.

Chapter Four, *Discovering the 'Exotic': Early Translations (1830s – 1940s),* discusses the start of translational activities in the late 1830s – early 1940s. After mentioning the first known poetic translation from Belarusian in 1836, it explores the translations of Belarusian folk-tales published in the anthology of Slavonic tales by Wratislaw and then places translations in the wider context of the discovery of Belarusian culture in late Victorian and Edwardian British society. The chapter then focuses on the phenomenon of the so-called 'Cambridge Set' (Picarda) which was prompted by an Edwardian fascination with 'neo-paganism' (Woolf) exhibited in folklore music, ancient pagan rites and herbal medicine. The Cambridge Neo-Pagans (Delaney 1987), or the 'Cambridge Set' (Picarda 2005), included two fringe members, namely Helena Iwanowska and Huia Onslow, who produced a series of prose translations of Belarusian folk songs which were published under the title 'Some White Ruthenian Folksongs' (in 1914 and 1924). The songs included thirty-eight Belarusian folk songs from Liabiodka, the native village of Iwanowska in Lida Province, Western Belarus, and these translations are the first known English translations of Belarusian literature.

Chapter Five, *Cold War in Translation: The Soviet 'Camp' (1950s – 1980s),* introduces two separate groups, or publishing 'camps', which produced Belarusian translations in the 1950-80s within two antagonistic discourses of 'Belarusianness'. Both this and the subsequent chapter point out the ideological issues of translations and focus on the analysis of historical, sociological, and political reasons behind these publications. The question regarding the criteria for selection of particular texts for translation at the time is raised as two distinct camps arise from the translations published: Soviet and émigré, with each of those promoting a particular image of Belarus ("New" vs "Old Belarus"). Since this chapter is devoted to Soviet publications, it discusses the issues of translating via the third language medium, namely Russian. It also brings into play sociological and political aspects of translation, censorship, and power imbalances often involved in this type of communication exchange. The work of Walter May, a British poet and translator of Belarusian poetry in the 1960s – 1980s, and a Moscow resident from the 1960s until the early 2000s, is used to highlight Soviet translation policies using the example of Belarusian literature. His correspondence with regard to the translation of the anthology of Belarusian poetry in English *Fair Land of Byelorussia* (May and Tank, 1976) uncovers the 'hidden' agendas of translation, such as the exclusion of material from translated anthologies, state publishers' censorship, and other forms of the 'manipulation of literature' (Hermans 1985). Placing a specific analysis of one translator's work into the broad context of the literary practices of the time, the chapter draws conclusions with regards to the status of literary translators in the USSR and the unequal status of formally "equal" literatures in the Soviet literary polysystem. The findings are supported with materials from the translator's personal archives, previously unresearched.

Chapter Six, *Looking through the 'Iron Curtain': Translations in the West (1960s – 1980s),* discusses translations of Belarusian literature carried out with the

help of the émigré milieu and published in the West. The work accomplished with the support of the Francis Skaryna Library (London) and BINIM (USA) is discussed, particularly the translations of Fr Alexander Nadson (UK) and Zora Kipel (USA). Two specific platforms for these translations are investigated: periodicals and scholarly publications (or, rather, semi-scholarly, as even though translations often appear as bilingual editions accompanied by commentary, the latter is not as extensive as it might be expected for a specialist edition). The establishment of Vera Rich as a literary translator who came to be defined as the "Belarusian voice in the English-speaking world" (a phrase which is often used with the omission of "English-speaking" by Belarusian literati), first in the Belarusian émigré milieu and then in Belarus itself, is traced. Her anthology *Like Water, Like Fire: An Anthology of Byelorussian Poetry from 1828 to the Present Day* (1971), which is often recognised today as "the only anthology of Belarusian poetry" (Jurevich 2002, 122) is analysed to highlight the translator's style and preferences for translation choices. Despite Rich and May's anthologies having much in common (both were published in the 1970s, concentrated mainly on modern poetry, and were censored and neglected for political reasons) only one of them, and consequently the translator who compiled it, became "the Ambassador of Belarusian culture in the Anglophone world" (Zaika 2010, 4) while the second was essentially written off the Belarusian literary scene. This chapter asserts that the reasons for Walter May's exclusion from the history of English translations of Belarusian literature lay in the political discourse of the Cold-War antagonists: the pro-Russian Soviet censorship, which constrained the pro-Belarusian movement in BSSR[37], on the one hand, and the openly pro-Belarusian diaspora of the West on the other. The chapter also highlights the work of the Anglo-Belarusian Society, which published a few books of literary translation from Belarusian at the time, before moving on to discuss the translations of Vasil Bykaŭ, the

---

[37] Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic.

one Belarusian writer whose work has achieved international acclaim (through the medium of Russian). His prose published in the USA via Russian translations and his recognition as a Russian writer despite his open Belarusian stance adds further arguments into the discussion of translation via a third medium started in the previous Chapter.

Chapter Seven, *Current State of Belarusian-English Translation (1991-2011),* analyses the last two decades of translation activity between the Belarusian and English language pair with regard to literary translation since the country's independence. It poses questions and suggests reasons why there has not been a major upsurge in translation practice. After the death of Vera Rich (1936-2009), who was the only dedicated translator of Belarusian literature in English recently, the dissemination of Belarusian literature came to a halt. Her later work is seen through the prism of a 'female literary philanthropist tradition', which also includes Constance Garnett, George Eliot, Charlotte Guest, Harriet Waters Preston, and Lady Augusta Gregory who wished to introduce lesser-known literatures to the British public and thus to disseminate these cultures' heritages. At the same time, the issues of the present crisis of Belarusian-English literary translation are discussed, analysing the reasons behind the current drop in translation practices and outlining further possible developments, including discussing strategies for future translation.

In terms of research methodology, the nature of this research necessitated the application historical approach to the description of literary and translation developments. This approach is combined with descriptive translation studies (Toury 1995) using a perspective developed by the 'manipulation school' (Hermans 1985). It also makes heuristic use of polysystem theory (Itamar Even-Zohar, 1978, 1990; Toury 1985) and postcolonial translation theory (Bassnett and Trivedi 1999; Cronin 1995, 2003, 2006; Tymoczko 1995, 2003, 2007) for the study of the translated texts as well as for general discussion of the reception of the 'minority' language source texts by 'major' target

language audiences. In its practical implications this thesis shares the integrated approach of Snell-Hornby (1988/1995) as this research's interdisciplinary nature necessitates combining the data across multiple disciplines, such as literary theory, history, ethno- and psycholinguistics, biology, sociology, postcolonial and cultural studies. For the textual analysis level, textual grid methodology (Bassnett and Lefevere, 1998) is applied. The primary texts include a wide range of Belarusian literary translations into English carried out in the 19th and 20th centuries and published in various anthologies, books of prose and poetic translations, major translations in periodicals and paratextual practices of translators. The comparative analysis of some key texts with their originals is provided. The former includes both published, as well as previously unpublished, materials from translators' archives, interviews, and correspondence.

Chapter One. Minority Literatures in Translation

> Small nations need great poets.
> Small actors throw grand gestures.
> Small husbands require bigger wives.
> Small theatres play historic dramas.
> Small people buy large cars.
> Small songs call for the greatest of voices.
> Small nations need only great poets.
> The defeated sing heroic songs.
> And winners, meanwhile, remain discreetly silent[38].
>   Arsen Dedić, *Small nations* ([1987] 1996, 127)

> It seems to be a law of life that the more political and military power a nation has, the more likely the world be interested in its literature.
>   Arthur Miller (Boldizsár 1979, 55).

1.1.   Key Terminology: 'Minor' vs. 'Major' Literature

The rise of newly independent nations in Eastern Europe at the end of the 20th century led to an upsurge in translation traffic between those languages and English, the language of hegemonic powers in the international arena. In fact, the traffic has increased in both directions involving these language combinations, i.e. both to and from English. Most of the Eastern European and in particular Post-Soviet nations rely heavily on translation: thus, 70 percent of published materials in the Latvian literary polysystem are translations rather than original works by local writers (Baer 2011). On the other hand, in an attempt to improve their position internationally, a substantial

---

[38] Translation from Serbian by Martin Djovčoš and Mirna Radin-Sabadoš. Source text:
>   Mali narodi trebaju velike pjesnike.
>   Mali glumci rasipaju velike geste.
>   Mali supruzi potrebuju veće supruge.
>   Mala kazališta igraju historijske drame.
>   Mali ljudi uplaćuju velike automobile.
>   Male pjesme zahtijevaju najveće glasove.
>   Mali narodi trebaju samo velike pjesnike.
>   Pobjeđeni pjevaju junačke pjesme.
>   A pobjednici kroz to vrijeme diskretno šute.
>   *Arsen Dedić, "Mali narodi"* (Dedić 1996, 127)

number of these newly established – or 'freed from Communism' – nations are using

translation to raise awareness of their cultures and languages, which are regarded as

'minor' by the rest of the European community. The number of those translations,

however, is quite low compared to their own 'imported'[39] translations from English and

quite a few of them are carried out by non-native speakers (Pokorn 2001; Hanauer

2010). The obvious power imbalances signify a different status attributed to these

cultures and their literatures, with terms such as 'minor' and 'major', or their synonyms,

such as 'weak' or 'peripheral' versus 'strong' or 'central', being employed to describe

their position.

A question arising from these observations is the issue of terminology. What is a

'minor' or 'major' language, and, more importantly for this study, 'minor' or 'major'

literature? Should the term 'minority' be used as more preferable than 'minor'? None of

the leading dictionaries of literary terms in English[40] contains a dedicated entry on

'minor' or 'minority', yet the term, nevertheless, is utilised. In literary studies, 'minor

literatures' are often associated with the derogatory meaning of *belles lettres,* or

'literature with a small, rather than capital, "l"' (McRae 1991). Ideas about canonicity

and marginality are the legacy of positivim exhibited in most school curricula of

---

[39] The language of macro-economy has been employed in translation studies generally along the lines of the 'sociology of translation' (Bourdieu [1999] 2008; Shapiro 2008) with the discussion of the actual production of translation. Pym (2003, 451 – 463) introduces the notion of 'translation as transaction cost', in other words, suggesting that translation production is governed by the standard economic rules of supply and demand. In this case, the economic law of balancing the quantity of imported and exported goods into a country aimed at securing its economic profit seems to bear a direct application to translation interchange. The much-lamented fact of English hegemony in this sphere, in economic terms, benefits the importer, i.e. SL (English), not the TL.

However, literary translation is not entirely governed by economic factors, or, at least, not directly by them (Cronin 2003, 56-57; Shapiro 2008). In other words, a claim that translation networks are based on the sole value of "translation as merchandise" (Pym 2003, 451), that is when the ST, firstly, cannot be read by potential audience and, secondly, always requires someone willing to pay the translator, is not entirely correct in the case of literary translation into minor languages, such as Belarusian. This research argues that even in the situation of the fringes of a network being "benignly inexpensive (e.g. everyone can read the source text)" (*ibid.*: 457), literary translation can still play a vital role in a particular literary culture, particularly at the moment of its cultural re-definition. With numerous Belarusian literati being involved in translation processes with little or no cost attached, the altruistic motives in such translation ventures need to be also accounted for.

[40] *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Abrams and Galt Harpham, 2005), *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Childs and Fowler 2005), *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (Cuddon 2000), *Encyclopedia of Literary Terms* (Makaryk 1993), *A New Handbook of Literary Terms* (Mikics 2007), *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Baldick 2008) and others.

national literatures. The axioms of the structuralist view on literature were challenged in a seminal work by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* (1975), where the authors pointed out three features of a minor literature. The first of these is what they term 'deterritorialisation' of the major language; whereby a minor literature neutralises sense (signifying language aspects) and highlights its intensive asignifying aspects. The examples given by Deleuze and Guattari include Afro-American English and, closer to Eastern Europe, Kafka's German.

Secondly, Deleuze and Guattari highlight the political nature of discourse, a feature they deem prominent in minor literatures where the conflict the characters are involved in is rooted in a larger social setting rather than an individual family unit. The recent introduction to the Penguin Central European Classics Series, written by the editor Simon Winder, while commenting on Ota Pavel's story *How I Came to Know Fish*, casually remarks:

> As always in Central Europe it tries to be about private life – the intimate pleasures of fishing and poaching – but ends up being about politics, as the Nazis take over Czechoslovakia, the author's father and brothers are taken off to camps and young Ota has to use his skills to keep his mother and himself alive (Winder 2011, 4 – 5).

The sardonic usage of "tries" here is further emphasized by "always" to highlight the impossibility of the attempt of that kind of literature being written in Central (i.e. East Central) Europe, which, in the editors' opinion, is *always* political. Interestingly, the series, which is "designed to showcase some of the remarkable writing from the region […] including novels and short stories, dystopian satire, short fables, through to memoirs and essays" (Penguin 2011) via the work of ten authors, stops at the 'Cold War' period, the height of the political struggle between East and West in Europe.

This fact yet again illustrates the invisible presence of the 'Iron Curtain' in current Anglophone literary polysystems in relation to Eastern Europe.

The final characteristic of minor literatures suggested by Deleuze and Guattari is their collective character. Regarded as being less prone to produce individual talents, minor literature emphasises the collective pronouncements of its community or its nation which is still being formed. It is this active development that makes this type of literature revolutionary, an example of the creative function of every literature, where "minor no longer designates specific literatures but the revolutionary conditions for every literature" (Deleuze and Guattari 1975, 18).

The political and revolutionary overtones of Deleuze and Guattari's work suited scholars focusing on deconstruction, postcolonial, and Marxist theories[41]. In terms of literary theory, their publication became a standard reference for any scholar revising the issues of minority/marginality and canonicity. However, one criticism of their tripartite theory questions whether *every* minor literature is necessarily revolutionary in its form. This is the criticism that Louis A. Renza makes in *"White Heron" and the Question of Minor Literature* when discussing Sarah Orne Jewett's story *A White Heron* as "a text that led one to rethink the difference between major and minor literature" (Renza 1987, xxviii). Renza admits that minor literature is "an undeconstructed critical category" and adds that ""minor literature" serves as a conservative justification for an established if variable concept of "major literature"" (*ibid.,* 4), in other words, effectively being an opposite entity to the literature *proper.* In looking for solutions to this power imbalance he considers the often conveniently offered option of revisiting the literary canon and "reinstating "neglected literature" to a position within the bounds of "highbrow" canonicity" (*ibid.*). Such actions, however, as he observes, subsequently

---

[41] Their work became an inspiration to political philosophers, particularly Paul Patton and William Connolly, who have expanded their notion of "becoming-minoritarian" to describe the democratic thought movement.

support, rather than challenge, traditional canonicity. Renza goes on to polemicise with Frye, Bloom, and Marxist ideologists (as exemplified by Deleuze and Guattari) to reveal flaws within traditional criticism of minor literatures and suggests deconstruction as the most favourable approach. This critique is well-grounded in that not every marginal literature is necessarily revolutionary as Deleuze and Guattari claim it to be. However, the negligence of ideological issues so evident in the development of minority literatures could be a serious flaw in his argument.

It is precisely that reason which led to the critique of his argument by David Lloyd (1987, 5) who notices Renza's avoidance of ideological issues as well as his "delaying discussion of the *political* function of the evaluations he critiques". Lloyd states that Renza "defers analysis of the ideological function of the canon and therefore also blurs the distinction that continually haunts his work, that between a radically minor literature and one that is still seeking to "fill a major function"" (*ibid.,* 5). Having made this distinction, Lloyd proceeds to state that "to produce an adequate theory of minor literature in any sense of the term, it is necessary to analyze historically the politics of culture" (*ibid.*). This turns Lloyd back to Deleuze and Guattari's work, which, according to him, has made some progress, "though impressionistically and largely only synchronically" (*ibid.*). For him (a view shared by this research) one of their most valuable findings is their acknowledgement of the political overtones of "minor" literatures of the Third World countries and their questioning of the existing canon hegemonies[42]. In defining minor literature himself, Lloyd looks at an

---

[42] Moore links the emergence of the term "postcolonial" to the avoidance of the terminology of the "Third World" and "minor": "When the term "postcolonial" arose in the Western academy it was rightly envisioned [...] as a replacement for terms like "non-Western", "Third World", "minority", and "emergent". The notion "non-Western" was a sham since it lumped four billion people under a single name and privileged the fragment called the West. "Emergent" worked no better, since the cultures and peoples so described had been producing literature for millennia before most Europeans stopped wearing bearskins or began to read [...]. "Minority" was even worse. And "Third World", though of honorable, even revolutionary, birth and still strongly defended, also seemed to have flaws: the tertiary status; the recent disappearance of the "Second [or Communist] World"; the presence of Third Worlds within the First; [...] and more" (2006, 14-15). However, this solution is currently unavailable for Eastern European literatures due to the current applications of a postcolonial framework to certain geopolitical entities only.

"autonomous ethical identity for the subject" which would evoke empathy. Thus the "major work asserts its disinterest [...]. The aesthetic domain within which the major work takes its place transcends political, racial, and class differences but it is, [...], precisely from this disinterest or indifference that it gains its hegemonic force. Predicated on the notion of universality, this aesthetic both legitimates and transmits the ethnocentric ideology of imperialism" (*ibid.*). Any other narration will be read as the one which is "a not fully realised form of humanity" (*ibid.*, 20), or, in other words, there is a conflict between the local and the global. Anything that cannot transcend local barriers or be transparent enough for idealised and canonised *Weltliteratur*[43] will be forever deemed as 'exotic' or defunctory. To borrow Deleuze and Guattari's term, this literature will be perceived as "collective". In this context, the canon can only be seen as a rigid, even policing, mould, while minor literatures in Deleuze and Guattari's revolutionary sense are the vehicle (or machine, to borrow their definition) of all innovation. For Lloyd, traditional literary approaches "mark the limits of readings based on canonical assumptions" while the canon is "an instrument of cultural hegemony" the demise of which should be quickened (Lloyd 1987, 26)[44].

---

[43] A critique of the term *Weltliteratur* initially introduced by Goethe in 1827 and reinterpreted by Marx and Engels to describe the globalistic tendencies of capitalist countries, has been undertaken by Jose Lambert in 1991 (Lambert 2006, 63-74). Reinvented since then, it has been substituted by "world literature" (Damrosh 2003; Prendergast 2004; Pizer 2006; D'haen et al. 2011, D'haen 2011) and "world republic of letters" (Casanova 2007).

[44] Similar ideas are expressed by West (1987), Gorak (1991), Smith (1988), Milner (1996) and others who are either suggesting introducing the notion of alternative or minority canons or the abolition of canon.

While agreeing with Lloyd's point regarding the link between canonicity and cultural hegemony, this research takes the traditionalist side in the 'canon war', suggesting constant *revision*, rather than *demise* of canon. Literary pedagogy, as well as literary criticism, is steeped in canonicity, which has been the cornerstone of all judgments (however misled they are) on the quality of a literary work. Whenever one tries to compile a literary anthology, or anthology of literature in translation (as the author found by experience while working on a CD-Rom *Belarusian Literature in English Translations: 100 authors, 500 works,* commissioned by UNESCO), canonicity becomes an inevitable part of the work. When discussing the canon and teaching of literature, Barbara Mujica notes: "The very format of an anthology prompts canon formation, ... an anthology invites prolonged study. Anthologies convey the notion of evolution (the succession of literary movements) and hierarchy (the recognition of masterpieces). They create and reform canons, establish literary reputations, and help institutionalize the national culture, which they reflect" (1997, 203-204). Representation is impossible without some value judgement attached to it and therefore canon is prone to revisions. Thus, Alastair Fowler singles out different types of canon: the potential canon (all literature), accessible canon (available books), selective canon (specific books are singled out), critical canon (books selected for study purposes), official canon (books included in the

The issues of canonicity and dependency lie at the very heart of the polysystem theory of Itamar Even-Zohar. Emerging from the principles of Russian Formalism (particularly the system theory of Tynianov), polysystem theory endorses various hierarchies within one literature:

> On traditional grounds one could suggest that the whole of non-canonized literature, literature for youth and children, epigonic literature and the whole corpus of translated literature be considered secondary systems. Primary systems, on the other hand, would be original canonized literature for adults of both sexes, if it is not epigonic (Even-Zohar 1978, 13).[45]

In a Hegelian-Marxist dialectical manner, where progress is only possible due to the inherent opposition of two mutually exclusive categories (black versus white, night and day, etc.), the existence of what Even-Zohar later calls "sub-literature" is not only a possible but also a necessary vehicle for the creation of canonical works or writers. He illustrates his proposition with the examples of Dostoevsky and Dickens who "would be inconceivable without the popular sensational and sentimental literature of the time [...] The fact is that where there is no sub-culture, or "sub-literature" [...], there is little chance for a vivid and vital "high culture" or canonized literature" (Even-Zohar 1990, 15).

Crossing the boundaries of national literary systems, Even-Zohar extends his argument to suggest the organisational principles of world literature by making a

---

latter three categories) and personal canon (individual taste) (1979). If "anthologies reflect changes in scholarship, attitudes, and pedagogical needs" (Mujica 1997, 208), translations that achieve the status of 'official' behave in a similar manner, with a translation 'authorised' by the author being immediately recognised as the one 'surpassing' the others, a process which is often irrespective of the linguistic ability of the author to access the translation of his work. The authoritativeness (the rigid limitations which can also carry a protective function) is both the strength and the weakness of canon.

[45] Even-Zohar does make a note regarding value judgements when talking of secondary systems: "At this point one may mistake my description for an indictment of the non-canonized system. This, however, is not the case: all the terms I use, such as "simplification" and the like, should be understood not as evaluations but as termini technici" (1990, 14). However, by value attributed to terms, even if they are technical, they are still perceived as derogatory. A similar situation argument can be made over his "strong" and "weak" dichotomy.

distinction between 'strong' versus 'weak' literatures (which generally correspond to the 'minor' and 'major' binary discussed above). He then presents what can be described as a behaviourist/biological account of literary interrelationship, whereby, much like ecosystems in nature, literatures co-exist and develop in symbiosis. In strictly biological terms, the relationship between a strong and a weak literature as imagined by Even-Zohar can be described as generally commensal, i.e. when a dependent literature is co-existing with a strong literature in such a relationship where the latter is neither benefitted, nor harmed[46]. According to Even-Zohar, this symbiotic relationship is "often dictated by the "defective" nature of a certain literature, i.e., its lack of certain systems (types, genres), which is frequently a result of socio-cultural conditions" (1978, 46).

Since symbiosis is starting to be considered as one of the major vehicles for evolution (Margulis 1991), Even-Zohar's theory may be acquiring more support from an interdisciplinary standpoint. Unlike biology, however, Even-Zohar views this literary interrelationship as a fairly temporary matter: "(a) when a polysystem has not yet been crystallized, that is to say, when a literature is "young," in the process of being established; (b) when a literature is either "peripheral" or "weak," or both; and (c) when there are turning points, crises, or literary vacuums in a literature" (Even-Zohar 1990, 23). Translated literature, in this case, becomes a temporary aid suited to the needs of the "weaker" literature.

In the case of a new literature, translated literature supplies it with the necessary genres and literary forms "in order to make it functionable as a literary language and useful for its emerging public" (*ibid.* ,47), since it is not able to create all of these complexities at once. Examples of the systems borrowing what they are yet lacking from other systems are evident throughout the history of many national literatures, irrespective of their minority or majority status (though, more commonly, during their

---

[46] Unless a *strong* literature needs a *weak* literature in the manner canonised literature needs a sub-literature, in which case their relationship would be mutualistic (Ahmadjian and Surindar 2000).

intensive development stages)[47]. A similar fairly understandable function is accomplished by a translated literature to aid a literature 'in crisis' as in the third point mentioned by Even-Zohar.

It is the second point made by Even-Zohar, the weakness of fairly well-established literatures which, nevertheless, find themselves on the periphery of literary hierarchy, that interests this research. According to Even-Zohar, these literatures are lacking some of the systems "required" by the structure of their polysystem and therefore are forced to borrow from other well-established literatures. As a consequence, he claims that "the ability of such "weak" literatures to initiate innovations is often less than that of the central literatures, with the result that a relation of dependency is established not only in secondary systems, but in the very center of these literatures" (Even-Zohar 1978, 23). This is the point where Even-Zohar's *termini technici* stop being merely descriptive and come close to Deleuze and Guattari's evaluations. Thus, the suggestion that *minority* implies unoriginality provides the existing stereotypes with regard to 'minor' literatures with an 'ontological' ground. If marginality equals lack of imagination, then there is really no vehicle for development and the cases of 'sudden' prominence of writers from minority literatures which tend to puzzle the advocates of established canonicities cannot be explained. In this case, it is not possible to account for the translational successes of such once-marginal non-European writers as Paolo Coelho (whose first publisher only printed 900 copies of *The Alchemist* and then refused to reprint the book which would eventually enter the *Guinness Book of Records* as the most translated book by a living author since it went on to be translated into seventy-one languages) or Europe's own translation success dubbed 'the Stieg Larsson phenomenon' which produced several English translations

---

[47] One such example would be the translations of Molière's plays by Lady Augusta Gregory carried out in order to sustain – and prove the authority of – the Hiberno-English dialect. In the case of Belarusian literature, a similar approach was taken by Maxim Bahdanovich, a writer who lived in Russia for the most part of his short life (1891 – 1917) yet who wrote in Belarusian and introduced into the then "peasant language", which was being revived, most of the European poetic genres.

from a lesser-known target-intensive language. In that case, Deleuze and Guattari's revolutionizing minoritarianism proves fruitful (yet still with the concession that Larsson's and Coelho's works are written mostly in accordance with the target audiences' familiar genre expectations). While it is true that literatures experience some periods of gestation where they are involved in the natural process of borrowing from and approximating other literature's ideas, genres or patterns before they are able to advance a new paradigm of their own or produce an original author, assigning these periods as characteristic of mainly minority literatures cannot be objective.

It is then obvious that Even-Zohar's view of weaker literatures is radically different from the revolutionising functions of minor literatures pointed out by Deleuze and Guattari. One of the positive aspects of his theory which helped it remain active in translation discourse until today (Kayyal 2011; Kruger 2011) is its recognition of the inherent power relations between literatures which come to the surface (or sometimes remain deliberately concealed by the participating agents) in the process of translation. His recognition of the difficulties facing 'new' or 'weaker' literatures due to the inequalities of their position provides a similar point of departure to that of postcolonial interpretation of literary processes, which express equal concerns over the difficulties in producing original literary moulds after what often seems to be centuries of both involuntary and voluntary mimicry of someone else's canonical patterns[48]. A particular value of the theory for this research is its recognition of the power imbalances within the European polysystem, as, for example, in the following statement:

> In order to make the notion of prestige more meaningful, it seems fruitful to take all
> European literatures as a system. In this system, there are obvious hierarchical relations:
> some literatures assume a position in the center while others are pushed to the

---

[48] The mimicry of Western customs by Eastern Europeans has been noted by numerous western travellers (Wolffe 1996; Wortman 2006; Baer 2011) as well as by writers themselves (Boldizsár 1979).

periphery. Central ones are "major" and "strong," whereas peripheral ones are "minor" and "weak" from the point of view of relations within the system (the reader is asked not to translate these statements into aesthetic value judgments!). Those literatures which assume a peripheral position behave like all peripheral entities: they take over features which are often outdated for the central system; they are usually target literatures and rarely function as source literatures. Of course it may happen that under certain conditions (which have not yet been clarified) a "peripheral" literature may rise to a central position and become a major source literature (cf. the Scandinavian literatures in the late nineteenth century). On the other hand a central literature may be pushed to the periphery (e.g., Spanish) (Even-Zohar 1990, 48).

While Even-Zohar somewhat begrudgingly admits to the possibility of a "weak" or "peripheral" literature becoming a major source literature, he, nevertheless, notices the issues of size and power imbalances, where major literatures dominate the minority ones and insist on providing models for the rest of Europe:

> Since peripheral literatures in the Western Hemisphere tend more often than not to be identical with the literatures of smaller nations, as unpalatable as this idea may seem to us, we have no choice but to admit that within a group of relatable national literatures, such as the literatures of Europe, hierarchical relations have been established since the very beginnings of these literatures. Within this (macro-) polysystem some literatures have taken peripheral positions, which is only to say that they were often modelled to a large extent upon an exterior literature (*ibid.,* 48).

Even-Zohar goes on to say that while stronger literatures can afford the luxury of looking for solutions to their deficiencies from their own internal resources, "the "weak" literatures in such situations often depend on import alone" (*ibid.*) – a reference to the economic inequalities expressed earlier. In such cases, he notes in "Universals in

Cultural History", "a SLt may function for a TLt almost as if it were a part of it" (1978, 45). This is applicable either to "the literature of a minority group within a majority group, or to groups which are geographically connected to or politically subjugated by some other group" (*ibid.*). His examples include the symbiosis of Ukrainian and Russian, Flemish and French in the 19th century, Hebrew and Arabic in Mediaeval Spain, Norwegian and Danish (up to 1900), Czech and German (roughly up to World War II), etc. (*ibid.*, 45 – 46). While one can agree with the unequal status of literatures in question, some correction of the argument (at least in terms of Ukrainian and Belarusian literatures symbiosis with Russian) is necessary. While Even-Zohar is right in stating their dependency on Russian, particularly from the 1890s onwards due to the politics of Russification in the Russian Empire, they also actively borrowed from Polish literature and, in general, from Western European literatures, via Russian and Polish intermediacy. Hence, the 'minority' literatures in question did not merely co-exist in slavish dependency with one dominant literature, but established a symbiotic relationship with several 'Big Brother' ones (Dalby 2002).

As for the reasons for choosing the source literatures for translation into 'minority' languages, two arguments are given: prestige of the SL and its dominance over the TL, usually as a colonial power (*ibid.*, 49). However, the political overtones of Even-Zohar's theory are generally subdued: he admits that subjugation *is* a possible precondition of a literature's weak position, but does not make this direct causal relationship:

> The main condition necessary for making a literature dependent is that it should be weak.This does not necessarily result from political or economic weakness, although more often than not it is correlated with physical conditions which allow for contacts by pressure (such as subjugation) or otherwise (such as majority-minority or proximity

relations). Thus, when there are no cultural conditions for a "weak" situation, i.e., when there are no intrasystemic (literary) conditions, hardly any dependency is likely, even in case of pressure unless a community is cruelly forced to assimilate. If we look at the history of conquests we can hardly find a case where political power alone, independent of other factors, caused cultural interference of system A within B (Even-Zohar 1978, 53).

Political conflict is thus removed and the models discussed have been transcended into an ideal sphere, where "the weakness of a literary system is then conceived of exclusively in terms of literary features. Other factors are obviously correlated with the state governing the literary system, but it is the weakness of the latter as such that determines whether or not it will assume a dependent position vis-à-vis another system" (*ibid*, 54). Such a hypothesis is in direct contradiction to the historical experience of Belarusian literature, which was a fairly well-developed literary system for its time[49]. However the use of the Belarusian language was strongly discouraged through political and religious pressure for two centuries after the Union of Lublin in 1569 with Rzecz Pospolita and then, after Belarus' annexation to Russia, it was actually banned. This prohibition became such a powerful political gesture that its ramifications are still acutely felt in Belarusian society, particularly in the area of identity definition. The ideological machine of the ruling 'Other' cannot be underestimated: either through direct prohibition or via redistribution of funding, the governing political system shapes its literary preferences. The relationship between the intellectual power of the elites, particularly writers, and national revivals has been a long tradition in Eastern Europe (Tymoczko 2003). The authorities were quick to recognise it: after the closure of all institutions of higher learning in the newly named North Western Territory after

---

[49] Cf. further historical evidence in Chapter Two in pp. 2.1. – 2.3.

Belarus' incorporation into the Russian Empire, the state censors continually monitored local literary activities. Therefore, the publication of the first Belarusian translation of *Pan Tadeusz* by Dunin Marcinkiewicz in Vilna (the first ever translation of the Polish original) was stopped and printed materials were seized by the government (Bahdanovich 2001, 65-67). The sad truth that originality of literary expression can be dangerous for subaltern citizens is evident through numerous examples from the Belarusian literary past and can possibly be best illustrated by the example of Paŭlyuk Bahrym (1812 – 1891), a village poet and a blacksmith. Born in the village of Kroshyn (now in the Brest region of Belarus), he was educated at the village school, worked on a farm and in 1828 began to write poetry. Shortly afterwards serf-riots occurred in Kroshyn and for his participation in them – as well as for the sentiments expressed in his poetry – he was conscripted into the army as a convict-soldier for a term of twenty-five years. All of his poetry was confiscated and he was not heard of thereafter as a poet until well after his death in 1891. His one surviving poem was first published in his master Count Leon Potocki's *Powiescz Czasu mojego, czyli Litewskie przygody / My Times, or Lithuanian Adventures* published in London (1854) accompanied by a Polish translation and included Bahrym's life story. Bahrym, whose life circumstances were similar to yet another serf, Taras Shevchenko (1814 – 1861), who lived to become the founder of Ukrainian literature, lacked the support the latter received from famous Russian painters and literati who bought him out of serfdom[50]. Therefore, cultural universals as suggested by Even-Zohar in relation to minority languages are rarely free from political domination by the 'stronger' nations, making the symbiosis between the 'weaker' and 'stronger' literatures not so much the result of free choice by the former, as Even-Zohar's claim implies, but one of need or even of its very survival.

---

[50] The portrait of the then patriarch of Russian poetry and established translator Vasili Zhukovsky was painted by the esteemed Russian painter Karl Briullov who donated it to be sold at a private auction organised by Earl Vyelgorsky on May 5, 1838. The entire sum – 2500 rubles – was raised and paid to Shevchenko's master who then freed Shevchenko.

Another point of departure of this research from Even-Zohar's claims on the nature of imbalances between 'weak' and 'strong' literatures is the present study's sceptical attitude to universalist conclusions being extended to *all* 'minor' literatures which is grounded in the belief in the dynamic nature of the status of 'minority' and 'majority' categories[51]. Even though they constitute entities which are obviously not equal, these categories are far from always being neatly organised along the axis of a "literary Greenwich meridian", since "the majority status of a language is determined by political, economic and cultural forces that are rarely static" (Cronin 2003, 145). Elsewhere, discussing oversimplified approaches to translation and minority languages (in post-colonial theoretical models, generally quite antagonistic to the canonicity endorsed by Even-Zohar), Cronin expresses caution against "once-for-all schemes":

> If political relationships in Europe have been characterised over the centuries by asymmetry, languages have been both accomplices and victims. Translation relationships between minority and majority languages are rarely divorced from issues of power and identity that in turn destabilise universalist theoretical prescriptions on the translation process (Cronin 1996, 4).

The danger of extending the polysystem's approach to account for all European literary complexities which would include *all* systems, *all* histories of conquests, would be to extend the theory to ontological absolutism, a status for which polysystem theory was strongly criticised:

> Evidently, literature does not work as a mechanism whose actions can be predicted on the basis of given constraints and coordinates. The point here is that while such environmental conditions are always present, they can be agreed with, counteracted or

---

[51] It should be stated that Even-Zohar does acknowledge the arbitrary nature of the categories, as in the above-mentioned case of Spain and Scandinavia.

simply ignored. Moreover, human beings – authors, publishers, readers – are basically unpredictable variables (Vanderauwera 1985, 9).

People, much like their cultures and literatures, are also rarely static, a distinction in which, as Vanderauwera (*ibid.*) and then Genzler (1993,105-143) notice, polysystem theory is lacking[52]. However, as a heuristic model of the description of existing basic inequalities among literatures developed on the basis of Eastern European material, the theory, and in particular, some of its terminology ('dependent literatures', 'symbiosis', etc.) denoting these inequalities will be applied in this research.

The theory in its various interpretations to suit particular applications in translation studies was one of the factors which gave an impetus to Gideon Toury's work on minor literatures. Toury used the then hypothesis in his often referred to article on minority languages, *Aspects of translating into minority languages from the point of view of translation studies* (1985, 3-4), by asserting that minority languages are "weak by definition" due to associated problems in producing various discourses. His usage of the term 'minority' was a more welcomed synonym to that of 'weak' literatures introduced by Even-Zohar (to say nothing of his other variants, such as 'defective'). Simultaneously, in 1985, the term 'minority' in application to literature was also employed by Ria Vanderauwera (1985) in her seminal work dedicated to the translations of Dutch novels into English. The structure of the European literary polysystem, the notions of 'centre' and 'periphery', or of 'province', in Dipesh Chakrabarty's terminology (2008), come in direct opposition to some of the postcolonial approaches discussed in the next section.

---

[52] The cosmopolitanism of 'national' writers is discussed in Casanova 2007. In a Belarusian context, Kolas famously responded to Krapiva's epigram by claiming "I prefer Zagibelka to Paris" (Kolas 1982b, 61), while Staver claimed that to love Belarus, one has to have been to different countries ("Каб любіць Беларусь нашу мілую, / Трэба ў розных краях пабываць").

1.2. 'Minority' Literatures in Translation Studies: European context

> The wide world does not know our poets and writers.
> We Hungarians, on the other hand, live, breathe, think,
> fight, love and die together with them. We, however,
> read not only Hungarian prose and verse but also
> writings in English, French, German, Italian, Russian
> and Spanish and therefore hold the conviction that our
> own literature is no smaller than any of those. [...] The
> world is poorer for not being able to know this line,
> this poem, this poet, this literature.
> Iván Boldizsár (1979, ix)

'Minority' is one of the lesser researched areas in translation studies: a surprisingly small number of publications is devoted to the issue, taking into consideration how often the issues of cultural hegemony and ideological rewriting are raised in translational metalanguage, particularly with the so-called 'power turn' in translation studies (Alvarez and Vidal 1996; Bassnett and Lefevere 1990, 1998; Cheyfitz 1991; Nirajana 1992; Rafael 1993; Tymoczko and Gentzler 2002, etc.). In the European context, the establishment of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages does not seem to have helped the theoretical investigation as much as it did in promoting the actual practice of translation from minority languages. Moreover, there has also been a significant general increase in the translation traffic from the literatures of the 'Third World' countries (which also includes Eastern European part of the EU) countries into English. Perhaps this situation could partly explain the initial simplification of European complexities by postcolonial scholars (Cheyfitz 1991; Niranjana 1992), when Europe was regarded as a single entity, namely, the Coloniser, in their dichotomies of postcolonial discourse, a situation which is changing in translation studies (Baer 2011; Cronin 1996; Robinson 1997; Rose 2000; Tymoczko 2007). In the European context, 'minority' European cultures are beginning to use English translations of their literatures to seek wider cultural acclaim (Woodsworth 1996; Shäffner 2000).

However, the investigation of minority issues within translation studies is still in its infancy. In his article on minority in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies,* Michael Cronin states that "the relationship between translation and minority languages has been a relatively neglected topic for much of the existence of translation studies" (2008, 169). The issue has also been neglected in translation histories: a two-volume *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English* does not cover any of the minority languages. In the Editor's Note Olive Classe remarks:

> With contributions from an impressive list of academic and independent scholars and translators, the over 600 entries in this encyclopedia cover translation into English of works of literature, from ancient to modern, written in "the principal world languages" (2000, vii).

"The principal world languages" here do not correspond to hypothetical "principal world cultures", which means that minor cultures are involved in self-translation processes. An example of such a translation from the Encyclopedia could be the case of Kafka, discussed above as a representative of 'minor literature' according to Deleuze and Guattari's classification. Moreover, in its overview of Spanish, the study omits any mention of Latin American literatures but puts the focus on their former coloniser – Spain.

The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation, edited by Peter France (2001), is a more consistent volume in that it lists all the literatures alphabetically, but even here the Russian section (marked *p* in the list of entries) is different from the 'Central and East European Languages' (section e), even though all the entries from Russian literature were written in the European part of Russia. Its section 'Central and East European Languages' includes Armenian, Bulgarian, Czech and Slovak, Georgian, Hungarian, Polish Poetry, Polish Fiction, Polish Drama,

Romanian, Serbo-Croat and Ukrainian as separate subsections. It comes as no surprise that it does not include Belarusian literature, while Polish translations are spread over three sections. Moreover, Russian is taken out of this section altogether where it belongs according to the language classification and is listed separately under a specially created category (France 2001). These examples illustrate inequalities of perception and representation in relation to 'minor' cultures when it comes to actual translation practices.

Before the appearance of the entry on minority in the Encyclopedia mentioned above, as late as 1995 the scarcity of theoretical material on minority languages was highlighted by Michael Cronin in his seminal article on the subject 'Altered States: Translation and Minority Languages' (the statement repeated in his publications in 1996, 1998, 2003 and 2008). A decade after the appearance of the initial article, in 2005, Albert Branchadell, in his introduction to the volume of contributions titled *Less Translated Languages,* noted the lack of entries for "minority language" both in the *Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* by Mona Baker (1998)[53] and in the *Dictionary of Translation Studies* by Mark Shuttleworth and Moira Cowie (1997). Reviewing the field on minority languages involved in academic discourse in translation studies Branchadell remarks: "Generally speaking, if one surveys the field looking for the key words "minority language", there don't seem to be a great many works that specifically tackle this subject, after Toury's 1985 pioneering work" (Brachadell and West 2005, 3). At the same time, he fails to mention Vanderauwera's monograph researching Dutch literature as 'minority' which was published in the same year as Toury's article.

The newness of the issue is evident from the existent terminology. Let us turn to definitions again, this time through the prism of translation studies. Here, the term

---

[53] The second edition of the *Encyclopedia* includes an entry on minority authored by Cronin (2009, 169-172). *Critical Readings in Translation Studies* (2010), also edited by Baker, contain two articles on minority: a reprint of Cronin's article *The Cracked Looking Glass of the Servants: Translation and Minority Languages in a Global Age* (247-262) and Alexandra's Jaffe's *Locating Power: Corsican Translators and Their Critics* (263-282).

'minor' has conveniently been replaced (Vanderauwera 1985; Toury 1985; Cronin 1995; Kayyal 2011) with the alternative less derogatory 'minority', which, however, still constitutes a binary opposition with 'major'[54]. Nevertheless, scholars admit that 'minority' in combination with 'language' is still "a fuzzy term that resists a clear-cut definition" (Branchadell and West 2005, 2). Toury's (1985) understanding of it is only as the literature of a cultural minority where another domineering language is always present. A similar approach is shared in a recent article by Kayyal (2011). However, what about discourses on minority where literature constitues a minorized and possibly formerly colonised culture, a definition which would take into account power imbalances between literatures?

One such definition which did take into account minority cultures was provided by Lawrence Venuti. One of the first definitions of minority in application to translation studies appeared in his guest-edited issue of *The Translator*, "Translation and Minority", as early as 1998. Here, Venuti applies Deleuze and Guattari's definition of "minor literature" to the translation of minor cultures. He defines minority rather broadly as "a subordinate cultural or political position" (1998, 135). In his classification, Venuti extends the notion of minority to "languages and literatures that lack prestige or authority, the non-standard and the non-canonical, what is not spoken or read much by a hegemonic culture" (*ibid*.), as well as to nations and social groups "that are affiliated with these languages and literatures, the politically weak or underrepresented, the colonized and the disenfranchised, the exploited and the stigmatized" (*ibid*). Broadly speaking, Venuti's work and his efforts to defend foreignisation to protect the ST while, at the same time, challenging the hegemony of English, can be regarded as essentially intertwined with highlighting the issue of

---

[54] Vanderauwera (1985) uses both 'minority' in the title of her work as well as minor vs major (20).

minority in translation[55]. Thus, his advocated 'foreignisation', alternatively termed 'minoritisation' (Venuti 1998), is aimed at promoting "cultural innovation as well as the understanding of cultural difference" (*ibid.*, 11). While domesticated translation is "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values" (1995, *ibid.,* 20), foreignising translation is "an ethnodeviant pressure on [the target-language cultural] values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text" (*ibid.*).

Since Venuti's definition of minority is quite broad, Branchadell aims to give it a more narrow focus by referring to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which defines minority as "languages that are (a) traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population; and (b) different from the official language(s) of that State" (Council of Europe [1992] 2007, 242). Not satisfied with such a definition which would include both minority languages as well as major languages in a minor position (such as French in Val d'Aosta and German or Italian in South Tyrol), the compilers of the volume introduced a new term: 'less translated language' (Branchadell and West 2005, 1). The very coinage of the term is regarded by compilers as the major contribution of the volume, since the notion was

> inspired by the concept of "lesser-used languages", a term now current in the European Union, "less translated languages" applies to all those languages that are less often the source of translation in the international exchange of linguistic goods, regardless of the number of people using these languages (*ibid.*, 1).

---

[55] The critique of foreignizing strategies by Cronin (1998, 2001) and Robinson (1997) will be discussed in more detail later.

Building on Cronin's terminology of 'source-language intensive languages' and 'target-language intensive languages' (1995), Branchadell and West define 'less translated languages' as "the *contrary* of source-language intensive languages" (*ibid.,* 1), noting, however, that these languages would not necessarily be target-language intensive. Their terminology is successful in solving a dilemma of such languages that either cannot be called 'minority' due to the sizeable population of their speakers (as in the case of Chinese) or are those of 'semi-peripheral' status, paraphrasing Even-Zohar's terms, i.e. the languages which may be target-language intensive languages for other minority languages dependent on them, but not so TL intensive globally (as in the case of Russian).[56]

While the present research acknowledges the volume's successful terminological solutions and its introduction of new minority languages into translation studies' discourse, it is hardly applicable as such for the purposes of this research. One reason for this is that Branchadell and West's edited collection of papers focuses mainly on Western European minority languages rather than including the voices of the 'Other' European, or more distant, countries, in other words, Eastern European or non-European perspectives[57]. Such focus is understandable, as the publication emerged as a result of a thematic conference in Barcelona, a fact which helps understand their perspective on the interpretation of 'minority' as languages which are under-represented in translation flows on national levels where they 'lose' to the official state ones (such as the relationship in pairs of Spanish and Catalan, French and Corsican, etc.). Secondly, since the definition adopted for 'minority' in this research is broader, it will continue using the more familiar term than the one offered by Branchadell and West in order to highlight the inequalities of status between literatures. Moreover, this research's focus is

---

[56] The Russian Federation has a sizeable population of speakers of Russian. Moreover, Russian is also spoken by a sizable diaspora in different locations across the globe as well as by bilinguals in various post-Soviet countries.

[57] A contradiction to this explanation is the paper by Irene Llop Jordana (2005, 289-311) which researches Hebrew literature.

on literatures in translation, rather than languages, and, therefore, the term 'less translated language' is not wholly applicable to a discussion of literary statuses and processes. Two examples where the contributors' interpretation of 'minority' directly contradicts the one adopted in this research are their usage of Irish Gaelic and Hebrew. Thus, even though they do make allowance for Irish Gaelic as "a merely symbolic state language" (*ibid.*, 2), they tend to identify 'less translated languages' with non-titular ones. For instance, speaking of a contribution by Irene Llop Jordana (2005, 289 – 311) on Hebrew translations into Catalan, they even exert a "word of caution":

> Demographically speaking, Hebrew is a small language indeed, but nonetheless it is a state language today, and as such enjoys all the benefits associated with state languages – something that cannot be said of Catalan (*ibid*., 17)

Elsewhere they speak of Czech and Hebrew as "former minority languages". Undoubtedly, these languages are in better position than Catalan. However, in the literary system, their position is still largely marginal, rather than central[58]. Again, their example of the case of Irish Gaelic can be used to point out this inconsistency. Finally, it is also interesting to note that in his latest publication on the issue, *Minority languages and translation* (2011, 97 – 101), Branchadell returns to the convenient one-word terminology rather than choosing to continue using the previously suggested three noun compound.

The appearance of Branchadell and West's publication, even though it is still written from the perspective of Western European minority languages, highlighted the changes in attitudes towards European languages in translation studies written from a postcolonial perspective. This perspective has been made prominent in the field of

---

[58] It is worth reiterating here that it was the example of Hebrew literature which inspired the formulation of the polysystem theory.

translations through the research into minority languages with the example of Irish Gaelic, mainly through the efforts of Michael Cronin and Maria Tymoczko. In 1998 (revised in 2001) Cronin criticised existent postcolonial approaches in translation, namely, the work of Niranjana (1992) and Cheyfitz (1991) for "using a convenient form of geographical shorthand in that the colonial powers in the New World were all from Europe" (2001, 140). Postcolonial clichés of European heritage, where all of Europe is united as one hegemonic culture (or reduced to the two major colonisers, i.e. Britain and France), came under criticism: "the critique of imperialism becomes itself imperialist in ignoring or marginalizing the historical and translation experience of most European languages" (*ibid.*). Similar criticism was expressed by Robinson (1997, 104–113) in his account of three seminal books on postcolonial translation of the early 1990s: Cheyfitz's *The Poetics of Imperialism* (1991), Nirajana's *Siting Translation* (1992), and Rafael's *Contracting Colonialism* (1993). In fact, he concludes that in postcolonial criticism translation is largely demonised as a collaborator with hegemonic powers, particularly in the first two publications, while also simultaneously admitting that some constructive decolonizing is possible, using Rafael's example (*ibid.*, 106). In looking at postcolonial translation models offered by these scholars, both Robinson and Cronin notice the lack of distinction by Latin American writers of any internal differences and power imbalances within the body of the Babylonial colossus of Europe. Moreover, even such famous postcolonial projects as Dipesh Chakrabarty's "provincializing 'Europe'"(2008) or "moving the centre" (Ngugi wa Thiong'o 1993, 10) fail to see the peripheries and hybridities present in the European paradigm which were discussed in the previous section.

In this context, the introduction of an Irish perspective as one example of inequality and complex power imbalances within Europe (and, moreover, Western Europe) is in itself a desired alternative to the discussed oversimplified postcolonial

usage of 'Eurocentric'. In *Translating Ireland*, Cronin sees "Ireland as a European country with a colonial past", whose "experience of a radical language-shift does not fit easily into the more reductive categories of contemporary theory" (1996, 3). In highlighting "the simple opposition of Europe and the New World or Europe and the Colony" (*ibid.*) found within postcolonial approaches in translation studies, Cronin points out that

> The translation experience of Europe is not homogenous, and the intense pressures on language resulting from internal colonialism in Europe itself are ignored in analyses which posit a common European historical experience and attitude to language (*ibid.*,3).

A new revision of postcolonial models with a more favourable and at the same time nuanced view of the role of translation was produced in a collection of papers edited by Bassnett and Trivedi (1999). A seminal collection of papers at the time, its emphasis, however, was on the general application of postcolonial theories to translation and the priority, therefore, was far from Europe and its minority literatures[59]. This much needed focus was provided in a publication based on the Irish material authored by Maria Tymoczko (1999) where she discusses traditions and strategies of the translation of early Irish literature in a postcolonial context. Tymoczko points out that the postcolonial approach is "still in the infancy, inclined to subsume difference between postcolonial peoples under broad generalizations about cultural oppression that do not necessarily hold for all nations that have been colonized or even all types of colonization" (*ibid.,* 15). Instead of supporting the previous accusations of translation as collaborator in colonial oppression, Tymoczko expresses a generally positive view on the role of translation despite its participation in the colonization: "Translation is paradoxically the means by

---

[59] Based on Europe's historical internal complexities, it can be suggested that hardly any country in Eastern Europe would easily fit into the simplified "Europe = coloniser" equation offered by postcolonial and subaltern discourse. For more on Britain and France's colonisation see Talib 2002.

which difference is perceived, preserved, projected, and proscribed" (*ibid.,* 17), at the same time noting, however, that "the process of translation is powerful and it is not innocent" (*ibid.,* 18). Though not specifically devoted to issues of minority literatures in general, her publication is language and culture specific and focuses on a particular minority culture, where Irish material is used to describe differences in forms of oppression and interaction with the colonisers "at a period when dominance took the form of annexation and incorporation" (*ibid.,* 18). In her analysis Tymoczko regards translation both as resistance and assimilation to the coloniser and the literary canon dictated by it, an experience Belarusian literature is closely familiar with.

By highlighting the dynamic nature of 'minority' status, Michael Cronin asserts that every culture is potentially a minor culture (2001, 145). This instant minorisation and the uncomfortable position of being 'the other' is experienced by any traveller from a major culture coming into a minor one without knowledge of the language. He goes further to suggest that if minorisation is a potential for every culture, then discovering the tendencies of minor cultures in translation will be beneficial for wider translation studies. Some of such insights based on the experience of translation of a 'minority' Eastern European literature into English are what this research hopes to highlight.

1.3.   Belarusian as Eastern European 'Minority' Literature

> To have foreign scholars take an interest in a minor culture like Belarusian is, almost whatever is written, considered a great boon and encouragement to those many creative people and, particularly, writers who may feel they are working in a vacuum and wonder how they can reach a wider audience. The way to greater recognition for writers in little-known languages has to be through translation, although, as we know, this activity is not smiled upon by those who fund academic activity in this country. I myself translate Belarusian texts given as examples in my monographs, but separate translations, apart from their lack of academic esteem, are very hard to publish, particularly when the author is unfamiliar (McMillin 2006, xli).

In the preface to *Nationalism and Minor Literature,* David Lloyd highlights the uniqueness of Ireland as a 'minority' nation and former colony in the European context:

> If it remains true that Ireland's history offers peculiarly significant paradigms for developments in Europe and elsewhere, this is no doubt due to its anomalous position as at once a European nation and a colony. In consequence of its geographical proximity to England, Ireland underwent, earlier than any other colony, a process of hegemonic domination which was as experimental as pragmatic (Lloyd 1987, ix).

Lloyd goes on to say that the numerous reforms which marked English domination of Ireland led the latter to become "a testing ground for state apparatuses later adopted both within Britain and throughout the Empire" (*ibid.,* ix), practically implying within the rest of the colonised world or, at least, the Commonwealth. This thought is made explicit in his next claim, where the Irish national movement is claimed to be "powerful enough to lead one of the first successful independence struggles within the British Empire, a struggle which in turn became a model for other colonized nations" (*ibid.,* ix). In fact, as postulated earlier, Ireland's example is not unique as the balance of powers in Europe has never been equally distributed (cf. earlier discussion of the status of Eastern Europe), and Baer acknowledges this fact by including Russian literature to counteract the stereotype of Eastern European literatures as being those of oppressed nations (Baer 2011)[60].

Undoubtedly, Lloyd is right in that the Irish experience is valuable to other former colonies "in the account of one particular set of reactions to the attempt by an imperial power to produce identity as the cultural counterpart to the material and political homogenization of its subject peoples" (*ibid.,* xi). However, the experimental ground for

---

[60] It may, however, be suggested that he includes Russia precisely *because* of its problematic identity of being neither East or West; for the same reason Moore (2006) finds it problematic to include it in the list of colonisers.

the application of the Irish nationalistic experience and its decolonization strategies was placed a bit closer to Éire and its application had already happened – decades before Lloyd's observation was written. Thus, in the early 1900s, Belarusian political and literary activists spotted the similarities between the two countries' colonial legacy as both of them became independent at about the same time. In 1907, Ivan Lutskevich, a representative of the Belarusian Revolutionary Society (Belaruskaya Revalutsyinaya Hramada, BRH[61]) met with a representative of Sinn Fein at a convention for the representatives of revolutionary parties of all nationalities of the Russian Empire. He received a symbolic gift of a shamrock and later BRH received a small donation towards its publishing activities (Rudovich 2000, 39). The Belarusian press published articles about the general situation in Ireland, including such famous pro-Belarusian periodicals as *Nasha Niva* (1908-1920) and *Novaye Zhyccie* (1923). In 1923 in Vilna a translation of Seumas MacManus' Irish folk tales ("Ірландскія народныя казкі") was produced under the pseudonym 'Dobry Karlik' ('Kind Dwarf'). This interest in Ireland continued for a while in Soviet Minsk (for instance in newspaper articles on Irish literature by Dvorkina). However, in the mid-1930s the Soviet authorities spotted a dangerous connection and, unwilling to further sustain Belarusian interest in a former European colony mirroring the Belarusian past, stopped any further developments in this regards (Maldzis 2000, 11 – 12)[62].

What is significant here is the realisation that Ireland was not the only European country whose national language and identity was minorised, as both Belarus and Ireland (as represented by their revolutionary parties) recognised these similarities as early as 1900. In fact, the idea of European power differences is not that new – particularly, in the light of Enlightenment writing on Eastern Europe discussed earlier. In terms of not-so-

---

[61] The sister of one of the founders of BRH, Helena Iwanowska, was involved in the project of the first translations from Belarusian into English (Iwanowska and Onslow, 1914a, b; 1924a, b).
[62] Information on Belarusian-Irish ties, including literary (Chamiarytski 2000) and political (Rudovich 2000), is contained in Maldzis 2000.

distant scholarly explorations, in the mid-1970s Hechter ([1975] 1999) established a term "internal colonialism", developing a model not dissimilar to that of Even-Zohar. However, instead of focussing on the inequalities of literary statuses, this model outlined the inequalities in Western countries. In it, one group was established as a core, dominant group, while the others were seen as dominated, peripheral, "internal colonies", such as Ireland, Wales, and Scotland. In *Translating Ireland* Cronin subsequently used the term to discuss internal colonialism in application to the Irish complexities (Cronin 1996, 3).

A more striking connection here is that one of the first responses to Irish independence from a Belarusian perspective was via literary translation. Thus, the phenomenon of the combination of a history of systematic oppression and translation activities in a European context can be easily transplanted from Irish Anglophone conditions into Eastern European ones. This is the reason for the validity of the Irish case for Belarusian literature as it allows the latter to raise the question of the application of postcolonial models to describe its own experience and thus establish a polylogue within the existing Anglophone postcolonial frameworks. Similar mechanisms of suppression employed by both the British and Russian empires stem from the common goal, as the "reduction to a single common form for human identity is the end that hegemonic colonialism is forced to pursue in the face of the multiplicity of resistant cultural and social forms contained within any empire" (Lloyd 1987, x). In other words, every empire ideally wishes to denounce heteroglossia and complicated divisions for the sake of transparency gained by using the official language in all of its communication with its subjects. Ideally, it wishes to abandon translation at all (or at least limit it in favour of the official language). Speaking of continual multilingual settings, Paulston singles out three possibilities of the language contact: language maintenance, bilingualism, or language shift (Paulston 1992, 55). However, she is highly sceptical of the prolonged multilingualism:

The major point about multilingualism, which is not readily recognized in the literature,

is that maintained group bilingualism is unusual. The norm for groups in prolonged

contact with a nation-state is for the subordinate group to shift to the language of the

dominant group, whether over three generations or over several hundred years. Where

the shift does not take place, there are identifiable reasons of which the major two are

lack of incentive (usually economic) or lack of access to the dominant language;

another one is that the political unit may not be a nation-state as is the case with the

federated soviets (*ibid.*, 70).

Obviously, in case of the USSR it was not *entirely* true, as 'national' languages

were still recognised as valid *de juro*, however, *de facto* the preference in the

multinational and multilingual empire was pro-Russian, a legacy of the linguistic policies

of the Russian Empire (Dalby 2002, 120-127)[63]. Thus, the internal translation policies of

the Soviet Union were serving to strengthen the hegemony of Russian: translation from

the fourteen languages of the Soviet republics into Russian was encouraged, while

translation from Russian into those languages was considered excessive due to

'transaction cost' (Pym 2000). Moreover, all translation from other foreign, 'non-Soviet',

languages was done solely into Russian and published in Moscow under strict censorship.

As a result, at the beginning of the 1990s, most of the newly independent post-Soviet

---

[63] Dalby states: "Imperial Russia promoted attachment to the emperor and to the Orthodox Church, but also promoted Russian as the linguistic vehicle for these. Publication in minority languages required approval from the censor – those who wished to start journals and newspapers needed approval from the emperor himself – and the approval was often withheld. Higher education was in Russian (with German and French, both of them favoured international languages) and not in minority languages of the Empire. If the government communicated with its subjects, it did so in Russian. [...] Thus, the Communist revolution led to a total reversal of language policy. The Soviet Union established itself as a nationalistic yet decidedly multilingual state" (Dalby 2002, 120). The nationalists' joy was, however, short-lived: "Gradually, however, policies and practices were adjusted, and the adjustments nearly always favoured the advance of Russian: in these ways, at least, Soviet linguistic policy began to resemble rather more closely that of most other countries of the contemporary world. [...] It was under Stalin (himself, as Joseph Djugashvili, a member of the Georgian minority) that the policy of 'Russification' gathered force. In 1938 Russian became a compulsory subject in every school, and all those languages that had previously used Latin alphabets were required to adopt a new Cyrillic alphabet. By the 1980s party (rather than national) policy was promoting Russian even more openly, channelling extra funds to the Russian-language schools. Ph.D. candidates found that doctoral dissertations could be written only in Russian" (*ibid.*, 121 – 122).

nations had poorly developed national translation schools and a virtual absence of translated literary classics in their national languages. While the Soviet 'empire' does raise questions in terms of applicability of postcolonial paradigms, the history of Belarusian-Russian unequal power relationship dates back to Belarus's annexation to Russia in the 18th century and therefore predates the Soviet period's controversies. However, rather than engaging with the historical evidence here[64], this research's focus at this stage is on the present situation in which Belarus finds itself.

As a country, Belarus shares a similar disadvantaged past with politically minoritized nations who were forced to adopt linguistic and cultural policies at the national level which actively discouraged their distinctive identity. Thus, 'Belarusianness'[65] (Bekus 2010) possesses some characteristics also shared by countries with a 'typical' colonial past[66]. As such, this research argues, they indicate that Belarusian literature can be considered a 'minority' literature in the 'world republic of letters' and suggests they will bear a direct influence on the translation of Belarusian 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu 1986) into English. However, as the next chapter will endeavour to show by providing historical evidence, 'minority' here does not denote quality of literature, but, rather, the positionality of the country and its literature on the axis of 'weak' to 'strong' (in Even-Zohar's terminology) without suggesting any qualitative assessment. If anything, it only suggests the 'geographical' distance in the

---

[64] The historical account of 'Belarusianness' and its negation within Belarusian literary space is provided in Chapter Two.

[65] In the traditional understanding of national identity.

[66] Such parallels are illustrated by a poem from Puscha, chosen by Adamovich to outline the resistant tendencies of Belarusian literature to 'Sovetization', or, more precisely, Russification. The poem is titled "To Rabindranath Tagore" who was to travel via Minsk in 1926. In it, Puscha "warmly greets the dear, excepted guest, "far away in mile but close in songs", even addressing him as "father"" (Adamovich 1958, 94). He paints a graphic picture of violence in Belarus carried out by foreign oppressors:
Foreigners have sought to deprive my people of glory
And to stain their hearts with bloody wounds.
Oh, Pride of Bengal, Glory of Bengal!
Oh, Genuis of annexed peoples!
Through the elements I pray in my song to thee,
And bend my knee on a wild burial mound.
Flowers of blood have sprung in Belorussia,
My dear poet, my beloved poet!" (Puscha 1927, 65-66, cited in Adamovich 1958, 94).

scheme suggested by Casanova regarding the 'Greenwich meridian of literature' (2007, 87), the distance suggested by power and supported by indifference.

Low Awareness of SL Culture in TL Culture

The implications of the subaltern position of Belarus and other 'minor' Eastern European countries likewise primarily include a low level of awareness of those cultures outside of their immediate surroundings and in the Anglophone countries in particular. Until quite recently the nation of Belarus and its literature remained *terra incognita* for the English-speaking world[67]. Despite the country's long history, this status is typical of many minor European states. The reasons for this may include the numerous political and geographical transformations in those nations' turbulent histories which span several centuries. For Belarus, as indeed for many other minor cultures, this meant numerous alterations of the country's official names as outlined in the introduction from Lithuania (16th c.) to the Republic of Belarus (1990)[68]. Discussing the problem of attributing the legacy of Adam Mickiewicz to a particular culture, Irena Grudzińska Gross notes: "He was born in a place that cannot be called by only one name – the Russian empire? Belarus? Lithuania? Poland?" (1995, 295). Understandably, for an English TL monolingual speaker trying to keep up with the historical complexities of a country which, after centuries of colonial subordination and peripheral status, has only just become independent, it can be rather tedious, as "the information load of translations of such marginalized texts is often very high – in fact it is at risk of being intolerably high" (Tymoczko 1995, 12-13). The confusion experienced by a monolingual English speaker

---

[67] This position clearly distinguishes Belarus from Russia, whose literary classics is of high international regard. Interestingly, though, translation from Russian became less intensive after the 1920s and Russian is considered by Branchadell and West to be a 'lesser-translated language' (2005). In terms of the UK, Anglo-Russian cultural ties have been dependent on the countries' diplomatic relationship, which at times varied from open animosity (such as during the Crimean War) to allies (in the case of World War II).

[68] The pro-Russian segment in 'Belarus' has been a major issue of concern for the left-wing political parties, with the name 'Cryvia' (after the major Slavonic tribe in that land) being offered instead since the early 1900s.

with regard to the Eastern European complexities addressed in the introduction is also coupled with the UK's concerns regarding recent immigration flows (as exemplified by Gillian Duffy's question quoted earlier). Hence, it would generally be impractical to expect any prior knowledge of Belarusian culture and literature of a target language audience mostly unaware of distinctions between Eastern European countries[69].

In translation practice, the low level of awareness of 'minority' European cultures means that the same cultural information (cultural symbols, historical facts, and personalities) needs to be constantly put forward and explained in virtually every published translation as it does not form part of the general knowledge of the TL recipient. Various explanations of 'Belarusianness' and different interpretations of its history have occurred regularly in translators' prefaces from the 1970s until the present day as will be seen from the discussion of translations in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

Confusion of the SL Culture Image(s)

Low awareness of the source culture can also be linked to another issue in translation from 'minority' cultures: confusion of cultural stereotypes or merging of ethnic identities with the cultural Other. In the case of Belarus, most Anglophone readers would potentially place it in Russia[70] (mainly because of the '-rus' element as well as due to the popularity of the pre-World War II ethnonym "White Russia") and would therefore

---

[69] Other Anglophone countries are equally confused when it comes to terminology. As Kipel observes, "Because the Belarusans' ethnic territory is divided among several neighboring states, it is difficult to present a clear picture of a Belarusan state, nationhood, and historical development. Part of the confusion stems from terminology. As political concepts, the terms "Byelorussia," "Byelorussian," and since 1991, "Belarus" and "Belarusans," are all relatively new. For most Americans, the term "Byelorussia" was not known until the end of World War II, when the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic became a charter member of the newly forming United Nations. Prior to World War II the terms more familiar to Americans were "White Russia" and "White Russians" or "White Ruthenia" and "White Ruthenians." The term "White" in these various formulations is simply the literal translation of "*byelo-*" or "*byela-.*" (Kipel 2011).

[70] A telling example of the confusion would be some of the letters the author has received from her well-meaning Anglophone friends addressed to 'Belarus, Russia' (even after prolonged conversations about Belarus).

naturally extend their cultural stereotypes of Russia to include Belarus[71]. While recognising the two countries' cultural similarities, including shared literary beginnings, it is necessary to mention their substantial differences, including the fact that they fought each other during the Livonian wars as well as Belarus' later uprisings in several 'Polish' revolts after its annexation to the Russian Empire[72]. Numerous differences can be noted in their national symbols (e.g. Russia's powerful and aggressive bear compared with Belarus' mobile and timid stork), chronotopes (the wide steppes of Russia vs. the very local 'nook of my forefathers' in Belarus[73]), and national myths[74].

The confusion of cultural stereotypes, and thus an ongoing endeavour to revisit the issue of national identity are typical features in the available discourse on minor European cultures (Clancy 1999; Cronin 2006; Shäffner 2000; May 2008; Woodsworth 1996). In the case of Eastern European cultures, this issue is exacerbated by the perceived European peripheral literary position. For example, in *Cultural Hierarchies, Secondary Nations,* Silvana Mandolessi notes of Poland:

---

[71] Cf. the earlier discussed interchangeable usage of the ethnonym Russian both for citizens of the Russian Empire and for the Russian ethnos.

[72] These included the Kosciuszko Rebellion of 1794 and the Polish Rebellion of 1863-64, which in Belarus was organised by Kalinouski. Alexander Suvorov, the famed Russian Field Marshal and the first of only three 'generalissimuses' in the whole of Russian history, took part in suppressing Kosciuszko's rebellion. The official Soviet hero's name was given to a large network of military academies for young cadets across the USSR, including Belarus, where a century prior he would have been vehemently opposed (Gigin 2009, 86 - 95; Hrytskevich 2007, 414 - 417).

[73] Examples taken from two famous Russian and Belarusian songs respectively (*'Oi, da step krugom / Oh, this wide steppe all around* and *Moi rodny kut/ My Native Nook*.

[74] Examples include Russia's self-identification as 'the Third Rome' with a high calling of Messianism (Gumiliov), i.e. of 'saving other nations', compared with the tragedy of faded glory (the Golden Age of the 16th century) in 'Belarusianness'. Russia's famous triad 'For God, Czar, and Fatherland', used both for battle cries and as the core foundation for "Russianness", was developed by Sergei Uvarov (later Earl Uvarov for his theory), President of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, in 1833, in a report to Nicolas I. The formula of the 'natural historical law of the development of Russia' consisted of 'Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality' as 'original Russian principles, without which it cannot prosper, strengthen and live' (Uvarov, 511) [translation is mine]. Belarus, on the other hand, recognises its heterogeneity and adopts "primary self-definition with multiple or non-national identities" (Gapova 2004, 67). The duality of Belarus' existence is reflected in its East-West divide (rather than North-South), which is reinforced via linguistic (Russian vs. Polish) and denominational (Roman Catholic vs. Russian Orthodox) differences. Belarusian heterogeneity is further discussed in Chapter Three.

Being a minor nation like Poland means being at the edge of Europe, in constant

tension with a strong desire to fortify a national identity that is perceived as weak

or insufficient in relation to other strong nations (2008,153).

In this context, as this research will further argue, besides promoting such

country's cultural capital in the hope of advancing closer to the centre of the European

literary polysystem, translation can act as a way of aiding a 'minority' culture's self-

definition. Crystallisation and reformulation of their cultural self-images, which naturally

happen during the process of selection of that culture's literary capital for translation, are

particularly salient for newly independent countries, which, like Belarus, are aiming to

achieve equal status or at least recognition of its existence among others in the 'world

republic of letters'. This aspiration, chosen for the title of the present research, was

expressed by Janka Kupala, one of the founders of modern Belarusian literature, in his

poetic manifesto *Young Belarus* (1909-12)[75]. It sees Belarus as eventually taking a "place

of honour and fame among nations" (Rich 1971, 60), or, at least, being "called human"

(*ibid.*, 48) by becoming a recognisable entity on the world literary scene.

Polyglotism of 'Minor' Cultures

Confusion of cultural stereotypes, in its turn, determines a further issue in the

translation of 'minor' European cultures: the source language – or rather languages –

chosen for translation. At some point in their history 'minor' European nations have been

bilingual or even multilingual, with various languages adopted as 'official' or, at least,

widely accepted in those countries. Belarus is no exception here, with its literary canon

---

[75] Although it was never set to music, *Maladaya Belarus* was one of the suggestions for the
national anthem of the Republic of Belarus.

written in several languages[76]. Kafka's term 'minor literature', coined in an analogous

situation in another oppressed European culture, seems a natural outcome of such a state

of linguistic policies. The presence of overt multilingualism and code-switching in these

cultures gives an impetus to Baer (2011) to draw conclusions concerning the "high

visibility" that translation enjoys in Eastern Europe. The range of languages employed by

authors in such nations reflects the various stages in the history of the colonised, as well

as exhibiting the power imbalances between the linguistically dominant and dominated.

The use of two or multiple languages in the same text or the atypical usage of the

coloniser's language as opposed to that endorsed by the 'metropoly' further complicates

the deconstruction of such texts, and subsequently their translation. Like the Palesse[77]

dialect of Vincent Dunin Marcinkevicz's plays in the 19th century, the linguistic patterns

of such texts require a highly skilled translator with a scholarly knowledge of a narrow

specialist field and who is comfortable using Belarusian, Ukrainian, Russian and Polish.

Moreover, the issues of classification and canon formation in such cultures still

remain open, a fact that poses difficulties in the selection of texts for translation. Often

texts cannot be attributed to 'minor' European cultures any earlier than the 19th

century[78]. For Belarus, one such highly debatable issue is the heritage of Adam

Mickiewicz, widely regarded as the 'prophet of Polish Romanticism', who,

paradoxically, never lived in Poland. The "poetic genius", who "represents the very

center of Polish culture" (Grudzińska Gross 1995, 295) was born in *kresy* (or 'outskirts'

or 'borderlands'), i.e. the lands of the historical Eastern frontier of Poland. More

specifically, the poet was born within the territory of today's Belarus (then part of the

Russian empire), his Polish was interspersed with localisms, he studied in

---

[76] Belarus' linguistic situation is discussed in Chapters Two and Three in application to its literary
canon and to the interpretation of its identity.

[77] Region of Belarus. Its dialect bears a strong Ukrainian influence.

[78] By comparison, English literature underwent similar processes and discussions much earlier,
mostly before the early modern period.

Vilna[79] (nowadays Vilnius, Lithuania) and often referred to himself as 'Litsvin'[80].
Current Belarusian literary theory sees Mickiewicz as a 'Polish-Belarusian writer', and in a sense his heritage is shared by Belarusian, Polish, and Lithuanian cultures, making him a cosmopolitan whose legacy belongs to Eastern Europe, rather than to one particular country. Interestingly, some early British researchers of Mickiewicz noticed both the bilingualism of his work and the minor position of Belarusian (in today's terms) substratum compared with the "modern nations of Europe", i.e. major European cultures:

> Although he [Mickiewicz] became in the course of his studies thoroughly acquainted not only with the beauties of classical poets, but also with those of the modern nations of Europe, his muse chose the hitherto untrodden path of the popular poetry. Mickiewicz perceived the beauties which were contained in the songs, traditions and tales of the people of Lithuania, and he created from those materials a really national poetry. His ballads and other poems of a similar description, [...] obtained at once a great and deserved popularity throughout all parts of Poland (Long 1842, 122).

The author, a contemporary of Mickiewicz, clearly does not differentiate which nation this 'really national poetry' actually belongs to – Lithuania or Poland. He just notes 'the untrodden path' and Lithuanian motifs in the poet's legacy, the almost exotic 'beauties' which differed from the dominant literary practices at the time. It is no wonder that translators' prefaces to the poet's English editions often contain different interpretations of the writer's portrayals of his native land in a particular book, as well as of his national identity and political views[81].

---

[79] Transliterated according to the Belarusian version of the city's name, *Vilnia*, it can also be spelt as *Wilno* according to its alternative versions in Polish, *Vilno* (in historical Russian), and *Vilnius* (in Lithuanian).

[80] His cosmopolitan background gave cause for Grudzińska Gross to call him "a European from Nowogródek" (1995, 295-316).

[81] Cf. Skomorokhova 2008 for a historical survey of existing translations and the reception of Mickiewicz in the Anglophone context.

Relay Language In Translation

The power imbalance vis-à-vis a once dominant language is often reflected in the application of translation standards typical of the formerly dominant culture rather than the dominated one. This is particularly reflected in names, as they often include the very names of the country, e.g. *White Russia* or *Byelorussia* (which follows Russian transliteration) rather than *Belarus*, which are used by numerous English speakers, including scholars and specialists in Russian translation. For instance, in his essay *'Memory, Language and Symbolic Russianness'* Harald Haarmann keeps referring to *Belarus, Belorussian SSR,* and *the Belorusian language* (2002, 63, 66). Grudzińska Gross, while discussing the historical complexities of attributing Mickiewicz's work and the multiple changes of his native town's name according to a political power's dominions at various periods in history, nevertheless, still chooses to use *Byelorussian* (rather than *Belarusian*) for the present-day language of the country (Grudzińska Gross 1995, 296). Baer speaks of *Belarussians* (2011, 12). At the same time, Russia (with the exception of a short period in the 1990s when the term "Belarus" was used in official news reports) still uses 'Byelorussia' in its official documentation and transliterates the name of the country in English accordingly. The legacy of Soviet times, which adopted Russian transliteration for translation from all of its fifteen republics' literature into English, is still strong for some of the post-Soviet republics sharing the legacy of what is sometimes described as a postcolonial past (Moore 2006; Velychenko 2003). Thus, a traveller to Ukraine searching various airlines websites, soon becomes aware of both spellings of the country's capital: Kiev (Russian transliteration) and Kyiv (Ukrainian), used interchangeably. The traveller to Minsk (the name of the city according to Russian via Polish transliteration) will only have a problem if they do some preliminary research on the city before travelling as most émigré Anglophone websites prefer to use the pre-

Soviet Belarusian version, i.e. *Mensk.* However, even in comparison with Ukraine, Belarus presents an interesting case study in terms of bilingualism, as "the Russian language, once spoken throughout the empire, is being replaced by native tongues everywhere except in Belarus" (Thompson 2000, 19)[82].

What is the explanation for such an exceptional condition? In a sense, Belarus is experiencing a dilemma typical of some 'minor' and postcolonial nations who have been forced to rely on a dominant language for a while. Thus, while the Belarusian language's main function at the moment is that of ethnic definition and the nation's self-expression (Mechkovskaya 2003), it is Russian or *trasyanka*[83] which are mostly used for daily communication. At the same time, the Belarusian language has to be used as well (for instance, for the singing of the national hymn, etc.) as it codifies certain layers of collective memory. As Fishman, one of the first advocates of supporting endangered languages, states,

> a traditionally associated language is more than just a tool of communication for its culture. Such a language can mean much more to its ethnoculture than just languages in general or than the language capacity with which all humans are endowed. Such a language is often viewed as a very specific gift, a marker of identity and a specific responsibility vis-à-vis future generations (Fishman 2001, 5).

This explains why even the most Russified Belarusians feel very tentative in letting go of the language completely. Bahushevich's appeal 'Do not let go of our language, so you will not die'[84] has been engraved in the collective subconscious since the first school days of learning Belarusian, acting as an alert for a possible ethnocide

---

[82] Given the recent debates on the status of Russian in Ukraine, this condition might potentially also be expanded to include the Ukrainian linguistic situation.

[83] A creole of Russian and Belarusian.

[84] Cf. some snippets of his translations in Karatkevich 1982.

should the subject's "mother tongue" be completely rejected. At the same time, the complete switch to that "mother tongue" after centuries of using the "more refined" oppressor's language, is still 'unnatural' to many. Such a situation is, according to Cronin, a typical dilemma of small nations and postcolonial condition. Reflecting on Bateson's work on logical types in communication and his concept of 'double-bind' (Bateson 1973), or logical no-win situation, Cronin applies the concept to postcolonial countries, remarking that:

> Linguistically, post-colonial nations then are caught in a double bind. If they do not rebel, their language will continue to be downgraded and eventually disappear. If they do rebel, they are benighted essentialists waving the banner of difference and replacing one 'master' language with another. The consequence of these post-colonial theoretical manoeuvres is the paralysis that Bateson attributes to the disabling effects of the schizoid condition (Cronin 2003, 90-91).

A similar argument in essence is voiced by Lloyd who claims that nationalism operates within the same paradigm of violence as the colonialism from which it aims to liberate itself (1987, x). Is there a way out of the 'double-bind'? There hardly seems to be a simple solution, and Fishman exhorts activists to admit the necessity of "embarking on a carefully multilingual and multicultural existence for the foreseeable future" (2001, 17) which would mean that

> sharing language functions with another language (indeed, with the very language or languages that are causing the threatened status to begin with) is to establish fairly complete interactional or political boundaries vis-à-vis Big Brother. If the latter is not an available option [...], and even the bulk of those ethnopolitical communities that have established such 'independence' still commonly indicate that they too experience many of the same threats that threatened languages experience, then another more symbiotic

arrangement (a manageable arrangement, not a completely triumphant solution) must be sought (Fishman 2001, 10).

He admits that such an arrangement will be nothing but admitting defeat to the advocates of the sole use of the threatened language for daily communication, but nevertheless considers it an "honourable, enriching and constructive solution to the multiple ethnocultural identities which most modern human societies and individuals are increasingly destined to enact as an inevitable consequence of the complexity of ongoing globalisation" (*ibid.*, 17). In this global context, seeing more of Belarusian literature appear in English translation can subsequently help Belarusians find a way out of the 'double bind' by disseminating more of their core values in the process.

However, the number of literary translations which state 'translated from Belarusian' on the cover, and yet employ Russian transliteration throughout, abound, including some of the translations discussed in further chapters of the present research, most notably with regard to Быкаў's translations (cf. Chapters Six and Seven). Seeing such clear evidences of the presence of 'the third' language in the translation process poses questions concerning the validity of such pronouncements with regard to translation 'from the original'. As translation practice in the Soviet Union shows, most translations of Belarusian literature were undertaken via the medium of Russian. Moreover, even translations carried out from the original also exhibit the influence of the 'third tongue' in terms of corrections at the final stages of the translation process. Most of them are associated with the censorship and editorial policies of the Soviet publishers, in particular, Progress Publishers in Moscow, which for several decades was the largest publisher of translations from the country's various languages into Western European ones. Progress had established the guidelines for all of the translations into European languages, and one of these guidelines was Russian transliteration. More of

those policies will be discussed in Chapter Five, devoted to Soviet translations of Belarusian literature.

Quantity and Quality of Translations

The general factors discussed above, which significantly affect translation from 'minor' European cultures, mean that there are relatively few literary translations of adequate literary quality from those languages into English. This state of translational activity has been highlighted by Nike Pokorn in a monograph titled *Challenging the Traditional Axioms: Translation into a non-mother tongue* (2005), where the author claims that under the current global conditions there is a pressing need to challenge the traditional axiom demanding that a translator always translates into his or her own native language, rather than into an acquired one.

Whether or not one agrees with the challenge, this state of affairs is quite typical of 'minority' European languages, where translations into English are relatively rare and translations are frequently carried out by non-native speakers. Besides Belarusian, this is certainly the case for Lithuanian:

> Since 1990, over 30 anthologies of Lithuanian prose and poetry, and about 240 books by different authors have been published in 29 languages all over the world. […] The number of books published in English is 44; however, 23 of them were published in Lithuania and we may therefore wonder whether they reached their readers or not (Jonikaitė 2011).

The statistics for Belarus show translation activity on an even smaller scale and not all of them contain only Belarusian originals: some volumes also include translations from Russian and Ukrainian literatures. A similar situation – as well as its

causes from literary translation history – is happening in Ukraine. Analogously to Belarus,

> Translations of Ukrainian literature into English have a brief and uneven history. Aside from a few works by some of Ukraine's classic authors, before the mid-twentieth century hardly any Ukrainian literature appeared in English. Then the Cold War and the presence of a generation of Ukrainian refugees in North America created circumstances in which translating literature was part of an effort to promote Ukrainian identity. In Soviet Ukraine, translators presented politically correct versions of ideologically compliant works, mostly by classic authors and usually with an ethnographic focus. Outside Ukraine, literary translation was largely a labor of love for a number of dedicated individuals [...] Ironically, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of an independent Ukraine was not a fortuitous development for Ukrainian literature in English translation. Soviet institutions that supported literary translations were not replaced by equivalents in Ukraine (Tarnawsky 2004, 5-6).

The situation with literary translation in Belarus is the mirror-image of that described by Tarnawsky, which gives grounds to consider it typical of at least several 'minority' European literatures. Thus, the lack of both opportunities and resources, whether human or material, is not an atypical situation for many minority literatures. There seems to be a shortage of professional translators using the language pair in their practice, particularly native English speakers who might also know the 'minority' literature's language (to say nothing of languages in cases of polyglotism) well enough to be comfortable translating from it. Moreover, if alternative methods of translation are sought, there is often not enough incentive provided to create a space for translators from the 'third' language to work with a consultant from a 'minority' literature. In many

instances, minor cultures have budgetary limits which do not easily allow expenses for literary translation or they are not aware of the existence of funding bodies who would be interested in endorsing the sponsorship of a lengthy – and generally unprofitable – project, such as literary translation from a minor culture. The creation (or further promotion in those cases where it exists) of such a favourable translation space from funding bodies (as discussed in Chapter Seven) would ease the transition of 'minority' literatures into the wider literary community, while at the same time enriching universal literary heritage and cross-cultural dialogue. Before moving on to the discussion of these issues, it is deemed necessary to provide a short overview of Belarusian literature, outlining its historical development, with major themes and authors involved in the process, to provide a more informed argument for the case of its translation into English. Thus the next chapter will present a wide panorama of the ten centuries of Belarusian literary history and will place the existing English translations into the historical context of the literary processes at the time when their originals were written. Such an overview will also make instantly apparent the inevitable 'refractions' that Belarusian as a 'minority' literature has been subjected to as part of its translation into English. It will also outline the creation of two distinct discourses of 'Belarusianness' outlined in Chapter Three and discussed in subsequent chapters using the examples of existing English translations.

Chapter Two. Belarusian Literature and Its Story of 'Belarusianness'

> Tell, then, to the other countries
> What a life the folk have here[85]
> (Kolas [1906] 1982, 7)
>
> Each country has those who sing of its glory,
> Who praise their own folk – a bard or a harper –
> But Byelorussians have no one, no story,
>   So let them at least have Yanka Kupala[86].
> (Kupala [1905-1907] 1982, 35).

At the end of the introduction to his 1129 page *Writing in a Cold Climate: Belarusian literature from the 1970s to the present day*[87], Arnold McMillin states:

> Many people outside of Belarus have asked the present writer, 'Is Belarusian literature any good?', to which the answer is always an emphatic yes, a belief underpinned not only by my experience, but as much as anything by the many promising young writers who are still coming forward, apparently undeterred by the cold climate (2010, xxi)

Two conclusions can be drawn from this "emphatic 'yes'" provided by a scholar respected in Anglophone Russian and Belarusian academic milieu for his dedication to the subject and passion to disseminate knowledge of Belarusian literature into the English-speaking world. Firstly, the level of knowledge of the general public, for whom he is presumably writing, of Belarusian literature is extremely limited[88]. This is evident

---

[85] Translated by Walter May. ST:
Раскажы ж другому краю,
Як у нас жыве народ (Kolas 1972, 26).
[86] Translated by Walter May. ST:
Кожны край мае тых, што апяваюць,
Чым ёсць дя народа ўпадак і хвала,
А беларусы нікога не маюць,
Няхай жа хоць будзе Янка Купала (Kupala 1972, 215).
[87] It is symbolic that most of the texts in the book have not been translated into English (the author quotes excerpts from them in Belarusian and provides a word-for-word translation in footnotes), so most of the 'many people outside of Belarus' have no choice but to trust the researcher's experience.
[88] Perhaps, the addressee is actually an Anglophone academic milieu as this is the sphere with which the author has been associated for most of his life. In a review of the book, Elena Gapova raises the issue of the audience which McMillin addresses and of the format of the book: "It is difficult to say if McMillan writes for an "insider," i.e. someone who would know enough to be able to notice and

from the emphatic 'any' in the question addressed to the author, 'Is Belarusian literature any good?' Secondly, his argument may be read in a way which might suggest that Belarusian literature is good *despite* the fact that it is produced in Belarus, which the author describes as having a 'cold climate', a poetic euphemism for a totalitarian regime and ideological control, i.e. the only context where his Western interlocutors might have heard of Belarus. In a way, it may be said that Belarusian literature is presented to the Western audience in full accordance with Deleuze and Guattari's 'undermining principle': it is political and revolutionary (i.e. underground) in the sense that it is written despite, rather than with, the help of the official literary bodies. It is, in a sense, shrouded in mystery (or, rather ignorance) elevating the initiated reader into an exalted status based on having some mystic/secret exotic knowledge, or, as the author states himself, a belief. In a way, this 'exoticising' is not atypical in introducing Western audiences to Belarusian, as it had been previously used by Rich (1971) in the introduction to her translated anthology of Belarusian poetry, as well as by Onslow in an article on the issue (Keene 1915, 645- 646), and recalls earlier Enlightenment narratives of Eastern Europe in Western cultural memory.

The rite of passage to this knowledge (the only one available for Anglophone audiences) is this book, "the culmination of a project that began in the 1970s, namely an attempt to present to English-speaking readers a picture of a little known and unjustly neglected literature" (McMillin 2010, xvii), which follows three previous publications of the author[89]. In the light of this extensive work, any further historical overviews of

---

comprehend the meaningful omissions, inclusions, or plays on orthography, and thus the question of the target group of the book cannot be avoided. With the volume having encyclopedic proportions, there is little doubt that scholars of Belarusian culture will look at it as a comprehensive literary "reference book," and then the omissions are regretful. It seems, though, that the author's intention is not putting together a literary encyclopedia, but telling a history of a literature that was able to thrive "in the cold climate." Overall, the book works excellently as a "register" of the state of this literature" (Gapova 2009).

[89] Namely, *A History of Byelorussian Literature from its Origins to the Present Day* (1977), *Belarusian Literature in the 1950s and 1960s: Release and Renewal* (1999), and *Belarusian Literature of the Diaspora* (2002).

Belarusian literature may seem excessive and unnecessary[90]. However, it has been over thirty years since the author's first monograph which provided a wide panoramic view of Belarusian literary history until the 1950s. It is also worth noticing the date of its publication as it appeared at the time when archival work was highly censored, especially in relation to Old Belarusian literature and Belarusian-Polish literary ties (in the latter case for being suspected of having bourgeois tendencies)[91]. Obviously, McMillan's work was free from the ideological constraints of Soviet scholarship (a fact that makes it still relevant today), but the new critical approaches of modern Belarusian literary critics, as well as recent theoretical and archival findings (for instance, the work of early Renaissance latinists, such as Mikola Hussoŭski/Nicolao Hussowski) call for some revision and re-definition of one or two of its postulates. Beside this, his work mentions translations albeit briefly, and since translation is the primary goal of the present research, the role of translation and translators in Belarusian literature needs a sharper focus in these circumstances. In this chapter, each period of Belarusian literature is linked to its representation in English, i.e. the names of authors or works from that particular period which have been translated will be mentioned. This is done to draw a wide picture of the refractions and metonymies of the 'Belarusianness' represented through English translations of the STs.

Another reason for the overview of Belarusian literature in this chapter is to highlight Belarus' literary heterogeneity and polyglotism. This is especially meaningful for Eastern European nations, where multilingualism is not a historical fact, but is often a daily reality. Thus, the following overview will highlight the role of translation and

---

[90] Short overviews of Belarusian literature are also available in Pynsent 1993. However, they are too short to include mention of polyglotism and translation practices of Belarusian literature.

[91] Despite the fact that Poland was part of the Warsaw Pact Countries, it was, nevertheless, dangerous to point out literary and cultural connections as history books, including literary history ones, portraying the Belarusian past and present were shaped by the strict party line. Thus, in the accepted Soviet interpretation of 'Belarusianness' there was no space left for literary Polish interactions, as Lithuanian and Polish lords were regarded only as oppressors of the Belarusian people whose only source of enlightenment came from the Russian lands.

polyglotism which have been part of the functioning of the Belarusian literary polysystem for the most part of its history, two factors of literary process which are given little space in Belarusian literary histories, including the one by McMillin. It is asserted that exclusion of some of the works written in Latin, Polish and Old Slavonic could mean an over-simplification of the development processes that Belarusian literature and its authors have been undergoing.

Thus it is necessary to note that this short overview, aiming to represent the main tendencies, themes and narratives of Belarusian literature, cannot claim to be exhaustive. Rather, it aims to highlight the main features and tendencies of Belarusian literature, offering not only some information for an answer to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter, but also a foundation for judging the representation of this literature through the existing translations discussed in subsequent chapters.

Belarusian Literature: History and Narratives

> And in native tongue, with a calloused hand,
> Belarusian will write on a new page
> In the book of all nations – grandly, with no pressure –
> A sad story of dear Belarus.
> Janka Kupala ([1910] 1973, 215)[92]

The history of every nation has a few seminal dates which become its turning points. A crucial point for Belarusian nationhood, and, consequently, for its language and literature, was the year 1569. The Union of Lublin which occurred at that time

---

[92] Translation is mine. Another translation of the same poem is found in Kupala 1982. It belongs to Walter May and reads as follows:'
  Then with horny hand, in native speech,
  That new book, which every land will reach,
  A Byeloruss will write, with pride, and hail
  Our dear Byelorussia's bitter tale (Kupala [1910] 1982, 85).
  ST:
  І радзімым словам рукой мазалістай
  Беларус упіша на старонцы чыстай
  Кнігі і ўсіх народаў важна, ў непрымусе
  Сумную аповесць роднай Беларусі (Kupala [1905-1907] 1973, 215).

united the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (henceforth GDL), where Old Belarusian was a language of court, and the Kingdom of Poland into one state, Rzech Pospolita, or the Kingdom of Poland. This union created significant pressure to conform to Polish influence encoded in the Polish language and the official state ideology as shaped in accordance with Roman Catholicism[93]. As Wandysz nonchalantly describes the state of affairs after the Union (2005, 65),

> The Lithuanian Statutes were maintained, as was the old Belorussian language used in official acts. Eventually Polish replaced it almost as a matter of course, given the linguistic polonization of the Lithuanian *szlachta*.

The polonization of the newly joined lands was not merely linguistic of course: the local gentry, in order to gain new privileges which could belong to them as loyal subjects of the new state[94], quickly began assimilating to the new rules and abandoning Protestantism and Orthodoxy.

By the end of the 16th century the Orthodox Church of the former lands of GDL had no choice but to make some concessions to the growing influence of Rome and so consitituted a Union. Thus, the Uniate Church, which belongs to the Roman Catholic

---

[93] Ironically, GDL which had been open to Protestant influences, turned to Catholicism at the time when some European nations were in the process of disentangling themselves from the religious domain of Rome.

[94] The situation of 'more loyal than the original subject' would be subsequently repeated with Russian dominance. The famous case is that of Faddej Bulgarin, a reactionary critic from Belarusian lands yet an ardent defender of the Russian empire, who was scorned by Pushkin several times for his non-Russian roots: as in 'The harm is not that you're a Pole: / so are Kosciusko and Mickiewicz; a Tatar be, for all I care: likewise no shame can I see there; or be a Jew, no harm there either; the harm is you're Vidocq Figlyarin' (translated by Vladimir Nabokov in Pushkin 1976, 226). Another, more poignant epigram uses wordplay to laugh off his roots: "Не то беда, Авдей Флюгарин, / Что родом ты не русский барин / Что на Парнасе ты цыган ..." (Pushkin [1830] 1959, 335) / "The harm is not that you, Avdei Fliugarin / By birth are not a Russian nobleman, / That you are a Gypsy on Parnassus ...". Kalinowska cites his switch of allegiance and claims him as Polish: "Another Pole who became a Russian writer, Tadeusz Bułharyn vel Fadei Bulgarin" (2004, 9), even though he was born in Minsk Province. Another reason for irony here is the fact that Tadeusz Jan Bułharyn was given his name in honour of the famous leader of the anti-Russian rebellion of 1794, Tadeusz Kosciuszko (whom Pushkin mentions in his first epigram).

An interesting take on Belarusian loyalty, or, rather disloyalty, is taken by Piatro Vasiuchenka in *Piatrohlify*, where he regards treachery as one of the core paradigms of Belarusian history (2009).

denomination but holds its rites according to Orthodoxy, was instituted. These changes of religious alliances, seemingly innocent today, were much more significant at the time in terms of destabilising a sense of collective identity for the locals. The official language of the former state, which is today recognised as Old Belarusian, shifted from its privileged position and, subsequently, vanished from court. That was the crucial point for Old Belarusian – as well as for the nation which came to identify itself with the language: after the Union of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with Poland, Old Belarusian went into decline and was subsequently banned in 1696 and then again in 1840 by both Polish and Russian governments (Sahanovich 2001). It was only revived at the end of the 19th century with a reliance on spoken dialects, by which time its prestige as the 'high' language of court had been lost. Hence, one of the strong narratives of Belarusian literature today, as with other minor European nations, is the narrative of faded glory or, less poetically, "the bruised ego of historical loss" (Cronin 2003, 151)[95]. The subsequent shifting of borders, religious denominations and languages arguably developed the proverbial Belarusian tolerance as the main feature of the ethnic psychology (Dubianetski 1995), but also introduced major confusion, which was not even over who has a right to own these lands but who *lived* in these lands. The constant changes produced a rift in the national identity (Dubianetski 1995; Gapova 2002; Gigin 2009; Pershái 2008) where a desperate attempt to reflect on continuous geo-political remappings (five of them in the last century alone) produced an ethnonym 'tutejshyja' ('people from here'[96]). In order to cure this ethnical and cultural amnesia,

---

[95] Analogously to Poland and Ireland, the narrative of the faded glory is also being employed by Belarus, although the reference point in this case is much earlier than the infamous three partitions of Rzecz Pospolita in the late 18th century. It takes Belarusians back to the short lived 'Golden Age' of Renaissance in16th century GDL (Bekus 2010).

[96] Kupala, who first popularised the term in his play with a similar title, came across it in an ethnographical study by the founder of Belarusian linguistics, Evfimi Karski, who wrote: "Въ настоящее время простой народъ въ Бѣлоруссіи не знаетъ этого названія. На вопросъ: кто ты? простолюдинъ отвчаетъ – русскій, а если онъ католикъ, то называетъ себя либо католикомъ, либо полякомъ; иногда свою родину назоветъ Литвой, а то и просто скажетъ, что онъ «тутэйшій» (tutejszy) – здѣшній, конечно противополагая себя лицу, говорящему по-великорусски, какъ пришлому въ западномъ краѣ" (Karski 1903, 116). Translation: "At the moment common folk in Byelorussia do not

Belarusian literature began to re-evaluate its historical roots and examine its beginnings, which had been marred by previous colonial-like[97] interpretations. These new theoretical findings form the bulk of the overview presented below.

The authors of *Гісторыя старажытнай літаратуры* (*History of Old [Belarusian] Literature*) give the following periodisation of Belarusian literature[98]:

1) literature of Old Rus' (11th – late 13th centuries),

2) literature of the 14th – early 16th centuries,

3) literature of the 16th – first half of the 17th century,

4) literature of the second half of the 17th c. – 18th century (Lazaruk and Semianovich 1998, 18).

According to their genre characteristics, the literature of the 11th – 15th centuries is mediaeval, the literature of the 16th – first half of the 17th century covers Renaissance and early Baroque, while the literature of the second half of the 17th – 18th century is of a transitional phase which possesses some elements of late Baroque (*ibid.*, 18).

The classification found in the recent two volume academic *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры XI – XIX стагоддзяў* (History of Belarusian Literature of the 11th – 19th centuries) is slightly different:

---

know this name [Byelorussia]. When asked, who are you? The comer answers: Russian. But if he is a Catholic, they call themselves a Catholic or a Pole; sometimes he calls his native country Lithuania, or even can say that he is 'from here' (tutejszy), local, of course, contrasting himself to a person who speaks Great Russian as a foreigner in the western territory". Cf. Antsipenka 2003 for further information on *tutejszac'or tutejshast',* which will be further discussed with regards to 'Belarusianness' in Chapter Three.

[97] The event of the Union lays the foundation for the point of no return to GDL's statehood and it is this historical moment which has been chosen by the proponents of the "Old/European Belarusianness" as the loss of Belarusian statehood. Polish and particularly subsequent Russian oppression is then viewed in colonial terms.

[98] The periodisation by Arnold McMillin is as follows: Spiritual writing from the 12th to the 15th centuries, Chronicles and Memoir Literature, Skaryna, Prose in the16th and 17th centuries, Poetry from Skaryna to Polacki, the 18th century, the Re-birth of Byelorussian Literature, Dunin-Marcinkevič, Bahusevic, Bahuševic's Contemporaries, The Age of Naša Niva, Bahdanovič, Harun, Kupała, Kołas, from Revolution to War, Biadula, Čorny, Post-war developments (1977, 7 – 8). Since the author has decided to focus on personalities, rather than outlining historical periods, for the purposes of providing a short outline of the history of Belarusian literature this research will consult his work for additional insights while adopting a more structured approach as provided by Belarusian scholars.

1) Mediaeval Literature (11th -15th centuries), which the authors, nevertheless, subdivide into early and late Mediaeval periods.

2) Literature of the Renaissance (16th century).

3) Literature of the Baroque (16th – first half of the 18th century).

4) Literature of the second half of the 18th century (Chamiarytski 2010; Chamiyarytski and Markhel 2010).

As can be seen, the first classification follows the historical development of literature as it reflected changes in society while the second focuses on literary periods. Since the following overview's goal is to combine both historical and literary information to provide a foreground before the discussion of translations, it will adopt the first classification's framework while at the same time consulting the second for additional information on the specifics of literary periods discussed.

2.1. Literature of Old Rus' (11th – late 13th cc.). Early Mediaeval Period.

The word "Rus'" was a generic name for the part of Europe comprising the present-day Belarus, Ukraine and Russia (or, rather, what was known not long ago as Muscovy). The nearest and most exact translation of this word into English would be "East Slavonic lands". To identify Rus' with present-day Russia is both incorrect and very confusing".
The Prologue Life of St Cyril of Turaŭ (Nadson 1965, 15)

Pradslava – for that was how she was called by her parents before her baptism – began to think, saying: "[…] Our ancestors who lived before us – what did they achieve? They took wives and were given away in marriage, they ruled, but they did not live forever. Their life passed away, their fame was consumed like dust being more flimsy than a spider's web. But on the other hand there were women who, filled with manly courage, […] did not bow their necks to the steel […]. Their memory lives on the earth, whilst their names are written in heaven."
The Life of St Euphrosyne of Polatsk (Nadson 1969, 14)

The timeline starts with Old Belarusian literature, where the main literary genres were typically mediaeval: hagiography, pilgrimages and homiletic writings (McMillan

1977; Chamiarytski 2010, 46-129). The massive influence of translation on the formation of literature in this period, barely mentioned by McMillan, cannot be overstated: translations of the Bible, apocrypha, lives of saints (mostly of those venerated by the Eastern Orthodox Church), patristic literature (particularly the writings of the "golden-mouthed" John Chrysostom whose rhetoric was followed by Cyril of Turaŭ and Ryhor Tsamblak), historical prose (Byzantine chronicles of John Malalas (6th century) and George Hamartolos (9th)[99], Flavius Josephus' *The Jewish Wars* (c. 75 AD)), as well as translated *belles lettres*, such as *Troy* and *Alexander* [100]. If the beginning of Belarusian literature can be dated as the 11th century[101], then it embraces such works as the *Story of Boris and Gleb* (ascribed to Nestor the Chronicler and Jacob the Monk, the 11th century), as well as the life of Theodosius of Kiev, or Theodosius of the Caves (end of the 11th – 12th centuries), which, together with the letters and stories of the lives of monks of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, became the foundation of *Kievo-Pechyorski Paterik* (13th – 17th centuries), as these were written within the larger territory of Kiev Rus, thus laying claim to what was traditionally regarded as Russian literary roots[102].

More locally, and, as McMillan classifies, more importantly for Belarusian literature, the Polatsk Principality[103] had its own saints (one of whom, Euphrosyne of

---

[99] He is known in the West as George the Monk. His Chronicle was often referred to by the author of the *Narrative of Bygone Years* which in Russian is *Повесть временных лет* and in Belarusian *Аповесці мінулых гадоў* (Chamiarytski 2010, 46-50).

[100] Translation of the latter will be discussed in more detail in the literature of the Late Mediaeval period.

[101] Interestingly, the change of view on 'Belorusian' literature is illustrated in *Encyclopedia Britannica*: the 1979 edition claims it began in the 13th century (1979, 833), while the 1991 volume dates it back to the 11th (1991, 232).

[102] Cf. the quotation regarding Rus' and Eastern Slavs in the beginning of this subchapter. Traditionally ascribed to Russian literary roots (as opposed to Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian) by Russian and then Soviet literary historians, these works are now generally regarded as "common cultural product and priceless heritage" (Lazaruk and Semianovich 1998, 51) shared by the existing three national literatures while the 11th-13th centuries are considered the time of "the beginning of foundation of independent Russian, Belarusian, and Ukrainian literatures"(*ibid.*). Earlier attempts to 'claim' that heritage for Belarusian literature are evident from the 20th century translations of *The Lay of Igor's Campaign* into Belarusian mentioned later.

[103] The beginning of Belarusian statehood is generally dated back to the Polotsk/Polatsk/Połack Principality (Chamiarytski 2010, 20-21; Zaprudnik 1993). The three variants of its English transliteration

Polatsk, is the patron saint of Belarus). Interestingly from the standpoint of local values,

the most popular lives, i.e. those of *Euphrosyne* (late 12th c.-early 13th c.) and *Aurami*

Smalenski (mid 13th c.) portray the saints who achieved fame not due to their heroic

martyrdom but for being great *асветнікі,* i.e. 'enlighteners', in other words, for their

educational efforts and charity work. Their *Lives* therefore, focus on the greatest

achievements of these saints as initiators of their principality's social and spiritual

awakening[104]. It is no wonder they were subsequently used within various

interpretations of the Belarusian 'national idea' and, more specifically, of its 'typical

character values', particularly of the proverbial Belarusian tolerance[105].

The strength of the local literature of the time was not in the genre of

pilgrimage[106], but in homiletic writings and chronicles. The most prolific of the church

authors were Ilarion (the metropolitan of Kiev), Climent Smaliatsich, and, most

venerated of those, Cyril of Turaŭ[107] (Chamiarytski 2010, 95-129). In terms of

denote, accordingly, the spelling based on Russian/ Belarusian (according to the Library of Congress) and Latsinka/łacinka, which is favoured by Belarusian émigrés.

[104] In terms of originality, the Life of Euphrosyne of Polatsk is probably the most outstanding of these. The only East Slav virgin saint and the first woman canonised by Russian Othodox Church (1547), Euphrosyne (?1101 – 1167) was a princess, and part of the reverence she received was attributable to her family's status (including her grandfather's well-known 'mystical' powers). However, she was the one who built churches, founded monasteries, and scriptoriae, as well as schools for public education, a "no mean achievement, for […] it was unusual for a young girl in Belarus and the other East Slav lands of that time to choose the monastic life in preference to marriage" (Nadson 1965, 14). Her educational activities, as well as her *Life* later, earned her immediate respect and posthumous veneration. Polatsk – and later Belarus – was particularly proud of its association with the saint, as the last words of the *Life of St Euphrosyne* testify: "She was the defender of the oppressed, the consoler of the sorrowing, she clothed the naked, visited the sick, and was counselor to all. Such was Euphrosyne whose heart was filled with divine wisdom; Euphrosyne – the unwithering flower from the heavenly garden; Euphrosyne – the high-flying eagle that flew from west to east, the light illuminating the land of Polatsk. That is why, while Thessalonika is proud of its Demetrius and Vyzhgorod of its Martyrs, we sing our praises in the following manner: Blessed be the city of Polatsk where such a flower – the blessed Euphrosyne – has blossomed; blessed are the people living therein; blessed are her parents […] Blessed are your works and your heroic deeds in honour of God; blessed are your monasteries; blessed are all those who dwell in the monasteries of the Holy Saviour and the Holy Mother of God; blessed are the people who have you as their intercessor, O blessed bride of Christ our God" (Nadson 1965, 23).

[105]The land which is blessed with such saints is the alternative Belarusian idea which was formed within émigré circles at the time when official 'Belarusianness' was atheistic. However, at the moment, the Orthodox Church rite, to which the saints belonged, is the one currently favoured within the official interpretation of the Belarusian national idea and the saints are also used within the discourse of the official 'Belarusianness'.

[106] The number of these works was fairly small, according to Lazaruk and Semianovich (1998, 46).

[107] St Cyril of Turaŭ (c. 1130 – after 1190) was born into a wealthy family and after receiving education from Greek teachers joined a monastery in his native town. Apart from becoming the first pillar ascetic in the lands of Rus, he was a prolific writer who authored at least 46 works. He knew both Church

chronicles, the two most influential of the times were the *Narrative of Bygone Years* (*Аповесцi мінулых гадоў*)[108] and the *Galitsk-Volynian Chronicle*[109], which were later referred to by Mediaeval chroniclers of GDL. Finally, one of the greatest works of the time is the anonymous *Слово о пЪлку Игореве* (*Слова пра паход Iгаравы* or *The Lay of the Host of Igor)*[110], created somewhere within the vast territory of Rus, possibly in Kiev (Chamiarytski 2010, 129-149). It combines an encyclopedic knowledge of politics and history with a rich poetic imagery which influenced the writers of all three Eastern Slavic literatures upon its discovery and publication in the early 19th century[111].

In terms of English translations of the period writings, apart from the *The Lay of the Host of Igor*[112] which has had several English translations due to its earlier associations with Russian literature, only two lives of Belarusian saints have been translated: *The Life of Saint Euphrosyne of Polatsk* and *The Prologue Life of Saint Cyril of Туган,* both translations carried out by Fr. Alexander Nadson (1965).

2.2. Late Mediaeval Period (14th-early 16th cc.). Foundation of Belarusian Literature.

> His soul grown weary-tired in life's stern tempests fending,
> Within cloister walls he waits for his life's ending.
> Here is silence, here is calm – no hubbub and no noise.
> Writing a chronicle four years he has employed.
> Copying the whole from an ancient parchment,
> From first word to the last, of Mahiliou and what passed there. […]

and spoken Slavonic, and his writings exhibit a knowledge of Byzantine rhetoric and poetics. A bishop, he was also an influential church and public figure, who corresponded with the political and religious rulers of his time.

[108] To an Anglophone Russianist it is probably more commonly known as *The Russian Primary Chronicle* (Vodoff 2001, 303) or as *Povest' vremennykh let*.

[109] The SL word *letopis* literally means "annals" (*ibid.*) but is generally translated as "chronicle".

[110] Also translated into English as *The Song of Igor's Campaign* and *The Lay of Igor's Campaign.*

[111] Belarusian translations were made by Maxim Bahdanovich (1910; a partial translation of an excerpt was dedicated to Izyaslav of Polatsk), Janka Kupala (prose translation in 1919, verse in 1921), Maxim Haretski (1922) and Ryhor Baradulin (1984).

[112] *The Lay* has been translated into English several times. The earliest translation is by Leonard A. Magnus, *The Tale of the Armament of Igor* (1915), followed by Vladimir Nabokov, *The Song of Igor's Campaign: An Epic of the 12th Century* (1960), and, finally, by Irina Petrova, *The Lay of Igor's Campaign* (1975/2005). More on the translation of the *Story* and its historical and literary background itself can be found in the recent publications, such as Mann 2005; *Pesn' o polku Igoreve* 2009.

And, all is changed, and even memory is drowsing!
But, letters, you once more will waken and arouse men,
And then about their forebears they will learn, and read.
Maksim Bahdanovich, *The Chronicler* [113], 1912 (Skamarokhava 2005)

Current academic scholarship regards the period between the 14th – early

16th cc. as formative in the development of Belarusian literature (Chamiarytski 2010,

85-93). As opposed to the syncretism of the practical and literary functions of the earlier

period, the primary literary functions then were aesthetic and historic (Lazaruk and

Semianovich 1998, 55; Chamiarytski 2010, 87). Moreover, the process of the formation

of literature was accompanied by, or, rather, resulted from, the formation of a

Belarusian ethnic identity[114] and the incorporation of the lands of Belarus into a new

state, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL). A particular complimentary condition for

the development of Old Belarusian[115] *belles lettres* was the acceptance of Old

Belarusian as the court language for all the official dealings of the state. The most

successful and prolific of literary genres of the time were the local chronicles: *The*

Chronicle of Lithuanian Princes (end of 14th century), *Belarusian-Lithuanian*

---

[113] ST: Душой стаміўшыся ў жыццёвых цяжкіх бурах,
Свой век канчае ён у манастырскіх мурах.
Тут ціша, тут спакой – ні шуму, ні клапот.
Ён пільна летапіс чацвёрты піша год.
І спісвае усё ад слова і да слова
З даўнейшых граматак пра долю Магілёва. [...]
І ўсё змянілася і ўжо пра іх забылі.
Вы, літары, цяпер нанова ўсё збудзілі!
І людзі зведаюць аб прадзедах сваіх (Bahdanovich [1909-1912] 1968, 65-66).

[114] Largely completed in 14th – 15th cc., according to Haranin and Chamyarytski (Chamyarytski 2010, 150).

[115] Old Belarusian is an accepted terminology for the language of the GDL, generally named as 'common language', 'Russian language'. The presence of the ethnonym 'Russian' may create confusion with its modern paronym, as what is denoted as Russian today was known as 'Moscovian' at the time discussed. Cf. Thompson's discussion of the problematic translation of at least four significantly different terms with one word 'Russian' in English (2000, 16). McMillin regards the usage of the determinant 'Old' in comparison with contemporaneous 'Middle', as in 'High Middle German' as a sign of the belatedness of Belarusian development which "highlights the difference in timescale between this part of Eastern Europe and the West" (McMillin 2006, xxxiv). He does "incidentally" remark that the language of the Statute of Grand Duchy of Lithuania produced in several versions around that time is "deemed by Western and native linguists to be written in Middle Belarusian" (*ibid*.), listing the classic study by Stung (1935) as proof of that. None of the works of the "native" linguists (in whose accepted terminology "Old" is not juxtaposed to "Middle" as suggested) supporting that view are provided.

Chronicle of 1446, Chronicle of Great Duchy of Lithuania and Zhamojts (1520s),

Chronicle of Bykhavets (16th century) (Chamiarytski 2010, 232-258).

None of the literature of this period has been translated into English. Given the

popularity of documentary genre at the time it is hardly surprising, as such texts tend to

generally interest a narrow scholarly audience, mainly consisting of mediaevalists and

Eastern European historians, who, due to their training, may not need a translation in

order to work with the texts.

2.3. Literature of the 16th – first half of the 17th c. Renaissance.

Since from the time of their birth animals
roaming about the desert know their nests, fishes
swimming in the sea and in the rivers know their
pools, and bees and their like defend their
beehives, so people born and nurtured in a certain
spot conceive a great love for that place
  Francis Skaryna, 1519 (quoted in Karatkevich
1982, 114)

In Poland, Latin is in fashion,
In Lithuania – White Russian.
The first in Poland is the rule,
The Lett who lacks the second's a fool. [....]
You Russians, raise a joyful cry,
Your glorious name will never die!
  Jan Pashkevich, 1621 (quoted in Karatkevich
1982, 119).

The 16th and early 17th centuries were a time of intensive development of the

cities, reflecting economic growth and cultural exchange for GDL. It is, therefore, often

referred to as the 'Golden Age' of Belarus (Akintschyts 2002; Bekus 2010), the

culture's Renaissance[116] and the 'Age of Humanism'. The gentry gradually gained more

and more personal privileges and liberties[117] which gave impetus to the development of

---

[116] The political complications of the late 16th century (Livonian War, Union of Lublin of 1569)
discontinued the development of the Renaissance features in Middle Belarusian literature and introduced
early baroque forms.

[117] These are reflected in the Statutes of 1529, 1566 and 1588. Bahushevich referred to these several
centuries later when recalling the 'old' books he had read written in 'our' tongue (Karatkevich 1982).

humanism and secularism in contemporaneous thinking and writing, including translation. Old Belarusian[118] was amongst the first European vernacular languages to be used in Bible printing and the first Eastern Slavonic language into which the Bible was translated[119]. The translation and printing of the Bible was done by Belarus' own Renaissance man, a doctor of medicine, engraver, translator and printing pioneer, Francis Skaryna (or Skorina[120]). The first Eastern Slavonic printer, Skaryna was born in Polatsk and educated in Padua (Venice) and Krakow (Poland); he then resided in Prague (Bohemia), where he printed his translations[121] of twenty three books of the Old Testament in 1517-1519. Subsequently, he moved to Vilna (GDL)[122] where the Psalter (1522) and Acts and the Epistles of the Apostles were printed with the intention of their usage in Eastern Orthodox liturgy. His meta-discourse in the translator's prefaces is generally regarded as the height of Belarusian humanistic thought due to his eloquently expressed ideas of democracy, social activism, patriotism, and his general polymathy (Čemerickii et al. 1980; Nadson 1966). At the same time, his visibility as a translator, as opposed to mediaeval translators' anonymity, lifts him to the honorary position of being

---

[118] It was known as *русская мова,* 'Ruthenian' or 'Russian' as the word is often translated now. However, it was distinct from the Russian language, which was termed Moscovian at the time

[119] A number of Biblical fragments in Old Belarusian appeared in several manuscripts: *Vitsebsk Psalter* (1492), *Chetsi-Minei* (1489) and *Vilno Codex* (early 15th c.).

[120] On the wave of pro-Russian tendencies in Soviet Union, Francis' name was changed to Georgy and is used in this form in Broŭka's long poem *Belarus* (cf. Picarda 1968).

[121] Skaryna's translation is based on Church Slavonic and Czech translations which led to its non-acceptance in Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic liturgies. Scholars' opinions are divided on the classification of Skaryna's language as it differed significantly from one book to another. Some of the scholars view it as Old Church Slavonic with Polish, Latin, and Czech borrowings, others (majority) as a Belarusian version of Old Church Slavonic, and yet others as Old Belarusian.

[122] Skaryna, however, involuntarily started a 'tradition' of printing Belarusian books abroad, including translations into Belarusian (examples include a Belarusian translation of Marcus Antonius, printed in Frankfurt in 1616 and *Artis Magnae Artillerae* by Kazimir Semianovicz which appeared in Amsterdam in Latin in 1650 (its English translation was published in London in 1729)).

Modern Belarusian literature also arose outside Belarus. For instance, Aliaksandr Rypinski started publishing his books in Paris in 1840 and then moved to London. An anonymous pamphlet entitled *Гутарка старога дзеда* ("The Talk of the Old Man") appeared in Paris in 1862. One of the founders of New Belarusian Literature, Frantsishak Bahushevich, also began by publishing abroad (Kipel 2005, 29). Zora Kipel emphasizes that 'early Belarusian publications appeared in Zurich, Geneva, Lviv, and Krakow' (*ibid.*). The 'tradition' is still kept alive today, with some modern Belarusian novels appearing elsewhere in Europe, for instance, the works of Svetlana Aleksievich, Razanau and Bykau. Partly, the current situation is due to political divergences within the ideology of the 'official Belarusianness'.

the founder of the Belarusian translation school[123]. His polyglotism and

cosmopolitanism are regarded as a major argument for the 'European' interpretation of

the Belarusian national idea[124].

However, Scorina's visibility was in no way typical, and a massive corpus of

European heroic and Romantic sagas of the Middle Ages translated into Old Belarusian

at the time, such as *Attila, Alexander, Troy, Tristan and Isolde[125]*, was rewritten by

unknown translators using local material (Brazhunoŭ 2009)[126]. Beyond translations,

other manuscripts were produced as well: the Tatars of GDL wrote their scriptures, *al-*

kitabs, in Belarusian using Arabic script. Therefore, what is definitely visible within the

literary production of the time is the multiple languages in which it was written, the

general polyglotism of the GDL providing further evidence for the European roots of

'Belarusianness'. Thus, apart from Old Belarusian, the late 16th century Vilna and

Kraków's printing houses published numerous translations of classical authors in

Polish. As for local authors, their cosmopolitanism was reflected by their choice of

Latin as the language of versification, as in the case of Jan of Vislitsa/Wislica (*Bellum*

Prutenum / Prussian War) and Mikola Husoŭski/Hussowski (*Carmen de Statura,*

Feritae ac Venatione Bisontis / The Song of the Statue, Wild Nature of Bison and

Hunting[127]) (Nekrashevich-Karotkaya 2009). At the same time, poetry in Latin co-

---

[123] The traditions of Skaryna were followed by other Reformation printers: Vasil Tsiapinski (who used Old Belarusian in his translation of the Gospels of Matthew and partly of Mark (c.1580), a diglot of Church Slavonic and Old Belarusian), and Symon Budny. Old Belarusian was also used in *Uchytelnaja Evanhelija* (1616).

[124] Skaryna's 'Europeanness' gives rise to speculations over the reasons why the major avenue of Minsk which bore his name from 1990 until 2005, was renamed as 'Independence Avenue' on 9 May 2005, the day of Victory Day celebration in The Great Patriotic War. The official discourse of 'New/Partisan' Belarus was thus freed from any 'Old/European' associations. The two discourses will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter Three.

[125] The *Belarusian Tristan* was translated by a renowned mediaevalist and Belarusian émigré scholar, Zora Kipel, a co-founder of BINIM, Belaruski Instytut Navyki I Mastatstva, Belarusian Institute of Science and Arts, the major centre of Belarusian studies in the USA (Kipel 1988).

[126] Moreover, Belarus served as a mediator for Muskovy's acquisition of new literary and cultural trends (Golenischev-Kutuzov 1973, 216).

[127] *The Song of the Bison* is dedicated to a prehistoric species of the wild bison once popular as a hunting trophy by the magnates of the GDL, now only to be found in Belavezha Thicket National Park shared by Poland and Belarus. The bison, or 'zubr' in Belarusian, is a symbolic representation of the country in the poem by Husouski, which was written when the poet was a part of a diplomatic mission to

existed with the syllabic poetry in Old Belarusian. The latter was started by Skaryna, continued by Andrei Rymsha, and later developed by Finafei Utchytski, Ihnatsi Iyaŭlevich, and Simiaon Polatski, gradually acquiring baroque features. The co-existence of the two traditions of versification in Old Belarusian and Latin exemplified by Skaryna and Husoŭski accordingly, essentially led to "two pivotal tendencies of Belarusian *belles lettres:* rational/realistic and ethnic-Romantic" (Lazaruk and Semianovich 1998, 175). Both of their two different discourses, nevertheless, created the heroicised image of Old Belarus which has been steadily employed as a part of the national narrative since the start of the New Belarusian literature.

Apart from translation and poetry, Belarusian literature at the time was used as a vehicle for the Reformation in the works of Symon Budny and Vasil Tsiapinski (Chamiarytski 2010, 271-272; Lazaruk and Semianovich 1998, 175-204; McMillin 1977a) and, subsequently, in Counter-Reformation disputes, which included satirical works (*Letter to Apostle Peter, Mialeshka's Word, Letter to Abukhovich*), and denomination disputes (the writings of Piatro Skarha, Ipati Patsei, Stefan Zizani, Khrystafor Filalet, Astroh School and the work of Mialetsi Smatrytski and Afanasi Filipovich). This was also the time of memoirs, the most famous of which are two diaries: *The Diary* (1644) written by Afanasi Filipovich which contains an eclectic collection of his speeches, letters and personal notes, and *The Diary* of Khviodar Jeŭlashoŭski (1603-04). The memoirs exhibit another growing tendency, namely the gradual decline of Old Belarusian. So while Jeŭlashoŭski's Old Belarusian is full of polonisms, the memoirs of Joseph Budzila, Samuil Maskevich, Salameja Pilshtynova, and Adam Kamenski-Dluzhyk are already written in Polish. The 'old language' was no longer needed due to unification with Poland and the system of privileges provided for the new converts to Catholicism and 'Polish ways'. Belarusian was removed from

the papal court and was asked to describe the hunt in a poem by His Holiness himself.

palaces to serfs' huts where it remained until its 'discovery' in the 19th century, by which time it had become 'the peasant's language'.

Two works from this period have been translated into English: *The Byelorussian Tristan* (Kipel 1988) and the diary of Jeŭlashoŭski (Jeŭlašeŭski1968). Excerpts from the Kucieina New Testament and Psalter of 1652 are given in English translation after an article by H. Leeming dedicated to the subject (Leeming 1974, 123-145).

2.4. Literature of the second half of the 17th c. – 18th c. Transitional Period.

> During this period (the eighteenth century) the main literary use of the Belarusian language was in puppet plays (batlejki – a word derived from Bethlehem) where the noble characters spoke Polish while the Devil and other buffoons amused the audience with demotic Belarusian (McMillin 2006, xxxiv).

The century and a half which followed the Belarusian Renaissance are often tactfully described as transitional (Markhel and Chamiarytski 2010; Lazaruk and Semianovich 1998, 316) or, less politely, as the start of colonialism (Moore 2006; Thompson 2000). In a sense, for Belarusian literature it was a literary black hole due to the ban on Old Belarusian as an official language which was imposed in 1696. In practice it essentially meant linguistic domination of the local population: first by the Polish language and then, after the 1770s, by Russian. Moreover, the 18th century was a time of several partitions of Rzech Pospolita, in the process of which Belarusian lands were gradually incorporated into the Russian Empire by Catherine II. The general decline of social welfare resulting in the shrinking of cities, decline of production and trade, was exacerbated by the Northern war with Sweden. The Belarusian language "was in a double captivity: social and national" (Chamiarytski 2010, 825) and survived

in its dialectal forms used by the population at large, while the elite used either Latin or Polish, Old Slavonic or Russian[128].

In terms of the literary tendencies of the available scarce materials, historians of this period (Lazaruk and Semianovich 1998, Chamiarytski 2010) have tended to define them as Baroque (from the 1650s until the 1730s) and Classicist/Sentimentalist (1750-1760s), while noting, at the same time, few sentimentalist features. Baroque aesthetics, fuelled by the Counter-Reformation, called for a greater secularisation of literature and a further transition from mediaeval to early modern ideas. In the Belarusian context, its division into low, middle, and high genres often reflected the different status of the languages used. Simeon Polatski and Andrei Belabotski used Russian in their religious writings (high), while Belarusian was used in folk songs (low) gathered in several manuscripts[129] of the late 17th – early 18th centuries. Polish was used in the new type of literary activity: drama[130]. Schools and private theatres functioning in Polish gradually began to include caricatures of peasants speaking in Belarusian as part of comic interludes in order to contrast with the high tone of the tragic plays. Such parodies of a Belarusian speaker being neither smart nor educated[131] produced a long-lasting stereotype. It, in turn, became a convenient platform for Russian and, consequently, Soviet ideology to build upon in their definition of Belarusian as "unrefined peasant's language" while – unofficially in the Soviet times but, nevertheless, consistently –

---

[128] Here, a parallel arises between the history of Belarusian and English. The latter, too, went out of use at court for several centuries, reached its peak of dialectal differences in the Middle Ages, and – after attaining official recognition – was reconstructed on the basis of Southern dialects, particularly London. Belarusian followed a fairly similar path, first being forced to go out of use and then being re-established on the basis of its Central Minsk-Maladechna dialects, the home of most writers at the time.

[129] About 150 songs of the period are known today. About 10 of them were published in Polish songbooks (Lazaruk and Semianovich 1998, 324).

[130] Belarusian drama, or mainly interlude, was staged in Belarusian while the main action was happening in Polish, and has distinct Polish, Ukrainian, and Western European influences. Due to its 'low' character, they were often more flexible and less rigid than the moralising plays themselves and were, therefore, a progressive movement of literature.

[131] It should be noted that some of the plays (for instance, from *Koŭna's Miscellany* of 1731) portrayed peasant characters more positively and had better knowledge of Belarusian grammar. At the same time, some Orthodox confraternities, the Smolensk Seminary in particular, even staged whole interludes entirely in Belarusian. These, however, were exceptions rather than typical cases.

looking down on its speakers as "uneducated and uncouth". Much of the further narrative of the new Belarusian literature was written in response to this poignant image. In spite of these efforts, this was the prevalent stereotype at the time of formulation of the idea of 'New Belarusianness' and it is still implied in its modern discourse.

This was also the time when denominational differences, with their preferences either for Slavia Catholica (Polish/Latin) or Slavia Orthodoxa (Russian/Old Slavonic) established themselves as Scylla and Charybdis for Belarusian identity. In practice this divide created an almost impassable chasm at the very core of Belarusianness – to the point where to this day the Bible has not been translated from its original languages into modern-day Belarusian, as the two major denominations are using the convenient linguistic and cultural mediations offered by either Polish or Russian interpretations of Biblical traditions[132].

In the 1740s and 50s in the Counter-Reformation Rzecz Pospolita was giving way to the Enlightenment with its classical and sentimental aesthetics. In spite of the existing political crisis, the economy experienced some rapid growth due to the new big manufacturing bases in several cities. Capitalism speeded the transition from Baroque ideas to the notions of rationality (Classicism) and feeling (Sentimentalism[133]). While the main literary language of Belarusian lands was still Polish, the partitions of Rzecz Pospolita in 1772-1795[134] witnessed an inevitable turn towards Russification, especially actively implemented in the 1790s (Chamiarytski 2010, 825). Relegated to folklore, Belarusian continued, though love songs were now giving way to political satires and burlesque poetry: in *kaliadki* (Christmas carols), which have a deliberate mix of 'high'

---

[132] The Uniate Church, which was an attempt to create a Belarusian Catholic Church which uses Orthodox rites, was not able to sustain itself as a major unifying force due to the uncompromising politics of both Catholicism and Orthodoxy (Bekus 2010).
[133] Less developed in Belarus than classicism.
[134] Belarus was gradually annexed and joined the Russian Empire as a result of the three partitions of Rzech Pospolita.

Christian motives and 'low' peasant lives, and in *Batleika*, a new puppet show of the Punch and Judy type. The satire penetrated into drama creating a new genre: comedy. The Belarusian "success" story is *Kamedya* by Marasheŭski / Maraszewski's (1787) with two of its main characters, Dziomka the Peasant and the Pub Owner, speaking Belarusian.

In terms of English translations, none of the period's texts have been translated.

2.5. Late 18th and 19th centuries. Foundation of New Belarusian Literature.

> Dear brothers, children of the Earth, and my dearest mother![135]
> Dedicating my work to you, I must speak to you a little about our fathers' age-old language. [...] Our language is as human and refined as French or German... The Croats, Czechs, Ukrainians and our other adopted brothers... have little booklets written and printed in their own tongue... and their children read the way they speak... Out tongue is sacred to us because it is a gift of the Lord... There were a great many such nations which at first lost their language, like a person who loses his speech before his end, and then became extinct. So don't abandon your own Byelorussian tongue, and you will survive.
> Frantsishak Bahushevich, *The Belarusian Flute*, 1891 (cited in Karatkevich 1982, 142).

> After the rebellion that year [1863] the ban on the word "Byelorussia" was resumed. [...] Over a good score of years there was just a black desert, excluding the manuscripts that were passed from hand to hand, and secret, illegal publications (Karatkevich 1982, 139)

The 19th century is generally considered to be the period of the foundation of the New Belarusian literature (Markhel and Chamiarytski 2010; Lazaruk and Semianovich 1998). Using Even-Zohar's terminology, Belarusian literature at the time indeed was 'weak' and it sustained itself by borrowing genres from neighbouring systems: Ukrainian (which had enjoyed an earlier literary revival), Polish (which served as the

---

[135] Here, Apollo Weise, the translator of Karatkevich's essay *Land beneath the White Wings*, which cites the only English translation of Bahushevich's introduction, translates the word "зямля" as Earth, while, in fact, it is "land"; moreover, it is "mother land", i.e. Bahushevich addresses not the abstract 'citizens of the Earth' but his compatriots, those born in the same 'mother land', which by that time had changed names from GDL to Rzech Pospolita to Russian Empire. By leaving out the names of the ruling empires, he avoids possible political contradictions and highlights the unifying factor: the one of locality, 'in-betweenness' (Bhabba 1994), of one's birth ('mother land'), which allows him to call them 'brothers'.

mediating system for Western European Classicism and Sentimentalism) and, later, Russian (Critical Realism and *narodnost* principles). Due to the eclectic character of contemporary writings[136], Belarusian literature uniquely juxtaposed trends which in other literary systems were gradually developed over significant periods of time, such as by then archaic classicism and novel realism.

Within the period the authors of the academic *History of Belarusian Literature: 19th – Beginning of 20th cc.* (Markhel and Chamiarytski 2010, 11-12) outline several general tendencies. First of all, there was the literature of *burlesque* (1750s – early 19th c.) with its "low genres" exemplified by *Энеіда навыварат* (*Aeneid Inside Out*), *Уваскрасенне Хрыстова* (*Christ's Resurrection*), then, *ethnographic,* or *folkloristic,* literature of the 1830s and 1860s, which had a bias towards the Enlightenment, with authors writing sentimental and Romantic poetry[137]. These writings were mostly in Polish, with a number of ballads and collections of stories based on local Belarusian legends produced by a number of writers, including Aliaksandr Rypinski, Jan Barszewski, Uladzislaŭ Syrakomlia, Jan Chachot, Artsiom Viaryha-Dareŭski, Vintses' Karatynski[138]. This was the time of Polish Romantic pining for the "good old days", where Belarusian serfs were portrayed as living as one big idyllic family with their masters[139]. Idyll is typical of the early works of Dunin Martsinkevich, 'the father of

---

[136] Lazaruk and Semianovich assert that the authors of the time "did not consider themselves as writers and hardly thought their works would become part of such a serious job as the founding of a national literature" (1998, 16). The examples of Martsinkevich and Bahushevich, who sought publication and wished to 'educate' their reader, seem to suggest otherwise.

[137] Karatkevich links the formation of new Belarusian literature with folklore viewing the 19th century surge for Belarusian folklore as a strategy of resistance against Russification: "After the publications of the first books by V. Dunin-Martsinkevich (1807-1884) and a few other books, from 1863 onwards the printed word was under a ban. After the rebellion of that year the ban on the word "Byelorussia" was resumed. [...] That was a period when the nation was being formed. [...] However, people found a way out here, too. They could not possibly be forbidden to prepare folk-lore collections and have them published, to write ethnographical and historical books, and to compile dictionaries. A pre-requisite of any folk-lore record is "write it the way you hear it". In this way, then, the banned Byelorussian language found its way onto the printed page. A back-door sort of way, it appears, but it worked. Thus these activities "for the sake of pure science" assumed a wide scope. [...] A mass scale was reached following the 1863 rebellion" (Karatkevich 1982, 139).

[138] These writers are generally regarded as Belarusian-Polish writers (Maldzis 1966).

[139] The ironic depiction of the "good old times" is contained in Karatkevich's *King Stakh's Wild Hunt*: "Гэта быў пакой тых "добрых старых часоў", калі паны разам з хлопамі збіраліся ў адну залу

Belarusian drama', whose later pieces are much more critical and realistic. Thus, similar to Gogol's *Revisor* (*Inspector General*), *Pinskaya shliakhta* (*Pinsk Gentry*) is no longer portrayed as a noble class, but becomes a "symbol of century-old backwardness, passiveness and conservatism, blind obedience and wilfulness" (Lazaruk and Semianovich 1998, 88)[140]. In a different way the theme of the "good old days" developed within social and political journalistic publications at the time of the reforms of the abolition of serfdom in 1861 and during Kastus' Kalinoŭski's revolt of 1863-64 in various *hutarki* (essays written in colloquial style). Such was the style of the first Belarusian newspaper, the clandestine *Muzhitskaya Praŭda* ('Peasants' Truth')*,* where Kastus' Kalinoŭski under the pseudonym of "Jas′ko, Farmer from the vicinity of Vilna" (Kalinoŭski [1862] 1976, 119) called all Belarusian "fellows" to go to war to "speed up the expulsion of the Muscovite with his bestial government" (*ibid.*, 120) by referring to the "time when our people were free and rich" (*ibid.,* 119). Such essays became the

---

і сядзелі зімовымі вечарамі пры вогнішчы. Пані і чаляднішы пралі, пан гуляў з хлопцамі ў "дваццаць пальцаў" або ў косці. Ах, ідылічныя старыя часы! І куды, нашто вы толькі зніклі? Праўда, пасля між адным і другім магло здарышца такое, што – толькі паслухаеш – кроў ледзянее і жыць не хочацца, але ж гэта глупства, на гэта зважаюць толькі сентыментальныя хлюпікі" (Karatkevich 1990,120) The English translation by Mary Mintz reads as follows: "This was a room of "the good old times" when the masters of the house (the Polish landowners) together with their serfs gathered together in one room and sat beside the fire. The women of the household and the servants spun, the master played dice or the game "Twelve Fingers" with the boys. Oh! Those idyllic old times!" (Karatkevich 1989, 125). The translation (perhaps, for aesthetic reasons) omits the final phrase: "However, afterwards between them there may have happened such things which you cannot hear without your blood turning cold or losing all hope for humanity, but this is silliness, and only sentimental ninnies are concerned about such things" (translation is mine – S.S.). As a result, the ironic overtone over the "good old days" mourning is omitted.

[140] Besides being the father of Belarusian drama, Marcinkiewicz is also one of the first (if not *the* first) translators into his dialect of modern Belarusian. Symbolically he translated Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz* (1834), an epic poem the first lines of which are dedicated to "Lithuania, my motherland" by the great Navahradak-born poet. Indeed, the first translation of *Pan Tadeusz* into any language was into Belarusian. Martsinkevich tried to publish it in Vilna in 1859, but was only able to have the first two chapters of his translation printed, with the rest of the circulation almost immediately confiscated by the Russian government. The appearance of this translation is interesting, as it was obviously not caused by the incomprehensibility of the language. The local gentry were able to read and speak Polish and Russian with no problem. Does it mean that Vilna was more advanced than Navahrugak in terms of Belarusianness? Perhaps. Or perhaps both actions, the original, written in Paris, and its translation published in Vilna, were part of the same process – the beginning of challenging pro-Russian stereotypes of national identity imposed on the local population. It is possible that Marcinkiewicz had some ties to the anti-Russian revolt of 1863-4 (Maldzis 1966) and it may be suggested that the two authors used different means to achieve a similar result. For one, it was the reference to his country's former glories, the idealised life of *szlachta* (nobility and chivalry) and of historical *Lithuania*. For the other, it was using the modern dialectal form of that old language, banished from print and court in 1697 and kept by serfs in their dialects at the time of his writing. Both of these, the original and its translation, had a role in the subsequent Belarusian Revival of the early 20th century and were read by Belarusian literati.

foundation for the critical writings of Frantsishak Bahushevich, Janka Luchyna and Adam Hurynovich, with their works being both revolutionary and educational. The translations and original writings of Alherd Abuchovich[141], Felix Tapcheŭski, Zofia Trzeszczkowska (Adam M-ski), and Marya Kosich[142] were also written in a realistic and critical manner.

In terms of the language of writing, the re-discovery of Belarusian as a literary language was began by Dunin Marcinkiewicz, who not only wrote his plays in the Palesse dialect, but also promoted the idea of general education for peasants, and Franciszak Bahuszewicz whose poetry was written under the pen-name of a peasant 'from Barysaŭ'. Equally novel in a linguistic aspect was a long satirical poem *Taras na Parnase*, considered anonymous until recently,[143] whose main protagonist and narrator, a forester Taras, finds himself on Olympus surrounded by Greek gods who live and behave similarly to Belarusian peasants. Thus, the 'discovery' of the new Belarusian literature began with its oral tradition drawn from folkloristic expeditions, while its first literary texts were later written for and – seemingly – *by* peasants. The change of the literature's main recipient was of significant importance: if Polish Romantics were writing for the *schliakhta* as their main audience, writers of the late 19th century addressed the peasantry[144]. The adoption of critical discourse meant a change from the Romantic pining for the 'golden past' to calling for active change in society. Their hero no longer was the "buffoon" peasant of the 18th century dramas, but a human being

---

[141] Abukhovich introduced fables to Belarusian literature, a genre with a long history in more developed literary systems (and in some already forgotten). He also widely translated from Goethe (*Dr Faustus*) and Schiller (The *Robbers*), as well as from the work of Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov, Adam Mickiewicz, Marya Kanapnitskaya, Victor Hugo and Byron. However, all of the translations were lost, together with his archives.

[142] Zofia Trzeszczkowska and Marya Kosich were also involved in literary translation: the former translated some verses and songs of Marya Kanapnitskaya and T. Lenartovich, while the latter introduced into Belarusian the collection of fables by Ivan Krylov (1903) and a play by Leo Tolstoy ("Першы вінакур, або як чарцёнак краюшку заслужыў") who gave his special permission for the translation, though its publication was banned by the censors in Vilna (Lazaruk and Semianovich 1998, 115).

[143] Scholars now assign it to Kanstantsin Veranitsyn (Kisyalioŭ 1971).

[144] This tendency largely remained for the *Nasha Niva* period as well, while Soviet Belarusian literati tended to write *about* the peasant for wider, often urbanite audiences.

capable of self-reflection and even having a feeling of self-worth. The problem of the revolutionary rhetoric, however, was that the image still recalled the old stereotype of the Belarusian being an uneducated peasant, a mostly apathetic subject of previous Polish educational efforts. Here again the inactive recepient is deemed as being in need of explanation of his/her critical condition and needing strong encouragement to 'rise up', to fight for his/her freedom, even though that freedom was often formulated in very vague propagandist terms (Lazaruk and Semianovich 1998, 112). A similar rhetoric was employed by the proponents of the 'Old/European Belarusianness' from time to time during the periods of Revival in Belarusian history (1900-1920s and 1990s[145]) with some natural scepticism arising on the part of the recipient of such messages. This paternalistic and condescending tendency may be considered one of the reasons why this interpretation of Belarusianness has not been unanimously accepted[146].

The English translations of the period's literature include the publication of all six editions of Kalinoŭski's *The Peasants' Truth* in *Zapisy* (1976), a recent translation of Dunin's Marcinkiewicz's *Pinsk Gentry* by Rich and Janushkevich (2008), printed together with Rich's translation of *Taras on Parnassus* (which is a reprint of the 1977 publication in the *Journal of Byelorussian Studies*). Another version of *Taras on Parnassus* (an exceptional occasion for Belarusian-English translations), appeared in a multilingual edition in Belarusian, Russian and English published in Minsk in late 1998, with the English translation produced by Walter May (1998). *Like Water, Like Fire* (1971) in its chapter, *The Early Period (1828 – 1905),* contains Rich's translations of Bahuszewicz (2 poems), Luchyna (2), Tsiotka (2), and Kupala (1). Snippets of

---

[145] In the 1990s, the recipient was the general public. However, the message of strong encouragement towards using Belarusian that was spelt out in revolutionary dogmatic was not dissimilar to Soviet propaganda and produced a negative reaction resulting in support for the 1996 referendum, where two official languages were accepted.

[146] Some examples of this 'educational' rhetoric included allegations "that the people did not know their true history, were living with a false consciousness and taking it for their own, had forgotten their language" (Gapova 2004, 71).

translations from various Belarusian 19th century classics are provided in Karatkevich (1989).

2.6. New Belarusian Literature. "Nasha Niva" Period (1906 – 1915) and the Revolution of 1917

> And the good Lord, looking down from the height of heaven, had pity for the land of Belarus, and said: Let there be Belarusian literature! And, behold, there was *Nasha Niva*!
> Anonymous (Rich, cited in Skamarokhava, 2005)

While fin-de-siècle meant a period of 'degeneration' (Schaffer 2007, 3) for some European literatures, modern Belarusian literature was experiencing rapid development, from the general formulation of its goals to the establishment of numerous genres and writing techniques. Like other 'minority' European nations who were redefining their borders and identities as a result of the decline of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires in the aftermath of World War I, Belarusians "emerged from the shadows of minority existence and took the reins of statehood into their own hands […] on the ruins of Romanov power" (Rich, cited in Skamarokhava 2005). In terms of literary development, due to the Constitution of 1905 which allowed publication in languages other than Russian, Belarusian literature was given access to print allowing its wider distribution[147]. The codification of the Belarusian language was started after centuries of its 'underground' existence in oral tradition.

This was the beginning of a process termed Belarusian Revival. For the first time in centuries of linguistic and political oppression Belarusians had a chance for self-reflection, including the freedom to do that in Belarusian and to see it printed. The

---

[147] Stsiapan Aleksandrovich states that between 1900 and 1917, within Belarus there were 245 books (81 original books of fiction, 27 translations, 24 folklore collections, 14 calendars, 43 non-fiction brochures, as well as religious texts, textbooks, propaganda, music, etc.) printed (Aleksandrovich 1971, 163-164).

results revealed a painful recognition of their subaltern state[148] exacerbated by the

feeling of belatedness in obtaining its unique voice in the polyphony of others and the

need to assert its validity in the international political and cultural arena. In terms of the

Belarusian literary polysystem, intensive borrowing from the latest developments in

French, Russian, English and other systems were fuelled by the need to produce new

and original Belarusian literature using existing (though mostly European) canons.

Adaptation of different moulds offered by "world literature" became a mission for

Maxim Bahdanovich who considered it to be "worse than negligence not to take

anything of what the hundreds of nations over thousands of years were gathering into

the treasury of the world culture. But to bring in only alien, without developing your

own, is even worse: it means scoffing at the nation's spirit"[149] (Bahdanovich [1915]

1918, 115).

Most literary developments of 20th-century Belarus matched the political

changes that were taking place at the same time as the country was invaded, occupied,

---

[148] Belarusian literature of the late 19th-early 20th century underwent a bereavement process not unlike postcolonial literatures, with the motives of despair, loss, poverty and sadness being its prevalent tones. Failure to understand this process actually results in denying Belarusian literature a vital step in the linearity of its development and, essentially, leads to its one-dimensional depiction as the one of "poor peasants". Thus, Soviet literary history portrayed the Belarusian literary process of the time as discontinued, where Old Belarusian literary traditions were completely cast aside, while new Belarusian literature was created without any reliance on its 'old' roots. Up to the present moment, the themes of sadness and mourning of fin-de-siecle Belarusian literature have been interpreted in a Marxist key and explained by economical reasons, revolutionary struggle fuelled by the poor conditions of the proletariat/peasant masses and their illiteracy. Such interpretations are still prevalent, and the ranks of their proponents even including one of the prolific Belarusian philosophers and ideologists of 'alternative' Belarusianness (Bekus 2010), Valiantsin Akudovich. Outlining the general tone and imagery of Belarusian literature, Akudovich remarks: "In fact, judging by our literature, we seem a gloomy and depressed people. Take anyone of the classics, there is melancholy, sadness, despair everywhere. At the end of the 19th – early 20th century the life of a commoner in Scotland did not appear better than ours socially, but look, how cheerful, audacious and life-asserting is the poetry of Robert Burns! While contemporaneous Belarusian poetry had sheer songs of sorrow" (Akudovich 2010, 35 – 36). The glaring error of placing Burns' poetry in the literary context of nearly two centuries later than his own is coupled with the fact that Akudovich has most likely not read Burns in the original but in the domesticated Russian translation of Marshak. However, the philosopher's conclusion reveals his dissatisfaction with the "gloomy and depressed" (read, boring) classics. It is, therefore, suggested that an application of postcolonial tools for the analysis of this historical period may allow for a new interpretation of Belarusian literary historicity.

[149] Translation is mine. ST: "Было б горш, чым нідбальствам, нічога ні узяць с таго, што соткі народаў праз тысячы год зьбіралі у скарбніцу сьветавой культуры. Але заносіць только чужое, ні разьвіваючы свайго, – гэта яшчэ горш: гэта знача глуміць народную душу" (Bahdanovich [1915] 1918, 115).

split into two, joined together, invaded, occupied, "liberated", re-inhabited after considerable losses in two world wars and then finally gained her independence[150]. The period started with *Nasha Niva,* the first official Belarusian newspaper which was published in Belarusian in two fonts, Roman and Cyrillic. The periodical, printed between January 1906 and August 1915, played a key role in the codification of literary language and in establishing New Belarusian literature both through its new literary publications as well as from wide-ranging discussions of the future and current state of literary and linguistic issues[151]. Its work was associated with the three 'founding fathers' of the new literature: Janka Kupala (who worked at the *Nasha Niv*a first as an editor in 1908-09 and then as editor-in-chief in 1914 until the closure of the periodical in 1915), Jakub Kolas, and Maxim Bahdanovich, all regular contributors to the paper. The new literature was spearheaded by poetry, where Janka Kupala with his revolutionary Romanticism and Jakub Kolas with his epic and philosophical style, took the lead. The image of the author as a musician, initiated by Bahuszewicz, was picked up by Kupala who turned it into one of the strongest and most influential images for the subsequent discourse on the role of the writer in Belarusian literature. Contrary to the Russian association of writer with *prophet*, Belarusian poets imagined themselves as *piasniar* (*bard*) or musician[152] (particularly famous became Kupala's image of the old Psaltery

---

[150] These processes were accompanied by the changes of names for the country described in the Introduction as well as the adoption of various linguistic policies towards the Belarusian language and literature.

[151] Most notable of those was the general discussion of 1913 concerning the new directions of Belarusian literature started by Vatslaŭ Lastoŭski under the pen-name *Jury Veraschaka.* Self-educated polymath, Lastoŭski's vision of Belarusian, or rather, Kryvijan – after one of the local Slavonic tribes – history was again rediscovered in the 1990s with his interpretation of history also used by the 'Old/European' idea of 'Belarusianness' (Lastoŭski 1997).

[152] The traditional image of Russian literature has mystical and religious overtones and recalls Russian Orthodox fascination with spiritual mysticism. Belarusian imagery of the turn of the century bore mostly pagan, rather than Christian, overtones. Perhaps it may be explained by the role the Eastern and Western churches played in the rift within the Belarusian national identity, an argument which is put forward by the advocates of neo-paganism among modern-day intelligentsia. A certain connection between neo-paganism and Helena Iwanowskaya, one of the first translators of Belarusian folksongs into English, can be made. Through her brother she was associated with Kupala and many young intellectuals in St Petersburg, who were members of Zahliane Sontsa U Nasha Vakontsa Publishers. She personally knew Tsiotka, her neighbour at Iwanowskaya's family estate. It is possible to suggest she was able to see similarities between the aesthetics of the neo-pagans searches of the New Belarusian literati and the Neo-

Player and Kolas' Symon the Musician) singing of – and for – their native land. The titans of the 'young Belarus' were diverse: apart from poetry, among their best creations of the period are dramas (Kupala's *Paŭlinka* and *Raskidanaye hniazdo,* both outlining the conflict between 'old' and 'new' and showing the crisis of Belarusian identity), prose ('realistic' and allegorical stories of Kolas) and numerous articles in periodicals[153]. The revolutionary zeal of Bahuszewicz's poetry was significant for Tsiotka ('Woman'[154]), the first female author to write in Belarusian who was also involved in revolutionary activities and propagated national activism. Together with Vatslaŭ Ivanoŭski[155], Tsiotka became very involved in the Belarusian Revolutionary Hramada which in 1905-1907 was active in St Petersburg (Nikalayeŭ 2009, 239).

At the same time, Maxim Bahdanovich was recreating in Belarusian the best known poetic genres from world poetry, aiming to prove that a 'peripheral' and 'weak' language was flexible and rich enough to carry the weight of classical and European 'high' style, considered to be the 'centre' of the European canon[156]. He, like many of *Niva's* writers, widely translated, introducing new ideas, genres and themes into Belarusian literature. In less than a decade the motives of sorrow, of the "cry" of the oppressed peasant ceased their significance as the main mode of poetry. Through his publications, and particularly in the discussion of 1913, Vatslaŭ Lastoŭski argued that

Pagans of Cambridge where she studied before the World War I. Iwanowskaya's role in the translations of Belarusian folksongs is discussed in further detail in Chapter Four.

[153] This time was also among their most productive: Kupala's famous *akopaŭski peryjad* (the period of Akopy) of 1913, while Kolas produced nine books of poetry and prose.

[154] The pen-name of Alaisa Pashkevich, it usually denotes a married or older woman.

[155] One of the founders of the Hramada, he was her neighbour and brother of Helena Iwanowska, a translator of *White Ruthenian Folk-Songs* discussed further in Chapter Four. Iwanowska and Pashkevich knew of each other and met several times in St Petersburg (Turonak 2006).

[156] Bahdanovich's legacy and his Romantic vision of the Belarusian past became the foundation for the neo-Romantics several decades later, the most notable of whom, Uladzimir Karatkevich, wrote that "he [Bahdanovich] raised our literature to world level. His poems, preserving their profoundly national spirit, are of interest to all people everywhere in the world. His original poetry is an exceptional thing. It includes a fairy-tale realm of goblins, water-sprites and pixies, the expression of real pain for the people, popular songs and complicated classic forms, and poems portraying antiquity" (1982, 153). Bahdanovich's poetry with its themes of 'old Lithuania', with its symbols such as Slutsk girdles and its state crest of *Pahonia* (Chase) became the cornerstone of the 'Old/European' interpretation of Belarusianness. At the same time, his image of a native Belarusian cornflower penetrated even into the 'new Belarussianness' as the floral emblem of Belarus.

Belarusian literati had to give back something to the culture they were raised in and urged the writers to focus on the positive, leaving the mode of sadness behind (*Ці ёсць расійская і польская культура/ Is there Russian and Polish culture*, *Ці-ткі мы сапраўды цямней ад усіх? / Are we really the most ignorant of all?*, *Перш за ўсё самі / Starting by ourselves*, *Голас сумленнасці / The voice of conscience*, *Па сваім шляху / Along our Path*). Furthermore, Lastoŭski raised the question of Belarusian literature's status and its entrance into the global literary canon. The question, first formulated by Bahdanovich as to what Belarusian literature could give back to its nation and, furthermore, to other nations (Bahdanovich ([1913] 1968, 133), in Lastoŭski's interpretation acquired some urgency: "However, at the moment our literature does not have global significance"[157] ([1914] 1997, 284). He argued for the necessity of new thoughts and ideas, rather than a mimicry of established forms and genres (*ibid.,* 273-275). These much desired new genres and themes appeared in the work of Ales' Harun (new themes of town, jail, early traces of science fiction), Jadvihin Sh.[158] (satirical, allegorical, psychological prose, travel writings), Tsishka Hartny ('worker's poetry', first 'social' novel), Zmitrok Biadulia (lyrical prose, children's literature), Maksim Haretski (psychological realism in prose) and others. This was also the time of another significant change in Belarusian *belles lettres* when literature started to make a gradual turn from its narrow focus on the life of peasants to a discussion of issues of society as a whole, including its various strata, such as workers, merchants, officials, students and intelligentsia, among others.

English translations of the period include numerous poems by Kupala and Kolas that were included in their collection of translated works by Walter May (Kolas 1982a;

---

[157] "Пакуль што наша літаратура не мае ўсясветнага значэння" (Lastoŭski [1914] 1997, 284).

[158] Jadvihin Sh. was one of the students who went to the school founded by Dunin-Marcinkiewicz and his family. In a *Nasha Niva* article he recollects the time spent at the writer's house in 1877-8, when "his daughter taught a small number of children. We were taught in Russian, Polish, French, taught various things but we never heard either of Belarusian history or Belarusian language" (Jadvihin Sh. 1910).

Kolas 1982b; Kupala 1982a; Kupala 1982b). Kupala has also been translated by Anisiya Prokofieva (Kupala 1982c), and a book of his sonnets appeared in a multilingual edition with English translations undertaken by Vera Rich (Kupala 2002). Several of the poems by the two poets were published in Soviet and Western periodicals (discussed in more detail in Chapters Five and Six)[159] and in the collections of Soviet and Russian poetry (Poetry of Europe 1979; Mukerjee 2002). *Like Water, Like Fire* contains the poems of Kupala (13 poems and the long poem *The Gravemound*), Kolas (7 poems and 2 extracts from *New Land*), Bahdanovich (17), Bujla (1), Biadulia (2). Out of the trio of "the founding fathers" Maxim Bahdanovich has been a popular author to translate: thus, Vera Rich published several translations of his poetry in various periodicals (cf. Chapter Six for details), a small book of Anisia Prokofieva's translations from Bahdanovich, *The Burning Candle*, was printed in Minsk (Bahdanovich 1991), a couple of English translations were published in Zuborev's fictional biography of Bahdanovich (2004). Yet the largest collection of Bahdanovich's translations into English is *Images Swarm Free*, which also contains the poems of Harun and Zmitrok Biadulia (Bahdanovich et al. 1982).

2.7. The 1920s and 30s (Soviet and Western Belarus)

> Just so! A proletarian I!...
> A miserable slave but yesterday –
> Today I am the earth and sky,
> As Tsar above all tsars hold sway!
>
> The world's become my motherland –
> I leave my field behind, it seems,
> And yet... One trouble remains on hand:
> I still see Byelorus in dreams!
> Kupala[160]([1924] 1982, 139).

---

[159] For English translations from Kupala, Kolas and Bahdanovich individually see: Kupala (Skomorokhova 2003), Kolas (Skomorokhova 1998 and 1999), Bahdanovich (Skomorokhova 2004).

[160] Commenting on this poem, Adamovich recollects: "The National Communists did not notice (or pretended not to notice) the obvious irony, and welcomed this poem as further evidence that Kupała had joined them. [...] Only after the purge of Belorussian National Communism did Bende pronounce the final verdict: "At the very least this is a caricature of proletarian internationalism. The poet cannot understand the relation between the national and the international, and he ridicules proletarian

The 1920s[161] and 1930s were "two of the most exciting and productive but ultimately tragic decades in the entire history of Byelorussian literature" (McMillin 1977a, 219). The establishment of Belarus as separate republic in 1918[162] with Belarusian becoming one of its official languages[163] meant the start of *Belarusizatsia* (or, pro-Belarusian education[164]) and it was also the time of what can be defined as the first wave of Revival (*Adradzhennie*), which began with the ripples created by *Nasha Niva*. The wave gained momentum during the 1920s, with translations and other works of literary societies, such as *Maladniak* ('Saplings', founded by Mikas Charot in 1923) and *Uzvyssha* ('Excelsior', founded by Duboŭka, Puscha, Babareka, Zaretski and others). While *Maladniak* argued for 'revolutionising' literature (to the point of 'razing to the ground' its previous achievements in accordance with the new Bolshevik's aesthetics), *Uzvyssha* worked on improving the language, the imagery and forms of Belarusian literature. For the first time in Belarusian literature, there were 'generations of writers' who worked at the same time: the 'older' generation (Kupala, Kolas, Biadulia), *Nasha Niva* followers (Hartny, Hurlo, Zhurba, Khvedarovich) and young poets who were enthusiastic about both national revival and revolution (Duboŭka, Charot, Aleksandrovich, Volny, Dudar, Puscha, Zhylka, Krapiva, Trus, Hlebka et al.). Feminist poetry was developing as well (Vishneŭskaya, Arsenneva). New policies called for activism and engagement of literature in society. The answer to that appeared in the form of satire, particularly potent in the fables of Kandrat Krapiva[165] and in the quickly

---

internationalism."[Bende 1935, 135] Kupała's irony was turned against him by the Bolsheviks at his funeral in 1942, when they provided the dead poet's funeral procession with a single poster inscribed "I yet dream dreams of Belorussia" (Adamovich 1958, 58).

[161] The late 1910s, usually classified with 1917 as being the year of change.

[162] *Belarusian People's Republic* (1918), *Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic* (1919), *Lithuanian-Byelorussian Republic* (for 6 months in 1919, until it was again reinstated as BSSR).

[163] In the late 1910s, the official working languages of a number of the new states which were forming and reshaping on the territory of Belarus, were Belarusian, Polish, Russian, and Yiddish.

[164] Belarusian education was rather short-lived as it was banned at the end of the 1920s and reinstated only partially in 1941.

[165] Literally, 'stinging nettle'.

censored novel of Andrei Mryi *Zapiski Samsona Samasuya/ The Writings of Samson Samasuj* (1929), which was aimed at "showing Samasuj[166], a parvenu who is pushing through from lower middle classes to the top of Soviet authorities" (Mryi 1993, 18). The fame of Mayakovsky in the 1930s created pressure to conform to the "Soviet style" of poetry, with Broŭka, Hlebka, Luzhanin and others swiftly changing their literary affinities (Arochka 1999, 48). Prose genres were developing and writers such as Kolas, Haretski, Zaretski, Chorny and others were producing a wide range of stories, from lyrical to satirical to psychological in modality (Tychyna 1999, 62-133). While this was still the time of "thinking in short stories" (*ibid.*, 85), the novels of Hartny *(Soki tsaliny / The Sap of Virgin Land,* 1916–1929*)*, Kolas (*Na rostanyakh / At the Crossroads,* 1922–1949), Zaretski (*Sciezhki-darozhki / Paths and Roads,* 1927), and Chorny (*Siastra / Sister,* 1927–8; *Ziamlia / Land*, 1928) are evidences of the genre's development. In only ten years Belarusian literature "went from short story to long short story, from novella to novel" (*ibid.*, 101).

In terms of the new ideas called for by Lastoŭski, searching for the Belarusian identity, for the new 'Belarusian Way' became one of the main directions of the literary process (Bahdanovich 1999, 8-9): Kolas created his *magnum opus*, an epic poem *Novaya Ziamlia / New Land*[167], Duboŭka proclaimed the 'golden Revival' (Duboŭka, 1923, 23), declaring Belarus equal to its neighbours by using the concept of triclinium[168] in his poetry; Janka Kupala wrote his seminal play *Tutejshyja* / *People from Here* ([1922] 1955)*,* a tragicomedy reflecting the rift within Belarusian identity[169].

---

[166] Literally, a 'self-pusher'. Only two of the three parts were published in *Uzvyssha:* Samasuj was a satire on the new 'Soviet' man whose 'high ideals' are discredited.

[167] Cf. a footnote regarding the translation of 'ziamlia' which can be translated both as 'land' and 'earth'. While the epic poem illustrates the centuries-long desire of a Belarusian peasant to have his own plot of land to work on (not dissimilar to the American dream) the Biblical allusion to the 'new earth' of Revelation is also present in here (Bahdanovich 1999, 16).

[168] After triclinium, a U shaped couch for reclining in ancient Rome, where three patricians could carry on a conversation as *equals.* This symbol was applied by Duboŭka to the relationship between Russia, Poland, and Belarus (Bahdanovich 1999, 29).

[169] Examples of that seminal play prohibited for staging during Soviet period and avoided by the ideology of 'New Belarussianness' are used to discuss Belarusian heterogeneity and polyglotism in

Fairly soon, though, the situation changed, as in the late 1920s with the rise of Stalin, the wave of national Revival was blocked. Mere survival became a primary concern as most of the Belarusian authors were exterminated in the 1930s under accusations of "contra-revolutionary" activities, involvement in espionage or belonging to the National Democratic Party. The Decree of the Central Committee in 1932 dissolved all literary organisations in favour of one: the Union of Soviet Writers, which all Soviet literati were strongly 'encouraged' to join. Arrests, deportations and executions of a significant number of Belarusian literati "took an appallingly heavy toll"[170], as "in addition to the usual charges of anti-proletarianism, decadence and formalism Byelorussian writers were also liable to be accused of the even more heinous crime of bourgeois nationalism" (McMillin 1977a, 219). Hardly any "figures of any consequence survived Stalin's reign, and the price paid by the survivors was a high one indeed" (*ibid.*): subjected to harassment, Kupala made a suicide attempt, and Kolas, Biadulia and others were forced to write letters confessing and denouncing any previous beliefs. The Pro-Belarusian movement ("*Belarusiazatsyia*") became a taboo, while the Belarusian language was yet again banished from government and educational institutions to be only partially reinstated in January 1941 (Panoŭ 2003). Knowing, and even more so speaking, other languages became a dangerous skill to possess which meant that all translation officially encouraged was to be done either from or into Russian, rather than Western languages.

At the same time, the western part of the country was annexed to Poland under the Soviet World War One peace settlement during the Peace of Riga in 1921[171]. The Belarusian lands rejoined with Poland were identified as *kresy,* the eastern provinces, or

---

Chapter Three.

[170] In one only night, 29 October 1937, about 100 writers, educators and officials were shot in Minsk NKVD prison (Marakoŭ 2007, 9).

[171] Thus, Belarusian lands were traded off for the 'communal good', a situation which was to be repeated after the Chernobyl accident where the rain clouds with radioactive elements which were moving in the direction of Moscow and were shot at and made to rain on Belarusian territory by the Soviet government (McMillin 2006).

the 'outskirts' of Poland, where any self-identity alternatives other than Polish were strongly discouraged. Most of the pro-Belarusian activities there were taking place in Vilnia, 'the Kryviyan[172] Mecca' (Zhylka) with its numerous small publishing presses, which kept being abolished by the Polish government only to "emerge as legendary Phoenix" (Lis 1999, 211). There, Kancheŭski, Samojla and Tsvikovich continued the search for the 'Belarusian Way' in their essays. The prose of Maxim Haretski and Vatslaŭ Lastoŭski's as well as the poetry of Leapold Rodzevich and Uladzimir Zhylka explored the dramas of Belarusian history. The themes and motifs developed by literati varied from the jail theme (started by Ales' Salahub and continued by Maxim Tank and Valiantsin Taulaj) to lyrical poetry in Bahdanovich's traditions (the poetry of Natallia Arsenneva with its rich metaphors and symbolism) to modernist and expressionist tendencies (Lis 1999, 226), evident in the plays of Leapold Rodzevich and Frantsishak Aliakhnovich, with the latter also the founder of the genre of Gulag memories[173].

In terms of English translations, very little of this prolific period's literature has been published. The only available works are among the selected poetry in *Like Water, Like Fire* (Rich 1971) in two chapters: *The Years of Adjustment (1917 – 1939)*, which contains the poems of Kolas (2 poems, an excerpt from *Symon the Musician* and two 2 excerpts from *The New Land*), Kupala (5), Krapiva (4), Duboŭka (1), and Dudar (1), and *Interlude – Western Byelorussia* (1921 – 1939), which contains the poems of Pestrak (1), Tank (3), Taŭlaj (2). A few poems by Tank from this period are available in *The Torch of Fire* (Tank 1986).

---

[172] Cryvia is one of the Slavonic tribes whose lands were used for the creation of GDL. Vatslaŭ Lastoŭski and others argued for the usage of 'Cryvian' instead of 'Belarusian' to oppose the postcolonial overtones of the name. For a treatise on the ethnonym 'Belarus' cf. Maldzis 2000; Kipel 2011.

[173] Aliaknovich, a political prisoner of the Soviet regime, was exchanged for Branishlau Tarashkevich, a prisoner of conscience in Western Belarus. His memoir of the experience, *U kiptsurokh GPU* ("In the claws of the GPU") was translated into seven languages (a rare case for Belarusian literature) and published immediately between 1935 and 1937 (Lensu and Lazaruk 2000, 556) for obvious political reasons. In fact, the translations appeared before the author was able to publish the original which he self-financed (Niafiod 1996).

2.8. Belarusian literature from World War II to 1985

> One cannot help but notice how uniquely oriented to village life is twentieth-century Belarusian literature from the 1950s to the 1970s. This notion is developed thematically by the continuation of peasant-oriented topics from the earliest days of modern Belarusian literature at the end of the nineteenth century. [...] It lies in the peasant origins of the mainstream Belarusian writers. Indeed, they portray best their first-hand experiences (Gimpelevich 2001, 596).

The next phase of Belarusian literature is associated with the Cold War, the 'Iron Curtain', and pro-Russian linguistic policies. The censorship of Glavlit and ideological pressures, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, meant that there were few authors who dared to express even implicit social criticism or non-conformist thoughts. Pro-Russian politics and centralization meant that guidelines for Soviet realism were to be introduced into each of the fifteen republics. Thus, ready-made schemes for successful writing and canonical patterns were provided, demanding close adherence to Soviet, aka Russian, models. Every other national literature in this situation had no choice but to agree to a 'provincial' status[174]. Since this period has been given an exhaustive treatment in three separate volumes by McMillin (1977a; 1999; 2010) only some general comments on the overarching tendencies of the literature and literati of the period will provided here. The growth in status of the Writers' Union gave an opportunity for many to afford to become professional authors and freed them for full-time 'creative work'. The result of that was, predictably, a growth in book production, particularly multi-volume prose sagas. In keeping with established tradition, partly for fear of censorship, as the depiction of other classes could always lead to accusations of being a sympathiser of the "bourgeoisie", and partly due to the general rise of 'the village prose' in Russian, they were mostly dedicated to the recurrent theme

---

[174] If the capital of the USSR was Moscow, with all translation activity and literary innovations happening and being approved there, the rest of the Soviet Union republics had to wait until orders came down from Moscow for their Unions of Writers in accordance with a strict chain of command.

of Belarusian literature, i.e. the village and its inhabitants. *The Palesse Chronicle* of Ivan Melezh, dedicated to the South-Eastern Belarusian frontier, is a particularly successful example of such sagas. The legacy of Ivan Shamiakin, a prolific prose writer, is uneven in quality but contains new themes (urban prose) and fast-moving plots. Another comparable "pillar of the official Soviet literary establishment" (McMillin 1999, 144) was Ivan Navumenka, an author of many novels dedicated to World War II. Besides larger prose genres, short stories and "miniatures"[175] were also written by such authors as Janka Bryl′ and Jan Skryhan. Particular fame came to Vasil Bykaŭ, whose long-short stories (which he refused to define as novels although they fit the criteria in terms of volume) dedicated to war contain existential dilemmas and deep psychological observations. The popularity of the war theme in Belarusian literature of the time was enormous and can perhaps be explained as the way for writers at the time to deal with otherwise frowned upon issues of individual choice in life-threatening situations, avoidance of responsibility and even collaboration with the coloniser. The safe protective cover of depicting a struggle against a coloniser from the West, rather than the East, allowed the asking of these poignant questions in Belarusian literature and paved the way for the new Revival of the 1990s, as well as for some developing implicit postcolonial trends, particularly with Bykaŭ.

New developments in poetry (free versification, new themes and imagery) were introduced by Maxim Tank in his 60 year-long prolific poetic career against the more traditional approaches of Broŭka and Hlebka who chose to adhere to Communist slogans and accent-syllabic forms (Kalesnik 1959; Mikulich 1994; Astraukh 2001, 12-16). The poetry of those who returned from exile with the 'thaw' (Duboŭka, Puscha, Alexandrovich, etc.) tended to be much more traditional and less inspired than their earlier work. At the same time, new names, such as Siarhj Dziarhaj, Anatol'

---

[175] Cf. Chapter Three on specific Belarusian genres.

Hrachanikaŭ, Arkadź Kuliashoŭ, Pimen Panchanka, Aliaksei Pysin and Vasil' Zuyonak appeared. The poets were developing new themes of war, philosophy, and "all the (permissible) questions of Belarusian life in the Brezhnev years, entering with equal vigour into debates about topical social and poetic issues, such as questions of the past and future of Belarus, time and place, or children and age" (McMillin 1999, 38). A particular trend which can be observed is the gradual rise of women's poetry (Edzi Ahniatsvet, Jeudakiya Los', Danuta Bichel-Zahnietava, Vera Viarba, and Jauheniya Janischyts). Drama was also developed, though not as intensively as poetry or prose (Laŭshuk 2010; Vasyuchenka 2000), by Arkadź Maŭzon and Andrei Makayonak.

It is the literature of this period which is the best in terms of its representation in English (if not from the point of quality, then from the fact of the appearance of a large body of translated work). This was mostly due to The Progress Publishers in Moscow who were the officially 'approved' publishers of all translated literature into foreign languages. The poetic anthologies by Rich and May contain the largest corpus of translated poetry[176]. Rich's magazine, *Manifold,* contains translations of Natallia Arsenneva's work of the period. The prose is represented in two anthologies of contemporaneous works, *Colours of the Native Country* (Volk-Levanovich 1972) and *Home Fires: Stories by Writers from Byelorussia,* which appeared under the auspices of Raduga Publishers in Moscow (Moroz 1986). Several books by individual authors written at the time appeared: they are, first and foremost, translations of several Bykaŭ's

---

[176] Vera Rich's *Like Water, Like Fire* splits this period into two: *The Years of Reconstruction (1945 – 1953)*, which contains the poems of Mikhas Kalatchynki (1), Luzhanin (1), Tank (4), Kuliashou (2), Vitka (2), Kireyenka (2), Auramchyk (1), Anatol Vialuhin (1), Mikhas' Kalachynski (1), Krapiva (1), Aliaksej Pysin (1), Piatro Makal (1); and *The Thaw – And After (1954 –)*: Bujla (1), Jazep Puscha (1), Brouka (5), Piatro Hlebka (1), Kuliashou (11), Zarytski (1), Tank (16), Siarhej Hrachouski (4), Aliaksej Rusetski (3), Pysin (1), Buraukin (4) [misspelt as Baurukin in 1 poem], Dziarhaj (3), Los (1), Vitka (1), Panchanka (5), Kireyenka (1), Auramchyk (1), Anatol Vialuhin (4), Aliaksej Pysin (4), Piatro Makal (2), Nil Hilevich (4), Ryhor Baradulin (4), Viartsinski (1), Ales' Zvonak (1), Anatol' Viartsinski (1), Dubouka (2), Larysa Henijush (1), Janka Sipakou (1), Vitka (1), Pilip Pestrak (1), Luzhanin (1), Zarytski (1). Most of these authors, with one or two poems each, are represented in the *Fair Land of Byelorussia* anthology by Walter May.

novels[177], a long-short story and an extended historical-literary essay by Uladzimir Karatkevich (Karatkevich 1989; 1982), novels by Shamiakin (1973) and Melezh (1979) and a collection of short stories by a Belarusian writer living in Poland (Janovic 1984).

2.9. Literature of the "Glasnost'" (1986 – 1990) and Independence Periods (1986 – 2012)

> Gloomy introspection and chronic loneliness seem to be endemic among middle-aged poets and short-story writers. Most literary depictions of the city are hostile and alienating, sometimes contrasted with what appears to be a romantic view of greater moral integrity and firmer values in the countryside. The generation gap and the failure of town and country to integrate are frequent themes, but not all Belarusian literature is gloomy, and some writers draw humour from the situations in which they find themselves (McMillin 2006, xxxviii).

A particularly intense period of Belarusian literary development occurred between 1986 and 1993. The appearance of new translations of previously forbidden authors and the return of the 'forgotten', i.e. censored, names were the main new features of this period which could be described as the continuation of the 'thaw'[178]. This was the 'Second Wave' of Revival and Belarusification.

The academic history of Belarusian literature (Hnilamiodaŭ and Laŭshuk 2003) subdivides this period into three:

1) 1986-1990, which coincides with 'glastnost';

2) 1991-1994, the first years of Independence, the politics of Belarusification;

3) 1995-2000[179], the election of President Lukashenka and the subsequent adoption of two official languages[180]. (*ibid.,* 10)

---

[177] Discussed in detail in Chapters Five and Six.

[178] Though it can be argued that the period of 'the Thaw' prolific for the Russian literary process never happened for Belarus as its literati were still under pressure to conform to Russophone policies.

[179] Published in several volumes, with the last one appearing in 2003, a four volume edition of *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры XX стагоддзя / History of Belarusian Literature of the 20th Century* stops at the year 2000.

[180] Interestingly, the explanation for this periodization is not given (the *History of Belarusian Literature of the 20th Century* just lists the dates with no explanation) for obvious political reasons as

The new politics of *glasnost* meant that writers could finally publish their memoirs of Stalinist times (Biadulia, Heniyush, Khrakhoŭski). The new revelations of previously censored facts created the immense popularity of the documentary writings of writers such as Nil Hilevich, Henadz Buraŭkin, Aleh Loika and particularly Svetlana Aleksiyevich who chose to write her popular documentaries in Russian and had an overwhelming success, especially with her book *Tsynkavyja khlopchyki/ Zinc boys*[181] which is devoted to the military actions of the USSR in Afghanistan. Poets turned to the accounts of purges in Kurapaty (Sokalaŭ-Voyush, Rudkoŭski, Zuyonak, Baradulin, Niakliayeŭ, Schnip and others) and the tragic losses of Belarusian soldiers in Afghanistan (Janischyts, Vol'ski, Tarmola-Mirski, Kusyankoŭ, Makal'). The works of Bykaŭ, who continued writing on war, were freed from all the constraints of Soviet propaganda which allowed him to seek answers in his search for the 'Belarusian Way' more directly. However, his later works exhibited a disillusionment in society due to its acceptance of pro-Russification (*The Wall* (1995)). The post-perestroika years and the hard transition from previously stable societal and economic structures to the uncertainties of the free market economy explained the extreme pessimism of the older generation of writers (Shamiakin, Tank) and even their denial of post-perestroika reality (Navumenka, Asipenka, Martsinovich). Some of them returned back to the 'sage' theme of the village (Ptashnikaŭ, Dalidovich) and to the image of mother which has been traditionally associated with the village: Zhuk's *Sny pra mamu / Dream About Mum* (1997), Pryhodzich's *Kukavala ziasyulia / The cuckoo was crying* (2000), Lipski's *Mama* (1999). At the same time, others continued their sagas, which they started during the 'stagnation period': Viachaslaŭ Adamchyk and Ivan Chyhrynaŭ finished their epics (the former his tetralogy on the life of a western Belarusian village before and during World War II; the latter a tetralogy dedicated to guerrilla war).

President Lukashenka is still in power.

[181] Referring to the zinc caskets in which the bodies of Soviet soldiers were flown back home.

The sadness of the post-perestroika years was exacerbated by the Chernobyl accident of 1986 and its tragic consequences for Belarus (evacuation of thousands of people from the 30 km exclusion zone, a rapid increase in cancer-related deaths, loss of fertile lands). For literature, it meant the appearance of the Chernobyl theme: Shamiakin's Z*laya zorka / Evil Star,* Aleksievich, *Charnobyl'skaya malitva / Charnobyl's Prayer*, Bykaŭ's *Vaŭchynaya jama / Wolf's Trap*, Kazko's *Vyratuj i pamiluj nas / Deliver us and Have Mercy, Chorny busel / Black Stork*, Karamazaŭ's *Kraem belaha shliakhu / By the White Way*, Bondar's *Imem Aitsa i Syna / In the Name of the Father and Son*, Sipakoŭ's *Odzium / Odeum,* etc.

The independence of 1991 meant the start of a re-evaluation of the country's history and a return to the questions posed by Belarusian literature in the 1920s. A number of historical novels were written that were dedicated to outstanding Belarusians (Loika, *Francysk Skaryna abo Sontsa maladzikovaye / Francis Skaryna, or Young Sun* (1989)) or to historical events (Khomchanka, *Strel u vakno / Shot at the Window* (dedicated to the 19th century revolts) and Dalidovich, *Klich rodnaha zvona / Call of the Native Bell* (1999) with the action taking place in the 13th century). Historical themes became so popular that several writers, such as Leanid Daineka, Volha Ipatava, Vital' Charopka and Uladzimir Arloŭ, started writing exclusively historical novels. History also found its way into poetry in the works of Siarhej Paniz'nik, Siarhei Sokalaŭ-Voyush, Iryna Bahdanovich, Aleh Minkin, Viktar Shnip, Liudmila Rubleŭskaya, Eduard Akulin and others.

In the two decades that have passed since the country's independence, its literature has finally been freed from the ideological, thematic and genre constraints of Soviet times, although, as McMillin suggests, other ideological filters have been introduced. Science fiction was introduced into Belarusian literature both by the 'older generation' (Adamovich, Adamchyk, Sipakoŭ) and the new writers of the 1990s

(Daineka, Hihievich). New themes were being raised in poetry which moved away from Soviet clichés to become more individualistic and non-conformist: intellectualism (Razanaŭ), deeper lyricism (Baravikova), avant-garde (mythology, intellectualism in Tank and Razanaŭ), philosophy (Dran'ko-Maysyuk, Dubianetskaya), postmodernism (Bum-Bam-Lit). New trends led to a focus on postmodernism implicatures, puns, hypertext and new genres in poetry, especially in the work of Razanaŭ who innovated the small lyric genres which he termed *vershakazy* (literally, 'poemstory', small prosaic genre based on word play and morphology)*, kvantemy* (from *quantum* in physics, short poetic genre written in free style)*,* and *versety* (proverbs on archetypical life events with no thematic line) (Belski 2003, 82). One of the more positive aspects of the new times is that Belarusian literature finally began moving away from its traditional theme of the peasant: thus, even though some of the younger writers still look back at the village for answers for 'Belarusianness' (Fedarenka), the new prose has mostly been written by the generation of "the children of the city" (Dran'ko-Maysyuk, Rubanau, Hlobus, Bahdanava, Astashonak, Rubleŭskaya). Most of the poets who started in the 1980s also began to work on urbanite themes (Hlobus, Bulyka, Minkin, Bahdanovich, Rubleŭskaya). These works "fully introduce us to the city space, slowly destroying the stereotype of absolute village-mindedness of our 20th century poetry and the view of Belarusians as entirely peasant culture" (Belski 2003, 78). Particularly successful in introducing new trends has been the work of literary societies: *Tutejshyja / People from Here, Tavarystva Volnykh Litarataraŭ / Coalition of Free Literary Workers*, *Bum-Bam-Lit / Boom-Bam-Lit*, and authors associated with the *Pershatsvet* literary journal, which was founded in 1992. The younger cohort of these authors is usually associated with postmodernism and the deconstruction of literary traditions, stereotypes and canonicity. Their work, provocative and contradictory by nature, has sparked some controversies with the critics:

Who are they writing for? What kind of reader are they oriented at? Why are the national traditions left out? And are we needed by, say, European readers, with works which are obviously secondary in their literary and artistic values?(Andrayuk 2003, 33).

Current developments in drama are considered less inspiring in this "Post-Makayonak" (Laŭshuk 2003, 88) period. The minority status of Belarusian has brought about a crisis within the national theatre as the Belarusian language is either not known well enough by the public or it does not attract them enough in terms of being a language of cultural entertainment. Moreover, theatres, being official organisations governed by the Ministry of Culture, usually have a set repertoire consisting mainly of translated plays. One definite change in Belarusian drama is the introduction of historical plays by Uladzimir Butrameyeŭ (*Strastsi pa Audzeyu/ Passion according to Audzei* or, alternatively, *Kryk na khutary / Cry at the Homestead),* Ivan Chyhrynaŭ (*Zvon – ne malitva / Bell is not a prayer* (1988), *Sledchaya sprava Vaschyly / Vaschyla's Case* (1988) and Aliaksej Dudaraŭ (*Rahneda i Uladzimir* (1998), *Chornay panne Niasvizha / To the Dark Lady of Niasvizh* (1999)). Several plays are devoted to famous Belarusian personae, such as Skaryna (plays by Arochka and Petrashkevich) and Salameya Pilshtynova (S. Kavalioŭ, *Salameya, abo u poshukakh svajho mestsa* (1996)[182]).

Finally, the opening of borders in 1991 meant that the Belarusian Diaspora, most of whom had to flee from Communism before or after World War II, were able to offer their work for inclusion into the current literary discourse. Natallia Arsenneva and Masej Sianioŭ achieved immediate fame, while Larysa Heniyush was assigned the status of a literary martyr. The Belarusophone writers of the Białystok literary society

---

[182] Much of the work of Siarhej Kavalioŭ is dedicated to adaptations of Old Belarusian texts for modern theatre.

Belavezha in Poland could finally cross the border, both literally as well as in terms of acceptance of their works into the general literary process, and receive acknowledgement.

One controversial issue with literary critics at the moment is the literature of Russophone writers in Belarus. The official policy of diglossia and the Russophone legacy of Belarus means that many writers chose to write in Russian (similar to Polish-Belarusian writers of the 19th century), though they identify themselves as Belarusian and write on local themes. Moreover, Russophone authors in Belarus insist that their works belong to mainstream Belarusian literature even though their vehicle of discourse is Russian. Discussions on whether such literature is Belarusian or not is the feature of some of the current debates (Goncharova-Grabovskaya 2010) and will be referred to in more detail in the next chapter.

Surprisingly few translations of the literature of this period have appeared. The latest anthology of modern Belarusian verse in English *Poems on Liberty* (Makavik 2004), was published by Radio Liberty. However, it can hardly be representative of the literary processes as the publication was mostly a political event. A recent translation is a parallel Belarusian and English edition of *Ksty* of Ryhor Baradulin (Baradulin 2006), which was used for his nomination for the Nobel Prize. Published in one thousand copies, the book is proclaimed "a milestone in the life of its creator", "a book of prayers, a book of meditation, a book of confession, and a book of repentace" (*ibid.,* 24) and is "dedicated to God and Mother" (*ibid.,*788). Several translations of modern Belarusian poetry (Ryhor Baradulin, Larysa Heniyush, Danuta Bichel', Mikhas Skobla, Siarhei Paniznik) were published in a book of translations of Alena Tabolich *Ліхтарык глогу / The Haw Lantern*[183] (Tabolich 2006). The latest translation of Быкаў is his *Parables*, recreated in English by an American Joseph P. Mozur and a Belarusian American Ihar

---

[183] The books is titled after Tabolich's translation of Seamus Heaney's acclaimed poem.

Kazak, the son of the famous émigré writer Ryhor Krushyna. The book was printed by an independent publisher 'VoliA' in Lviv, Ukraine (Быкаў 2007), a circumstance explained both by the exile of the author because of his political views as well as by the antigovernmental sentiments expressed in the book, both overtly and implicitly. Therefore, it is possible to make a connection between the political views of authors and the appearance of their works in English translations, especially in terms of recent publications. This obvious link between the complex issues of ideology, politics and the cultural representation of Belarusians in translation will be reviewed in subsequent chapters.

Chapter Three. Translating 'Belarusianness' into English

> In the middle Ages the whole area from the Elbe to the Volga was inhabited by Slavs, whose dialects varied from one region to another, but who had no national consciousness whatever. With the passing of centuries two powerful States grew up, Poland and Moscow, the one Catholic the other Orthodox. Literary Polish and Russian languages began to crystallise. But between the regions unmistakably Polish and those unmistakably Russian remained a long and broad belt, inhabited by people still speaking undetermined dialects, whose religion might be Catholic, Uniate or Orthodox (Seton-Watson 1946, 321).

> Three paths are found in our land,
> Three paths.
> One is to the West, to Warsaw.
> Another to the East, to Moscow.
> And the third one is just straight ahead.
> It goes, and goes, and goes
> Far away – to the very
> Sun itself. Three paths[184] (Biadulia 1917).

Having surveyed ten centuries of Belarusian literary writing, an Anglophone reader can notice the inevitable refractions and metonymies of its representation in English. An Anglophone publisher, on the other hand, is faced with a dilemma of choice of material for translation. To illustrate these choices, let us turn to the experience of newly established independent British-Dutch publishers Glagoslav[185].

According to the mission statement of the publishers, they aim to "seek out books from Slavic countries that represent an important part of our common cultural, literary, and intellectual heritage and that promote a better understanding of this intriguing but often misunderstood part of the Eurasian continent" (Glagoslav 2012, 1).

---

[184] Translation by Svetlana Skomorokhova. ST:
Тры сцежкі на нашай зямельцы прэходзяць,
Тры сцежкі.
Адна на Захад – да Варшавы.
Другая на Ўсход – да Масквы.
А трэцяя – проста ўпярод.
Ідзе, ды ідзе, ды ідзе –
Далёка – да самага
Сонца. Тры сцежкі (Biadulia 1917).

[185] Established in May 2011, the company is chaired by a Ukrainian Maxim Hodak.

The mission statement goes on to claim that their main focus

> is to bring out translations that embody values that are uniquely Slavic in nature. Every book that we publish has already achieved an engaged readership in its native land, has been recognized by international critics, and, in many cases, has either received or been short-listed for prestigious national and international awards (*ibid.*).

Surveying their choices for Belarusian literature (spelt interchangeably as "Belarusian", "Belorussian" and "Belorusian" in the publishers' catalogue), the catalogue presents three titles: firstly, Ales Adamovich's uncensored edition of *Khatyn* – "a heart wrenching story of the people who fought for their lives under the Nazi occupation during World War II"(Glagoslav 2012, 6), – secondly, Uladzimir Karatkevich's *King Stakh's Wild Hunt,* a "detective story with a romantic twist [which – *S.S.*] includes a personal theme of the author's sad concern for his [author's] nation's destiny"(*ibid.,* 11). Finally, the description of a third forthcoming publication (scheduled for August 2013) of Lubov Bazan's *A History Of Belarus* paints a picture of *terra incognita*:

> Not only the country that this book is about has a beautiful name, White Russia, it also to this day remains a white spot on the map to many. Unavailable to the English language reader, publications on the history of Belarus conceal from the outside world the story of the nation whose residential territory exceeds in size the area of some European countries. [...] The author chooses to provide the reader with a leeway for an autonomous analysis of the historic material, indiscriminately allowing for the exposure to all presently available concepts on the matters of such theoretical discussion triggers as the Belorussian ethnogenesis, the origin of the Belorussian language, ethnic

identification and national awareness of the Belorussians, problems of the Unia between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches (Glagoslav 2012, 20).

From these choices of 'typical Belarusian issues' (described above in rather convoluted English) it may be concluded that 'Belarusianness', on one hand, is portrayed here through the lens of World War II and partisan movement, and, on the other hand, through the narrative of 'faded glory' and historic loss. These two representations fit two antagonistic discourses of 'Belarusianness' discussed in this chapter, illustrating the central role that identity plays in the process of translation of Belarusian literature in English. As the third non-fictional publication by Glagoslav suggests, the question of what constitutes Belarusian identity has been one of the most disputed issues of Belarusian cultural and political life in the last and current centuries. Transferred into the sphere of literary translation, different discourses on what constitutes 'Belarusianness', as this Chapter argues, act as paradigms for its international representation (on a larger scale) and for selection of texts for subsequent translation (on a more practical level). In discussing the issues of Belarusian identity and its translation, the chapter starts with the issue of Belarusian heterogeneity and polyglotism, outlining their place within the current formulation of the Belarusian literary canon. It argues that Belarus' heterogeneity and different readings of its history of oppression have led to two contrasting interpretations of 'Belarusianness' formed in response to the nation-building in the long 20th century. These discourses, in their turn, stipulated two traditions of representation of Belarusian literature in English, which may be roughly termed as "Old" ("European Belarus") and "New" ("Soviet" or "Partisan Belarus"). The realisation of these discourses in literary translation practice will be illustrated with English translations in the subsequent chapters, particularly in Chapters Five and Six, where the conflict between the two representations of Belarus serves as a

dividing line in the split of all contemporaneous translations as belonging to two opposing camps.

3.1. Defining Literary 'Belarusianness'

> Barshevsky revealed Byelorussian to the Slavonic world. What of it that he was compelled to write in Polish? Our austere and inexorable fate made many another do the same. Dozens of people were born here, but joined neighbouring cultures, enriching them and occasionally glorifying them (Karatkevich, 136).
>
> The word 'English' refers to both ethnicity and language. Its double meaning underlines a compilation that is still with us. The word *English* also has a link to *nationality,* viewed in terms of residence, a sense of belonging to a community, or the citizenship of an existing political state (Talib 2002, 3).

Belarus is a relatively late arrival to the world political arena, and thus it shares certain experiences with other newly formed states. Its perceived cultural and political belatedness are, therefore, the features it shares with other countries in Eastern Europe, while its history of linguistic and political oppressions and problematic identity construction are the characteristics common to postcolonialist states. Its final emergence on the world political map as a sovereign entity in 1991 coincided with intensive explorations of the transnational and postcolonial paradigms in Western academic discourse, including that of translation studies[186]. Thus, by the time Belarus gained its nationhood, the 'golden age' for nation-formation had already passed. Commenting on the difficulties of representation of nations in modern translation studies, Julia Jehn at the same time critically assesses formerly clear-cut categories:

---

[186] In their introduction to a collection of papers titled *Reading Chinese Transnationalisms: Society, Literature, Film,* Maria Ng and Philip Holden proclaim 'transnationalism' as "very much the concept of the moment in anthropology, literary, and cultural studies" (Ng and Holden 2006, 1). Indeed, the works of James Clifford's *Traveling Cultures* (1992), Arjun Appadurai's *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (1996), Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins' *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation* (1998) among others have established transnationalism as a major framework in academic cross-cultural discourse, including that of translation studies (Apter 2006; Cronin 2006).

Traditional historical representation has characterized the nation as homogeneous, metropolitan, and modern rational construct that exists in linear time and that possesses an origin and a teleology, thereby eliminating the margins and any subversive, dissenting, destabilizing factors (Jehn 2009, 28-29).

To account for these factors and to highlight the heterogeneity of cultures, postcolonial studies have widely used several of Bhabba's coinages formulated at the time, particularly, the concepts 'dissemiNation', 'liminarity', and 'inbetweenness' (1994), which illustrate the difficulty of focusing on the narrative of 'nation' in both dispersing and establishing the concept. Over time, disengagement with the ideas of nation-building in favour of 'hybridity' in postcolonial discourse, has been authorised by some of the discipline's authoritative publications:

In the preceding section on nationalism it became clear that the idea of the nation is often based on naturalized myths of racial or cultural origin. That the need to assert such myths of origin was an important feature of much early post-colonial theory and writing, and that it was a vital part of the collective political resistance which focused on issues of separate identity and cultural distinctiveness is made clear in many extracts collected there. But what is also made clear is how problematic such construction is and how it has come under question in more recent accounts (Ashcroft et al 2006, 137).

It is precisely here where Belarusian experience finds both divergences and commonalities with postcolonial frameworks. On the one hand, it can step away from one dimensional early modern formulaic constructs of national identity (as exemplified by the one-nation-one-language model) by embracing its heterogeneity, as it will allow it to deflate criticisms of it having a problematic identity. On the other hand, its sense of

political belatedness becomes even more acute as its "sluggish" development yardstick is no longer measured against the First World but against the Third. It is a blow too hard for some to bear as it means abolishing the rhetorics of the Second World, to which some have grown accustomed, and of Europe (albeit 'imperfect', Eastern Europe, but Europe nonetheless)[187]. Moreover, while Commonwealth countries have amassed several decades of experience in dealing with their postcolonial identity constructions and so have become aware of the need to diversify their discourses[188], Belarus still finds an urgency to formulate its own development paradigm in 'old nationalistic' terms as most of its 9 million population routinely register themselves as ethnic Belarusians in the country's general censuses. Thus, the Belarusian paradox between homogeneity and polyglotism needs to be discussed before any conclusions can be drawn in terms of a literary representation of 'Belarusianness' via translation.

Located at the crossroads of Europe, this "perpetual borderland" (Savchenko 2009) is far from being culturally and ethnically homogenous. Multiculturalism, along with polyglotism and translation, is often a daily practice for *tuteishyja,* or "the people from here", as Belarusians would often describe themselves. In the 1900s-1920s, the official working languages of a number of the new states being formed and reshaped within that territory were Belarusian, Polish, Russian, and Yiddish[189]. The present

---

[187] Moore considers a claim to "Europeanness" to be the main reason for post-Soviet scholarship's avoidance of postcolonial terminology: "Because of this invented line betweeen the "East" and "West", "Asia" and "Europe", the post-Soviet region's European peoples may be convinced that something radically, even "racially" differentiates them from the postcolonial Filipinos and Ghanaians who might otherwise claim to share their situation" (2006, 20). In terms of Belarusian "racial claims", the following nationalist myth is pointed out by Gapova: "Belarusians have retained the ancient Slavic anthropological type, for the Tatar-Mongol hordes were stopped in this country after being exhausted in conquering Russia and did not "spoil" the blood. To support this last intriguing assertion some recollect that Russian writer Ivan Bunin allegedly said it is only West of Vitebsk (i.e., in Belarus) that the women do not have wide Mongolian cheek-bones, but narrow Slavic faces" (2004, 70).

[188] In comparison, a recent innovative project in Ukraine is aimed at the social inclusion of ethnic minorities. It consists of a series of videos where representatives of various ethnic minorities are wearing their traditional clothing and sing Ukrainian in their own language (Inter 2010).

[189] Belarusian at the time was written both in Cyrillic and Latin scripts. In terms of various languages, Kipel notices the difference in the first wave of Belarusian immigration: "A peculiar phenomenon is the language of thousands of Belarusan immigrants who came prior to World War I. These people claimed to speak Russian but were in fact speaking a Russified Belarusian, often with the admixture of Yiddish words. Unfortunately, because of the lack of language professionals working for the

situation in Belarus is not dissimilar: Belarusian and Russian are the officially endorsed working languages of the state, while people living on the country's five borders carry out their daily communication in a corresponding tongue. Bilingualism is the norm for the overwhelming majority of the population, while multilingualism is not infrequent either[190], with Belarusians, especially in border regions, speaking some Polish, Lithuanian, and Ukrainian – apart from a 'natural' usage of Russian and Belarusian. In practice, quite a significant percentage of the population is using *trasyanka*, a creole of Belarusian and Russian, in their daily life (Mechkovskaya 2003, Koshino 2005), or is routinely involved in code-switching between at least two languages. With multilingualism, daily communication in Belarus, where translation is sometimes involved for the sake of a third party, is no longer a negotiation between two languages only. Here a translator is not a bilingual bridge-builder but a multilingual negotiator who has to change his or her positionality depending on the languages involved in that particular discourse – a fact which provides support for Tymoczko's argument for changing the traditional view of translator as a bilingual cultural mediator (Tymoczko 2003, 181-201)[191]. The country's religious palette is traditionally complex, Belarus still being a hinge between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, with residual traces of Islam in traditional Tatar settlements and a growing number of Protestant congregations[192] as well as Buddhism and other religious affiliations.

U.S. Census, this melange of languages stemming from a Belarusan base was recorded as Russian" (Kipel 2011).

[190] According to the Census of 2009, out of 9,503,807 Census participants, 2,227,175 speak Belarusian at home, while 6,672,964 use Russian, Polish (3,837) and Ukrainian (5,578). As an extra language in which they are highly proficient, the respondents named Russian (1,301,567), English (449,969), Belarusian (271,778), German (137,353), Polish (65,066), French (42,180) and Ukrainian (30,660) among others (Belstat 2009). These numbers, however, do not take into account communication which happens among participants who are not 'highly proficient' in another language (that includes all modes of free communication in that language), but can still communicate in it verbally, rather than be able to speak, read and write it.

[191] During a visit of Dutch volunteers to a Chernobyl-affected Belarusian village on the border with Ukraine, communication and translation required some understanding of English, Belarusian, Ukrainian and Russian. The first dramas of Dunin-Marcinkiewicz were written in the Palesse dialect, which is heavily influenced by Ukrainian.

[192] For more on the wide spread of Protestantism in the 16th century cf. Akinchyts (2002), who argues the existence of a link between the ethics of Protestantism and the ideas which stipulated the

Being the "borderland" country which only recently became independent[193],

Belarus' struggles with self-identity are well documented (Koshino 2005; Marples

1999; Pershái 2010; Wilson 2012). The fact that the Belarusian identity is "weak" or

"undefined" is one of the most enduring stereotypes of 'Belarusianness': Pershái finds

"surprisingly similar conclusions in essays about Belarusian nation building from the

nineteenth century, turn of the twentieth century, and beginning of the twenty-first

century" (2010, 381). The persistence of such stereotypes stems from conventional

approaches to national definition (one titular ethnos, one dominant language, one

historic territory) which Belarus with its chequered political past, linguistic code-

switching and uses of multiple languages fails to comply with. With all this to take into

a traditional nation building formula, it is no wonder the results of such an exercise

serves as a pessimistic barometer of the country's "strength" as a nation. Indeed, the

numerous alterations of the country's borders over the centuries have contributed to the

fluidity of the national identity, or, rather, identities.

Summarising the discourses of identity (or identities) as outlined within

Belarusian literature in the previous Chapter, it becomes evident that historically the

Belarusian literary and cultural landscape is shaped by at least two strong

positionalities: eastern and western. From the east, after what Thompson (2000)

describes as colonisation by Russia in the 18th century, these lands are referred to as the

North-Western Territory, a poor, long-suffering younger brother[194], who, after being

---

'Golden Age' of Belarus within the 16th century GDL.

[193] Technically it has been an independent entity since 1919 when it was declared BSSR, a separate republic and an equal member of the Union. Moreover, BSSR was one of the UN founding nations.

[194] The image of the 'suffering' Belarusian is supported by some of the most famous Russian classics. For example, Nekrasov's *The Railway* (1864), dedicated to the depiction of suffering by 'the peasants from all of the Russian state' opens with the graphic image of the slave-like toiling Belarusian:

Стыдно робеть, закрываться перчаткою.	Shameful it is thus to shrink and be frightened,
Ты уж не маленький!.. Волосом рус,	Thou art no longer a babe. . . . Dost thou see
Видишь, стоит, измождён лихорадкою,	There a White Russian stands, tall and fairheaded,
Высокорослый, больной белорус:	Sickly and wasted with fever is he.
Губы бескровные, веки упавшие,	'Bloodless his lips are, and sunken his eyelids,

torn from the alleged 'brotherly union' in the 12th century, was subsequently oppressed by Lithuanians and Poles only to be happily rejoined with 'mother Rus' in the 18th century as *Zapadno-Russki Krai* (North-Western Territory)[195]. Obviously, the brothers are unequal in their share: while *velikorossy* ('Great Russians', or modern-day Russians) are greater than *malorossy* ('Little Russians', or modern-day Ukrainians), *belorusy* ('White Russians') are left in the position of being neither great, nor small and, therefore, ambiguous[196]. From the west, these lands are described as 'kresy', or eastern borderlands, which historically belonged to the Polish crown, a view nurtured in the centuries-old Union of 1569 and which lasted, largely, until the end of the 18th century[197].

Язвы на тощих руках,	Sores on his arms shrunk and withered are spread,
Вечно в воде по колено стоявшие	Swollen his legs from long standing in water,
Ноги опухли; колтун в волосах;	Festered and bleeding his head.
Ямою грудь, что на заступ старательно	'Gaping his chest like a hole from the pressure
Изо дня в день налегала весь век...	Spent on the shovel from morning till night,
Ты приглядись к нему, Ваня, внимательно:	Look at him carefully, study him, Vanya,
Трудно свой хлеб добывал человек!	He for his bread fought a rigorous fight.
Не разогнул свою спину горбатую	'Not even now has his back become straightened.
Он и теперь еще: тупо молчит	Drearily silent he stands,
И механически ржавой лопатою	And the cold earth with mechanical movements
Мерзлую землю долбит!	Pecks, with the rusty old spade in his hands
(Nekrasov [1864] 1981, 202).	(Nekrassov 1929, 190-191).

At the same time, the Belarusian is referred to in the subsequent catrene as the 'Russian peasant' and generally in comments on the poem any distinction between the various nationalities of the Russian empire who built the railway is not generally made: "As with other works by Nekrasov, the poem arouses the reader's sympathy for *Russian* [emphasis mine – S.S.] common folk and outrage at their plight" (Pearl 1991, 768).

[195] Moore (2006) states that it is the 'brotherly' union rhetoric which makes it difficult to fit Belarusian and Ukrainian cases within the postcolonial framework. It might be argued, however, that the "brotherly" union here is not much different from Christian discourse of the union of "brethren" and aggressive evangelism which was used as one of the vehicles of colonisation. Such a parallel becomes potent particularly in the cases of religious persecution in the newly annexed lands, with Uniates and Catholics having to convert to Orthodoxy.

[196] Another parallel with the "three brothers discourse" is that of Russian folk tales. In the traditional folklore matrix the older son is clever, the second one is generally a hardworking one but not that bright, while the younger one who is neither clever nor hardworking initially at the end of the fairy tale by *avos'* or some stroke of luck gets sudden riches and marries the king's daughter. It is not difficult to see parallels between the three Eastern Slavs: the Ukrainian as the elder son (with the historical heritage of the Kievan Rus'), the Belarusian as an unintelligent hard worker and the Russian as the youngest son who ends up the richest and most powerful of the three.

[197] Here not the fairy tales, but Romantic depictions of the "good old days" are employed. It is interesting to note that both Poles and Russians used the discourse of a close relationship to formulate their claim over the lands. In one case it was "blood relations" (as in the case of Russian "brotherly love"), while in the other it was that of an "extended family" where masters and their serfs shared

These positionalities are best reflected in the play *Tutejshyja* (*People from Here*), where Janka Kupala, one of the founders of modern Belarusian literature, introduces two characters, namely Eastern and Western Scholars. Upon their first entrance, the Eastern Scholar is holding a telescope and the Western a pair of binoculars which they use to observe the land and to seek a "pure Belarusian type". The telescopic equipment is symbolic both of their positionality (from afar) as well as their inability to notice the details of real local life while they are producing their anthropological verdicts. The Western Scholar is using Polish while the Eastern is speaking Russian, with both of the languages being used immediately after each other in the play. The characters make similar utterances (apart from mutual animosities expressed towards the opposite side) and in fact serve as translators of each other, which lets the audience, whether coming from either the eastern (Russified) or western (Polonised) part of Belarus, immediately understand what is happening on the stage through the colonial language they understand best. Thus, describing a 'pure' Belarusian type, who happens to be a village teacher, Jan Zdolnik, the Western and Eastern Scholars state:

> "WESTERN SCHOLAR (writing down in his notepad, reads outs). Janusz Zdolnicki. True type of a Pole from Eastern Kresy with a touch of Poznan' and Hural' blood... The native language is general Polish, which has been significantly perfected, but with a great mix of incomprehensible words".

> "EASTERN SCHOLAR (also writes down, together with Western Scholar). Ioann Zdolnikov. True Russian type of North-Western Region and obviously with a touch of Mongolian-Finnish blood... Native language is general Russian, which has been significantly perfected, but with a great mix of incomprehensible words".

---

communal life in a large house as one big happy family.

"WESTERN SCHOLAR (writing down). During the survey of the Belarusian an unusual characteristic has been observed, that is: against Polish historic, geographic, ethnographic, linguistic and diplomatic research and publications, Belarusians for some reason call their motherland Belarus".

"EASTERN SCHOLAR (writing down together with Western Scholar). During the survey of the Belarusian, an unusual characteristic has been observed, that is: against Russian historic, geographic, ethnographic, linguistic and diplomatic research and publications, Belarusians for some reason call their motherland Belarus"[198].

Intended as an obvious parody of Orientalist anthropologist writings, the description is, nevertheless, a reflection of two positionalities which continue to influence the models of Belarusian nation-building provided by real-life scholarship[199]. In the situation of political oppression *tutejshasts',* with its inclusiveness of the village's

---

[198] Kupala's play has not been translated into English. Translations provided here are mine. Source text:

"ЗАХОДНІ ВУЧОНЫ (запісваючы у нататкі, голасна). Януш Здольніцкі. Незаводне тып Всходнё-Крэсовэго поляка з немалон дозон крві познаньско-гуральскей. ... Мова ойчыста — огульнопольска, незвычайне удосконалёна, ено з вельконо домешкон незрозумялых слув (Kupala [1922] 1953, 29-30).

УСХОДНІ ВУЧОНЫ (таксама запісваючы ўперамежку з Заходнім вучоным). Іоан Здольнікоў. Ісціно-русскій ціп Северо-Западной Обласці і безусловно з прымесью монгольско-фінской крові... Родной язык — обшчэрусскій, веліколепно усовершэнствованный, но с большой прымесью непонятных слов" (*ibid.,* 30).

ЗАХОДНІ ВУЧОНЫ (запісваючы). Пшы баданю бялорусіна высветлёно надзвычайнон особлівосць, а мяновіце: вбрэв гісторычным, еографічным, этнографічным, лінгвістычным і дыплёматычным баданём і розправом вшэхпольскім, ойчызнэн свон бялорусіні называён Бялорусь (*ibid.,* 30).

УСХОДНІ ВУЧОНЫ (запісваючы ўперамежку з Заходнім вучоным). Пры опросе белоруса выяснено необыкновенную особенносць, а іменно: вопрэкі історычэскім, географічэскім, этнографічэскім, лінгвісцічэскім і дзіпломацічэскім всероссійскім ісследованіям і трудам, — оцечэство своё белорусы почему-то называют Белоруссія" (*ibid.*).

[199] Gapova observes the expansionist mechanisms of this 'sibling unity' rhetoric (Moore 2006): "Eastern Scholar and Western Scholar try to classify "marshy" people of Belarus as the not fully formed branch of either big western neighbour [Poland], or eastern big brother [Russia]. This branch is subject to immediate acculturation according to their own [Russian or Polish] national projects" (Gapova 2005, 417, translated in Pershái 2008, 89-90). For a summary of the four types of models of Belarusian national identity, see Pershái 2010. The most typical model is described in Bekus 2010; Gapova 2002.

heterogeneity, can be regarded as a diplomatic avoidance of the political extremes[200] (Pershái 2008).

The inclusiveness of *tutejshasts'* provides a foundation for new emerging postcolonial, localising approaches, which emphasize the hybridity of the Belarusian national idea, seeking to escape the positionalities of the traditional discourses of periphery and centre typical of the former colonising discourses. Instead of the previous telescopic descriptions of Belarusian cultural complexities, they try to position themselves locally, focusing on the heterogeneities of the local landscape. Babkoŭ, for instance, independently of Bhabba's "inbetweenness", introduces the concept of "in-between-ness" to describe Belarus as a border country with a complex hybrid identity which arises from the local processes of "division, collision and transition of native and alien, of self and other" (Babkoŭ, 2005, translated by Pershái 2010, 381). They, however, are in their infancy at the moment and, therefore, have not yet significantly influenced the existing representations of 'Belarusianness'.

The paradox of the current situation is, however, the fact that at the same time, Belarus is regarded as mostly an ethnically homogenous nation (83.7 % consider themselves ethnic Belarusians according to the 2009 population census). This argument is often used to support the adoption of Belarusian as the official language for all legal state documentation, challenging its current 'alternative' status in which it is assigned to an 'aesthetic ghetto' (Cronin 2003, 143) where it is only engaging with literary and cultural matters. This view, generally classified as belonging to the pro-Belarusian opposition to the current state of affairs, is nevertheless shared by one of the state's most conservative institutions. Thus, the Ministry of Education, which is technically in opposition to the promotion of pro-Belarusian education (or at least is not actively

---

[200] Pershái provides at least five reasons for Belarusian *tutejshasts'* (2008).

137

endorsing that view[201]), still propagates a "one-nation-one-language" approach to the classification of Belarusian literature. Due to it, Russophone writers of Belarus are only just beginning to be introduced for study in the National Curriculum shared by all secondary schools in Belarus, where they are allocated a place within the confines of <u>Russian</u> literature under a subheading "Russian Language Writers of Belarus" ("Russkojazychnye pisateli Belarusi"). At the same time, Russophone writers widely publish their work in periodicals, such as the newpaper *Vestnik Kultury,* and magazines *Neman, Zapadnaya Dvina, Vsemirnaya Literatura,* which are produced in Russian in Belarus, and in the bilingual *Litaraturnaya Gomelschyna*. Despite this apparent freedom, all these periodicals are specialised editions, which mostly publish the work of certain authors, effectively segregating them from participation in the general Belarusian literary process[202]. This example illustrates the practical support for the traditional Enlightenment paradigm of nation-building which clearly is not working for Belarus, where, according to this scheme, the "nation-building function" is assigned to Belarusian while Russian or *trasyanka* (as well as other languages) are used for daily communication. The problem with the conventional paradigm is the apparent multilingualism (or, at least bilingualism) of which people are not willing to let go. Possessing two languages means having more linguistic choices and the ability to use

---

[201] After the Referendum of 14 May 1995, the Russian language was given equal status with Belarusian as an official language of the Republic of Belarus. In practice, however, the bulk of official correspondence and legislation produced by the state bodies is now carried out in Russian. In the educational process, the prevalence of Russian as a medium for education is a fact often raised by Tavarystva Belaruskaj Movy (The Union of the Belarusian Language). While the official statistics of the number of schools with Belarusian or Russian as a medium of education is currently unavailable on the website of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus, the following facts can illustrate the Russophone tendencies of Belarusian secondary education. On 28 August 2007 the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Belarus issued a Decision N П-218/2007 in response to a complaint regarding the absence of official blank forms for Central Testing in Belarusian. The complaint was triggered by the fact that the existing forms were available only in Russian. Central Testing is the set of standardised final exams taken by all secondary school graduates in the Republic of Belarus, the results of which are used for University admission. In 2011, Central Testing in Russian was taken by over 96,000 students in comparison with 53,000 taking it in Belarusian. The History of Belarus and Geography of Belarus have been taught in Russian since 2006, a situation which resulted in a drop of students taking Central Testing in the History of Belarus in Belarusian: in 2011, only 33% of the students taking the test chose to do it in Belarusian, with the overwhelming majority using the forms in Russian (Nikalayeva 2012).

[202] Most of the Russophone authors consider themselves Belarusian, with their writings reflecting Belarusian realities (Goncharova-Grabovskaya 2010).

one of the languages outside of Belarus, which explains the hesitation to "lose" Russian[203]. Moreover, with the population being linguistically aware of code-switching in different situations, many have found it difficult to give credibility to the monolingual works of literature due to their own constant usage of translation from Russian, *trasyanka* as well as possibly other languages involved in conversation. Koshino suggests that this adverse reaction may have been "caused by the unreality of conversation scenes; the use of Russian words in Belarusian texts[204]; and references to the Belarusian language" (2005, 177-178). This disregard for heterogeneity and Belarusian multilingualism is probably the underlying reason behind the rift between Belarusian authors and their intended audience, which is roughly termed here as 'Shved's dilemma', i.e. of Belarusian literati "being torn away from the people" (1990)[205]. A solution to that would probably include a new redefinition of the Belarusian canon to include works written in Belarus in multiple languages and a strengthening of Belarus' own translation school which will give a choice to Belarusians willing to read world literature not only in Russian, but in Belarusian as well.

---

[203] Another reason for the unwillingness to let go is the Russification policies during the Soviet times which not only mostly stopped the Belarusian language as a medium of secondary education, but also propagated the view of Russian as a language for international communication within the USSR, which meant that all of the translations from other languages had to go via Russian mediation.

[204] Here Koshino refers to those works which use one or a few Russian phrases amidst an otherwise homogenous Belarusian text to highlight some specific usages of Russian, a strategy of estrangement which might cause an adverse reaction by a reader who experiences a more nuanced and controversial multilingual reality. Similarly, using only Belarusian in daily conversations by every character in a book suggests an unrealistic depiction of the linguistic situation and as such is immediately singled out by the recipient to be beyond the bounds of verisimilitude.

[205] In 1990 Viktar Shved observed (Shved 1990, 90; translation mine):

Мы сабе ў стракатасці прыкрас	We see ourselves in multifaceted beauties
У сусветным бачымся маштабе.	On a global scale.
Верш сатканы з беларускіх слоў,	The verse woven from Belarusian words
Родных спраў круг закранае вузкі.	Touches upon a narrow set of local issues.
У перакладзе на любую з моў	A Belarusian author perishes
Гіне цалкам аўтар беларускі.	In translation into any language.
Не жывём у гушчы мы падзей,	We do not live in the thick of things
Што праходзяць на вачах заўсёды.	Which are happening before our eyes.
Не жывём мы справамі людзей,	We do not abide by the issues of people,
Мы ўжо адарваны ад народа.	We are already torn away from the people.

Belarusian authors, as Shved imagines them, are too far away from their potential readers and are not addressing the issues which the general public faces in daily life. In the context of this Chapter, it may be asserted that largely the rift between the literati and their target reader here reflects the rift between the idealistic (one nation-one language) and practical model of 'Belarusianness', but is also indicative of the split between "Old" and "New" paradigms of 'Belarusianness'.

However, such solutions are future projects, while current Belarusian literature reflects existing positionalities building on centuries' old moulds of 'Belarusianness'. These historic moulds reflecting Polish and Russian interpretations of Belarusian identity(ies), reinterpreted during the Soviet period, have led to the existence of two different representations of 'Belarusianness' which have dominated the Belarusian political and cultural scene since the Cold War. The literary scene, in its turn, has been reflected in English translations, thus representing two distinct images of Belarus for the Anglophone reader. These two representations can roughly be categorised as that of "Old/European Belarus" and of "New/Soviet Belarus".

3.2. 'New' vs. 'Old Belarus' for Translation?

These once autonomous nations [inhabitants of the great plain stretching from the Baltic to the Carpathians] are grouped round the central kingdom of Poland – Lithuania and White Ruthenia lying to the north, Ukrania or Red Ruthenia in Eastern Galicia to the south. [...] Of all the ancient States, White Ruthenia[206] is perhaps the least well known [...]. In former days, during the reign of Gedymin, it rivalled the kingdom of Poland in the extent of its territories, and for many years the White Ruthenian language was spoken by the nobility and in the Courts of the neighbouring State of Lithuania.
Weyland Keene[207], *A Polish People* (1915)

The Lithuanian and later the Polish feudal barons for a long time held sway over the Byelorussian land. These together with the Byelorussian overlords, mercilessly exploited the toiling people, striving to hold them in subjection, ignorance and poverty. [...] The Byelorussians looked to the east, cherishing in their hearts the hope of help from the Russians in their struggle for liberation. [...] The reunification of Byelorussia and Russia at the end of the 18th century was an outstanding event in the history of the Byelorussian people, a fulfilment of the long-cherished dream of a life in common with their Russian kinsmen. It facilitated the economic development of Byelorussia. [...] It was thanks to Soviet

---

[206] An alternative name for Belarus.
[207] Pen-name of Huia Onslow who produced one of the early translations from Belarusian together with Helena Iwanowska published in 1914-1924.

power that, for the first time in their long history of oppression, the Byelorussians received statehood and independence.

Taras Khadkevich, *Soviet Byelorussia* (1962)

Before moving on to a discussion of English translations of Belarusian literature in the next four chapters, it is worth pausing to consider the general image(s) they present of Belarusian literature and the country it introduces to the TL reader, since Belarus is still "the least well known" of "all the ancient States" stretching from the Baltics to the Carpatian mountains just as it was in 1915 when Onslow was writing the quoted article for *The Spectator*.

When surveying the existing translations from Belarusian into English, it becomes clear that they form certain patterns of representation and essentially create two independent images of the country: that of a new, young, developing nation, whose development has been dependent on Russia and then on the Soviet Union, and that of an ancient European nation whose statehood has been tragically lost. These two images represent two traditions of interpretation of 'Belarusianness' formed in the 20th century and particularly openly antagonistic after World War II. In considering their rhetoric, let us begin with "New Belarus", as such a view seems surprising after the lengthy overview of its literary history in the previous chapter. A typical example of this representation of Belarus is expressed in the above-mentioned quote from Taras Khadkevich, author of the article *Soviet Byelorussia* which appeared in a special edition of *Soviet Literature* monthly literary journal in August 1962 which was "devoted to literature and art of the Byelorussian Republic" and, apart from the article, contained various literary translations from Belarusian. Khadkevich invites the Anglophone reader to sympathise with the lot of "the poor Byelorus" (Kupala 1982b), a land where "even the names of many villages spoke of the half-starved existence of their inhabitants – Beskhlebichi (Breadless), Mokhoyedy (Mosseaters), Koroyedy (Barkeaters), and so on"

(Khadkevich 1962, 148). In a situation like that "it is no wonder, then, that the toilers of Byelorussia greeted the Great October Revolution with joy" (*ibid.,* 149). From that point on, the country finally is given (!) independence and then quickly (naturally, with "the help of the fraternal Soviet people") becomes a Soviet success story: Belarusians, "in a short space of time, ended their age-long economic backwardness, changed the face of the country, covered it with a network of factories, plants and electric power stations, and transformed agriculture. Poverty, hunger and illiteracy became a thing of the past" (*ibid.,* 149). Indeed, rapid industrialisation led to the country's position of "the assembly shop" of the Soviet Union. The republic started to assemble tractors and multi-ton lorries, and the Belarusian bison yet again became the symbol of "national idealization" (Gapova 2004, 648) – just as it had done in Hussowski's representation of Belarus for the papal court several centuries earlier[208]. Belarusian prosperity became a reality, and thousands of its citizens were generally content with their status, particularly after the losses of World War II during which Belarus had lost a quarter of its population[209]. The country was also occupied by the Nazis for three years and the only solution which could redeem this fact within the official Soviet historiographic discourse was to stress the local guerrilla movement. Thus, Belarus became known as a "Partisan Republic":

> When, in June 1941, the Soviet Union was attacked by the Hitlerites, the Byelorussians, together with other Soviet peoples, rose as one to fight the invaders. Byelorussia in the years of the Second World War became a classical example of partisan warfare. There was no area in the republic without its partisan formations, not a single town without its fighting underground organizations, headed by Communists and Komsomol members. Partisan warfare assumed a nation-wide character and rendered substantial assistance to

---

[208] This fact was not mentioned, however, as that was the "image" of another Belarus, the one which did not need to be "saved" from illiteracy.

[209] Some areas had a figure as high as one in three.

the heroic Soviet Army in the final victory over fascist Germany (Khadkevich 1962, 149).

Besides providing impressive figures (the preface to the translation of Shamyakin's *Snowtime* mentions the fact that "over a million Byelorussians fought at the fronts, while a partisan movement of unheard-of scope developed on enemy-occupied territory" (Pashkevich 1973, 11), the official historiography also created visual reminders of the war's toll. A place chosen as an emblematic representation of Belarusian suffering during the War was Khatyn, the fact which was deemed worthy of mention in the same preface:

> Not far from Minsk there was a small forest village before the war. Khatyn was the name of that village. In March 1943 the Hitlerites razed it to the ground, drove all the inhabitants into a barn and burnt them alive. The same happened in about three hundred other Byelorussian villages. Today, pilgrimages are made to Khatyn. A memorial ensemble has been erected here, commemorating all the victims of nazism on Byelorussian soil. Black steles stand like charred chimneys where the houses used to be. They have bells at the top, and the mournful ringing goes on day and night. There are three birch trees planted in a row: in place of the fourth the Eternal Fire is burning, this is a sacred fire, symbolising that every fourth inhabitant of Byelorussia perished in the war. They were killed at the front or in partisan warfare, they were shot during mass killings of the population, they died in gas chambers, or were worked to death in Germany (Pashkevich 1973, 11).

The word 'pilgrimage' is not accidental here, as Khatyn became a shrine of official mourning for every fourth loss, while "its representation on posters, books, pictures, badges, etc. became emblematic of Belarus in the same way as the Eiffel

143

Tower visually represents Paris" (Gapova 2002, 647)[210]. Since the official narrative did

not allow any alternative interpretations, the victory in the War (not World War II, but

the Great Patriotic War as it is titled in Soviet historiography) has been represented only

through a Soviet/Partisan perspective (and English translations are illustrative of that

trend[211]). Thus, "the ethos of the war in Belarus became a basis for constructing the

history of the nation – and the national identity. [...] it is the loss of every fourth person

and the immense common suffering that became the shared historical experience, which

was turned into a clear differentiation from "others" [212]" (*ibid.*, 647). Thus, the

representation of "New Belarus" can be presented in the following linear progression:

Kievan Rus → conquest and national oppression by Lithuanians and Poles →

reunification with Russian brothers→ illiteracy→ October Revolution→

enlightenment→ successful development→ Great Patriotic War losses and Partisan

Republic→ successful rebuilding after the war→ successful socialist development →

the collapse of the Soviet Union→ independence→ successful development as a

sovereign state[213].

This discourse is totally unacceptable to the proponents of another idea, i.e. that

of "Old/European" Belarus, whose "ethno-symbolic nation" is "based on the cultural

capital of the Golden Age of the Belarusian past (17th century)" (Bekus 2010, dust

jacket). An example of that discourse of 'Belarusianness' is represented here in the

meta-translation discourse of Onslow's article *The Polish People* which precedes his

---

[210] Walter May's anthology contains several poem dedicated to World War II. In fact, Vertinsky's poetry is represented with his long short poem *Requiem for Every Fourth One* (May 1976). May dedicated his own poem to Khatyn (May 1996, 70-75) written as a choral piece.

[211] While seeing Bykov's works through this prism can be considered a limited view, it needs to be said that most of the translations of his novels were done via Russian mediation during the Soviet period. The bowdlerization and Russification of his translations is discussed in Chapter Five.

[212] "New Belarusianness" received its ritualistic support through state holidays, such as Victory Day, The Defender of the Motherland Day, as well as through private functions. For instance, most Belarusian wedding parties after the civil ceremony at the registry go a local WWII memorial to lay flowers as a tribute to those who laid down their lives during the war so that their offspring could live.

[213] Obviously, this is a schematic representation which omits several important political events, however since its main focus is on highlighting momentous events for this particular representation of 'Belarusianness', it is deemed an appropriate linear illustration.

poetic translation from Belarusian (Keene 1915, 645-646). It speaks of Belarus as a once powerful state which rivalled it neighbours both geographically and linguistically.

Another example of a translation, which may be typecast as the one epitomising this representation, is that of a long-short story by Karatkevich, *King Stakh's Wild Hunt* (1989), written in the neo-Romantic tradition (old palace full of priceless relics; a lady of noble birth, the last heir of an old Belarusian family, who is harassed by a KKK-style 'Wild Hunt'; a stranger who comes to her rescue; a duel; the final battle where the hero leads an army and defeats the villains, etc.) with some Gothic features (a haunted mansion in a dark forest; ghost riders appearing with the fog; a steward hiding a mentally challenged brother; several mysterious deaths)[214]. The Belarusian past is heroicised and romanticised in the story, which its source audience found an alluring antithesis of the recurrent Soviet 'village' theme in the Belarusian literature of the time. Contrary to the one-dimentional "typical representatives" of "typical conflicts" portrayed in Soviet literature, in the works of Karatkevich and other proponents of the "Old Belarusianness"

there was national mythology whispering great things into the Belarusian ear. The nation is a European gatekeeper against Russia: the printing of books began earlier here; these lands had a renaissance, a reformation and a Baroque period. The Belarusian language is the most ancient of all Slavic languages and preserves the most ancient words; the bogs of Belarusian Palessie (in the Southwest) are the ancient place

---

[214] A newly re-edited version of Mary Mintz's translation of the novel, which was released on 30 September 2012 by Glagoslav Publishers, contains the following blurb: "On a late rainy evening a young scientist, folklorist Andrey Belaretsky finds himself lodging overnight in a mysterious castle belonging to the Yanovskys, an old noble family. There he meets the hostess of the house, Nadzeya Yanovsky, a neurotic young thing and the last descendant of her family. Fears and terrible premonitions, for which she believes to have substantial grounds, overpower her. The act of betrayal by her far ancestor Roman Yanovsky the Old brought the curse on the family for twenty generations to come, and has since claimed lives of all the young noble's relatives under bizarre and unnatural circumstances. Nadzeya expects her nearing demise in terror, moreover supported by the recent signs of the upcoming tragedy. Ghosts of the Little Man and the Lady-in-Blue were sighted wandering around the castle, and out in the fields from time to time shows itself the Wild Hunt. Belaretsky collects his wits and bravery, and decides to remain in the castle for a while to assist the hostess Yanovsky in getting rid of the ghosts, whose existence he dismisses wholeheartedly" (Glagoslav 2012, 11).

of origin of the Slavs; Belarusians have retained the ancient Slavic anthropological type (Gapova 2004, 70)[215].

The time line of "Old Belarusianness" mostly fits within the time framework of the literary overview presented in Chapter Two. Its schematic linear depiction normally includes the following milestones:

Slavonic and Baltic tribes → Kievan Rus → formation of GDL → independent statehood with one the most progressive legislations in Europe and highly developed culture (early book printing) → Union with Poland → beginning of Polonisation → annexation/colonisation by Russia→ political and cultural oppression→ uprisings of 1834 and 1863→ beginning of *Nasha Niva* movement and 1st wave of Revival → Belarusian People's Republic (BNR) → Separation of Belarus into Western and Eastern parts → Unification→ World War II and BNR→ independence/2nd wave of Revival → the last dictatorship of Europe.

It should be noted that this schematic representation of 'Belarusianness' mostly follows the Anglophone discourse formulated by Belarusian diaspora in the West, a fact significant from the point of the selection of material for English translations. Its openly anti-Soviet discourse, particularly, in regards to World War II, is not unanimously accepted by Belarusian literati who, nevertheless, share its aspirations to ancient Belarusian statehood. However, due to its controversial[216] interpretation of 20th century events in Belarusian history it is regarded as the 'alternative' (Bekus 2010) to the 'official' one supported by the State which utilises the image of 'New/Soviet' Belarus

---

[215] To some extent, literary histories, particularly after independence, have reflected this perception of history. The one provided in Chapter Two is not an exception as it reflects the current canonical interpretation of literary history. It is, on the other hand, currently quite problematic to describe Belarusian literary history within the "New/Soviet" paradigm as it does not permit any mention of Belarusian independent literature before Frantsishak Bahushevich, i.e. end of the 19th century.

[216] Particularly controversial remains the interpretation of the World War II period in Belarus as during the time of the Nazi occupation Belarusian language and national symbolics (state flag and the crest of *Pahonia* of GDL) were supported by the governing regime. This fact was used against pro-Belarusian policies during the 1995 Referendum and led to the adoption of a slightly modified version of the Soviet flag and crest for the Republic's emblem instead.

interpreting it as a success story of Belarusian statehood. This opposition gives grounds

for the distinction of two types of 'Belarusianness' which Nelly Bekus terms

'alternative' and 'official'. In her monograph titled *Struggle Over Identity: The Official

and the Alternative 'Belarusianness'* (2010) she analyses the core of the struggle where

"the ethno-symbolic nation of the Belarusian nationalists, based on the cultural capital

of the Golden Age of the Belarusian past [...] competes with the 'nation'

institutionalized and reified by the numerous civic rituals and social practices under the

auspices of the actual post-Soviet Belarusian state" (2010, dustjacket). Bekus argues

that in official representation 'Belarusianness' appears as a "constructed entity" and is

propagated through the state institutions and educational system. On the other hand, it is

presented as a "cultural unity" in the 'alternative' model (*ibid.,* 7), which engages "a

rather wide area of cultural representations through which memories and myths from the

past become part of the mass consciousness, penetrating into the space of self-images

and self-representations" (*ibid.*).

Thus, the 'official' 'Belarusianness' represents Belarus first and foremost as a

political entity. It is not interested in the consolidation of people in an "imagined

community" (Anderson 1991) based on an ancient historic commonality. In fact, a

recent edition of a Belarusian history textbook for secondary schools interprets the

Nasha Niva period as ideologically harmful (Treschenok 2003, 154). The official

ideology relies on established ideological moulds developed for Belarus during the

Soviet era and sees Russia as one of the allies for its subsistence. By employing this

strategy, it taps into the unwillingness of the Belarusian population to support any

political extremes.

This 'status quo' is unacceptable for proponents of "Old/European

Belarusianness" who view current processes in Belarus through a lens similar that of

postcolonial, highlighting the motives of 'native' grandeur, loss of independence and

political and linguistic oppression in a Belarusian context. This has mostly been the approach taken by this research, the main reason being that 'official' Belarusianness does not leave any alternatives to the 'alternative' model in terms of the Belarusian literary and cultural scene. If the Belarusian nation is represented as a new construct in 'official' discourse, then all the literary processes which had been happening prior to the emergence of 'New Belarusian literature' in the 19th century are thus deemed insignificant. Such a view can hardly be accepted by a literary historian, and it, therefore, leaves Belarusian literati in an alternative position to the state ideology and its loyal supporters. Hence, Shved's dilemma of literati torn away from the people can be explained not only by the unwillingness of the writers to search for new discourses, but by the political and ideological frameworks they find themselves operating within. On the other hand, if Belarusian literati are left in an ideological vacuum due to the state's disinterest in cultural matters (unless, of course, they represent a political threat), then the conflict between the official ideology of the Belarusian state (which recognises and supports bilingualism), and the 'alternative', i.e. nationalistic, ideology (which is strictly pro-Belarusian), disappears in terms of their attitudes to Belarusian literature. Thus, "official" 'Belarusianness' is not being currently supported via cultural and literary channels, while the "alternative" is (Bekus 2010). In a sense, the choice of allegiance is hardly surprising, as literature records and preserves "memories and myths from the past" conveniently turning them into national symbols. Thus, Belarusian literary writings reflect the painful process of self-discovery, negotiation between two positionalities of East and West, national archetypes and values (hard work, tolerance, passiveness, forgiveness, being content with little, etc.) which become part of the discourse of both 'official' and 'alternative' narratives of identities. By creating a 'second reality' which naturally influences and shapes the 'first' as it is taught in educational establishments, Belarusian literature solidifies these myths in cultural

memory. In a situation of such limited choice the alliance of Belarusian literati with the 'alternative' model can be regarded as a natural outcome of the current circumstance. Choosing "Old/European Belarusianness" allows them to see their work as a continuation of a millennia-old literary tradition[217] and, in the situation of no other apparent choice within the one-language-one-nation scenario, provides them with a mission to side with, and eventual glory if Belarusian becomes a part of a wider European dialogue.

The exploration of the practical representation of the "Old/European" and "New/Soviet" discourses of 'Belarusianness' through English translations of Belarusian literary source texts and through translation prefaces will be analysed in detail in the following four Chapters. However, before moving on to the discussion of metonymies of representation of 'Belarusianness' in English, it is necessary to consider the other side of the translation process, i.e. the receiving polysystem(s).

3.3. Rewriting a Story of 'Belarusianness' in English

> It is a curious fact of contemporary literary studies that very different branches of literary theory have converged on the same insight: every telling is a retelling (Tymoczko 1995, 11).

Having suggested what Belarusian literature might gain via translation into English, it is necessary to consider what it can offer (and how) to the receiving literature, or, rather, literatures written and/or published in 'transatlantic' English. Upon its entrance into a new polysystem, a translation from a Belarusian literary work ideally needs to be accepted as a congruent part of the TL literary[218] canon, fitting into complex

---

[217] Gapova argues for less noble motives for this choice, seeing the intellectuals' fascination with the "Old/European Belarus" as a project to "bring a different group of people into power nationally, to enter the global intellectual market and to become international players in this field" (2004, 85).

[218] Even though Anglophone literatures represent very different and separate entities, for the sake of

intertwinings of its system and conforming to its 'literary grid' (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998). In other words, the story of 'Belarusianness' has to be re-told not only in the language, but also in a manner typical of the TL literary expectations. In describing the complexities of 'minority' literatures entering a dominant cultural polysystem, this research will turn to the framework of a 'mythic retelling' suggested by Tymoczko (1995, 11-24), but will substitute her usage of "*myth* in the broadest sense of a "traditional tale" " (*ibid.,* 14) with a *story*, as the latter invokes associations both with *history* and with *narrated tale*[219]. Tymoczko argues that the notion of familiarity is essential for a literary work's accession to the international literary scene:

> Modern English-speaking audiences understand fairly well the generic signals of nineteenth-century Russian novels such as *Anna Karenina*; the plotting and character types are familiar, even though certain aspects of the culture such as elements of the law or the use of nicknames or the symbolic significance of samovars may not be. Thus, such works in translation are able to be integrated into canons of world literature – or at least canons defined within the framework of dominant cultures – with relative ease (*ibid.*, 17).

A translation read as a retelling of a familiar story or a story set in a familiar – or at least recognisable – setting evokes the feeling of shared humanity, a feature required of world classics which should surpass the confines of national literatures. Commenting on the origin of the Finnish epic *Kalevala,* André Lefevere claims it was 'invented' in

---

clarity, they are used here in the singular form, i.e. Anglophone literature, to be conveniently juxtaposed with Belarusian literature. Wherever the distinction does have to be made, it is done via the plural form of the noun 'literature'. It is also worth mentioning that though some of the generalisations can be extended to the literatures of the US, Australia, Canada, Ireland and other literatures using their own variants of English as the main mother tongue to write in, the focus would be on British literature as the one most familiar to this research – and, incidentally, the one variant of English into which Belarusian literature has been most translated.

[219] Since the Belarusian story is not familiar to the TL audiences, using the nondescript *story* allows one to escape the connotation of familiarity contained in the noun combination *traditional tale*.

the process of a national literary self-definition[220]. Applying the Bourdieuian notion of 'cultural capital' to the heritage of 'minority' literatures, he stresses their need to conform to the target literature's expectations of 'literariness' when such literatures are introduced into a dominant literary polysystem:

> Literatures written in languages that are less widely spoken, will only gain access to something that could be called 'world literature', if they submit to the textual system, the discursive formation, or whatever else one wants to call it, underlying the current concept of 'world literature'. They have, in other words, to create something that is analogous to some element of 'world literature' as it already exists (Lefevere 1998, 76).

The ambiguity here in this passage is not unlike that of Even-Zohar's theory: it is not quite clear what these rules are and who establishes them, as the passage keeps referring to "*something* that *could be* called 'world literature'", "*whatever else one wants to call it*", "create *something* that is analogous to *some* element". The excessive usage of the indefinite pronouns might be a deliberate rhetorical device to highlight the ambiguity and subjectivity of unequal relationships described here, rather than the suggestion of the ontological status of these rules. As in the case of Even-Zohar's theory and the centre-periphery binary of Casanova (2007), it can be presumed that these 'rules' are those of the 'Greenwich literary meridian', shared by Western European literatures who inherited and subsequently developed the basic genres and literary interpretation postulates from the Romano-Hellenic civilization. Its millennia-long tradition, reinterpreted slightly differently within various vernacular literatures, ensures

---

[220] In the case of Belarus, such ethnic epics are generally shared with Russian and Ukrainian literatures, as discussed above in Chapter Two. A typically 'Belarusian' epic is generally considered to be Jakub Kolas' long poem *New Land*, "an encyclopaedia of Belarusian peasants' life" written in the 20th century.

its authority and demands conformity for all pretenders in a world-wide literary contest. Being a 'minority' European literature, Belarusian *belles lettres* is rooted in this tradition together with English literature, which means a lesser divide between the literary systems and greater convergencies in translation practice. Some of these similarities[221] are accounted for in a translator's preface to an anthology of modern Belarusian poetry by Vera Rich:

> The translator working from Belarusian into English (or, indeed, any European language) is fairly fortunate in this respect, being able to tap into a common source of images and allusions. In particular, Belarus shares in the heritage of 'European culture', including Graeco-Roman mythology, and the Bible. (In view of the official atheism of the 70 years of communist rule the latter is particularly noteworthy; however, the poets represented here clearly feel that their audience will understand and respond to such symbols as Lucifer, Eve, Noah's flood, the Tower of Babel, Barabbas, or St Peter the 'Gate-keeper') (Makavik 2004, 6)[222].

---

[221] A fuller comparative account of Belarusian and English literary polysystemic topologies is available in Skomorokhova 2006. In summary, the convergencies include similar historical versification systems (accentual-syllabic) and roughly similar literary periods (especially during the mediaeval and early modern periods) with generally comparable literary genres (short stories, sonnets, etc.). These similarities can be explained by the fact that both literatures belong to the European literary tradition. On the other hand, the greatest variances between the two canons start appearing with the 17th century texts (when Belarusian ceased to be the language of court and stopped being a written language) and escalate in the 20th, when the development of Belarusian literature was heavily controlled by Communist Russia. The absence of a written codified practice meant the decline of all genres and the prestige of the literature as a whole, while English enjoyed an undisturbed development and slowly became a major colonising power. Unsurprisingly, genres and themes produced by two literatures contain major differences.

[222] Rich goes on to describe "other shared images", which, according to her, "may derive either from our common cultural tradition or perhaps are inherent in the human psyche". They "include the 'River' (= death) and the cawing of ravens as an omen of doom (cf. the margins of the Bayeux Tapestry, also 'Macbeth', Act 1, v. lines 39-41, 'The raven himself is hoarse/That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan/Under my battlements.')" (*ibid.*). It may, however, be argued that both of these cited examples belong to Graeco-Roman tradition too: river signifying death alludes to the Styx in both cultures (as well as pagan burial rituals in Nordic and some of the Slavonic traditions), while raven being an omen of death goes back to Cicero's forewarning of his imminent demise. Ravens are associated with death in Celtic, Norse and Slavonic mythology, which may be explained both by their assigned mythological qualities and biological ones (the bird being a necrophage).

In summary, Rich observes similarities between the two polysystems in mythology, allusions and imagery. However, the different theatres of action (the village and peasantry being the main setting and characters of 20th century Belarusian literature) make the cultural distance instantly apparent for an Anglophone speaker. Commenting on a "barrier of cultural strangeness" deemed unpassable by a British reader, Mervyn Jones (Boldiszár 1979, 39) refers to

"novels set in an environment extremely alien to British readers, the environment of the traditional village with its old traditions. Many allusions – to types of food, to living conditions, to religious beliefs, to legends and superstitions – cannot be conveyed accurately by even the best translator, and require tiresome footnotes of explanation. This has created a certain prejudice: not long ago, a publisher said to me: "We can't sell any of those peasant novels" " (Boldiszár 1979, 39-40).

In this context, the acclaimed epic novels of Belarusian literature produced within the social realism paradigm will all contain this insurpassable "barrier of strangeness", even though translators of both Shamiakin and Melezh managed to abstain from "tiresome footnotes". Nevertheless, the different theatres of action create an estrangement between the translated text and its reader. Moreover, this unfamiliarity is explicit in the text, often in spite of the translator's efforts to avoid the footnotes (thus, he or she may use explanations within the text), making "the information load of translations of such marginalized texts [....] very high – in fact it is at risk of being intolerably high" (Tymoczko 1995, 13). Amongst the factors attributing to high information load Tymoczko singles out (*ibid.,* 12-13)

issues related to the interpretation of material and social culture (including law, economics, and so forth), history, values, and world view; serious problems with the

transference of literary features such as genre, form, performance conventions, and literary allusions; as well as the inevitable questions of linguistic interface.

This information overload due to frequent explicitation of the 'foreign remainder' is counter-cultural to Anglophone literary preferences formed within the domesticating tradition where translated texts read as 'originals' whilst the cultural mediator is 'invisible' (Venuti [1995] 2008). Footnotes and particularly end-notes which provide the 'necessary' cultural information are not only perceived as inconvenient interruptions to the naturalness of the flow of narration but can also serve as undesirable markers of 'foreignness' within the texts. Rich's anthology, *Like Water, Like Fire* (1971) is an example of a selection of texts where the historical account of literary 'Belarusianness' is intercepted with notes after each section, explaining and 'correcting'the reader's perception of verses (which might be regarded as 'patronising'), while the translator's presence is visible both on the cover of the book in bold and in large font and through the commentaries provided. Sometimes the very selection of text may be questionable due to the information load produced, as is the case with Karatkevich's *King Stakh's Hunt*, where the numerous accounts of ancient Belarusian realities may prove too tedious to a TL reader due to long descriptions of priceless relics, forgotten food recipes and the "forefathers'" traditions, the loss of which is bemoaned. Even though the English translation by Mary Mintz includes most of the background information within the text, the information load is so high that some of it, nevertheless, had to be put into footnotes (Karatkevich 1989). Thus, while for Belarusian audiences, the story is deliberately presented as 'retelling a story', where the historic material is often presented 'in passing', as casual remarks or descriptions, this effect is lost in the TT, since "neither the content nor the intertextual framework of such texts is familiar to the receiving audience" (Tymoczko 1995, 13). Here, typically for

154

translators of 'minority' literary texts into a 'major' language, the translator finds herself "in the paradoxical position of "telling a new story" to the receptor audience, even as the translator refracts and rewrites a source text – and the more remote the source culture and literature, the more radically new the story will be for the receiving audience" (*ibid.*). This 'strangeness' which remains in the TL text structured in accordance with what would typically be described as domesticating strategy calls for rethinking the 'foreignisation/domestication typology (Venuti 1995) with regards to translation from 'minority' literatures.

The rethinking of typologies, in its turn, calls for revisiting the issue of strategies for translation from 'minority' literatures. Before discussing the specificity of strategies in application to translation of such literary texts, it is necessary to briefly outline the existing general options. The translator's choices are normally closely connected to the final goal of the translation, i.e. the type and usage of the TT. When applied to the case of Belarusian literature, the primary goals for its translation into English would be the perlocutory function of its translations and the dissemination of knowledge of the culture via created interest in the TL audience. The next step then is considering the issue of translator's choices or strategies to account for these goals. Over the centuries the 'tried and trusted comparative' method (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998, 70) of comparing ST and TT has produced the most obvious historical pair of strategies, of 'word-for-word' (domestication, SL-oriented translation) vs. 'sense-for-sense' (foreignisation, TL-oriented translation, etc.) translation. The discussion of these strategies, aptly termed by Steiner as a 'sterile debate' (1975) reached a stalemate, broken by the introduction of the 'cultural turn' in translation studies (Bassnett, Lefevere). However, the debate is far from being resolved in academic translation discourse, including that of 'minority' languages, with various reasons for supporting a particular strategy being argued for. Thus, while discussing translations from 'minority'

languages into English, scholars like Venuti or Berman argue in favour of minoritization/foreignisation as a vehicle for undermining the world hegemony of English and empowering other cultures (Venuti, Berman, Chakrabarty). This route of activist, as Grutman calls it, "dissident" translation (Grutman 2006) challenges the existing cultural hegemonies supported by the tradition of "smooth translations" and places value on the formerly minorized and abused, following some current revisionist trends in a society which seeks to protect human rights, aim for fair trade and become more eco-friendly[223]. Another argument for this translation strategy is that since these translations will be mostly read by a limited audience[224], a more ST-oriented translation would be appreciated. Thus, if most of the TTs are going to be received by a specialist audience (including native speakers with a knowledge of English), the closeness to ST will be one of the areas of the TT's assessment.

The arguments in favour of the other strategy – more easily readable domestications – include wider dissemination of the TTs, as narrowing the audience from the very start defies the sole purpose of producing these translations, since these texts are meant to be disseminated within English-speaking audiences. Thus, Bassnett and Lefevere's goal for translators is to create 'palatable' texts in TL:

> We need to find out how to translate the cultural capital of other civilisations in a way that preserves at least part of their own nature, without producing translations that are so low on the entertainment factor that they appeal only to those who read for professional reasons (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998, 11).

---

[223] The concluding discussion at a recent conference 'Research Models in Translations Studies II' held by UCL and University of Manchester on 29 April – 3 May 2011 mentioned ecology of translation as a new promising trend to develop within the discipline.

[224] An interesting review of an English translation of Andrzej Stasiuk's *Tales of Galicia* / *Opowiesci galicyjskie* was described as 'the perfect gift for a homesick Pole' (Nafpaktitis 2004, 10 – 11). This suggests that the novel will be mostly of interest to ex-pats, rather than the general British public.

Their arguments are supported by scholars researching preferred translation strategies. For instance, the results in Nike Pokorn's survey of preferred translation strategies show that the vast majority of respondents (86%) preferred TL-oriented translation, while SL-oriented and other types of translation each accounted for only seven per cent of the chosen preferences (2005, 116). If self-marketing or 'selling' its culture becomes the main goal for translation of a 'minority' literature, then the argument for domestication receives strong support. In this sense, the translation of cultural heritage can be viewed and judged by applying the same rules as those for importing goods which, naturally, have to comply with existing norms and standards in the receiving country. In extreme cases these rules could even mean the creation of new texts (Adab and Valdés 2004).

The creative power of translators who "use a metonymic process to achieve specific strategic goals, prioritizing particular aspects or elements of the source texts for immediate context-dependent effects and ends" (Tymoczko 2007, 198) has been emphasized by Michael Cronin and Maria Tymoczko. Neither of these endorse domestication as the 'ideal' strategy for translation, with Tymoczko stating that "postcolonial translations cannot normally be defined in terms of the binary cognitive structures that translation studies has depended on to describe translations [...] and translations in postcolonial contexts do not generally fall on a continuum between such polarities either" (*ibid.*). She sees these types of translations as "complex, fragmentary, and [....] self-contradictory" (*ibid.*), epitomizing activism in translation studies (*ibid.,* 199). However, this activism is different from the foreignizing stance:

> For the receiving audience the translation metonymically constructs a source text, a literary tradition, a culture, and a people, by picking parts, aspects, and attributes that will stand for wholes. Such metonyms of translation play a part in establishing a

symbolic order within which a people is constructed or even construes itself (Tymoczko 1999, 57).

Selection in translation strategies from 'minority' literatures is also argued for by Michael Cronin who considers that "rather than universalize one particular strategy in translation practice, it would arguably be more useful to oppose *translation as reflection* to *translation as reflexion*", where the latter is "second-degree reflection or meta-reflection", "the critical consideration of what a language absorbs and what allows it to expand and what causes it to retract" (Cronin 2003, 141).

Thus, the representation of 'minority' literatures does not neatly fit into the existing "foreignisation/domestication" dichotomy. Moreover, the criteria for differentiation between 'domesticated vs. 'foreignised' texts, in practice, can be deemed unreliable. Thus, when defining typical types of translations used for introduction of 'new' literatures, Tymoczko singles out scholarly and popular translations, each seemingly having two opposing strategies. In a situation where a translator is faced with complete ignorance by the public of the SL culture or literature he or she often has no other alternative but to "do a partial translation of the literary information in the text – or seek a format that allows dense information transfer through a variety of commentaries on the translation" (Tymoczko 1995, 17). The latter format is that of scholarly translations which represent the SL cultural information through footnotes, explanations, introductions, etc. They might also be published in a parallel format, in both languages. Popular translations, on the other hand, aim to smooth out most of the foreign elements, possibly leaving a few exoticisms to attract the interest of the TL reader. However, this division disappears when applied to translations from 'minority' literatures. These initial translations, as Tymoczko observes (and as will be evident from subsequent chapters) cannot be neatly fitted into two opposing types, as both scholarly

158

and popular translations from 'minority' cultures rarely fit into categories of either a foreignised or a domesticated type:

> Scholarly translations with their metatranslation devices are able to convey more information to the reader, but all translators, including scholarly ones, select specific aspects of the metonymic relationship between text and literary system or text and culture to realize and to privilege (Tymoczko 1995, 18).

In other words, even scholarly translations, seemingly 'safe' from the point of 'faithfulness' to the ST, are not 'objective' in their representation of the source cultures. Belarusian literary translation experience provides further support to this critique of Venuti's binaries: an example of a 'scholarly' translation which should have used 'undiluted' foreignisation is the translations of Belarusian folksongs by Helena Iwanowska and Huia Onslow who provided frequent anthropological commentaries in footnotes, which are discussed in the next chapter. Some of the observations introducing the texts are quite subjective. Similar criticisms have been made with regard to Vera Rich's comments accompanying her selection of Belarusian poetry (1971). Obviously, the selection of texts could be another area where the position of the researcher on a controversial subject is likely to appear subjective, poorly informed or prejudiced.

In acknowledging the complex processes of negotiation discussed by both Tymoczko and Cronin, it is nevertheless possible to incorporate their views into a larger body of work supporting domestication, if domestication is defined as a complex of TT-oriented strategies (Kliukanov 1999). If it is possible to make a generalisation in terms of the overarching preferences for a certain type of translation strategy among scholars of 'minority' literatures in translation there seems to be an inclination towards the

domesticating/ TL-oriented model[225]. This tendency might be explained by a desire to reach wider audiences and to overcome the 'high degree of strangeness' factor.

Another argument in favour of TL-oriented tendencies could be the publicity which sometimes follows a particularly successful or innovative publication. If a translation aims to disseminate its SL culture(s) and 'win' 'major' TL audiences, then the domesticating route can evoke initial interest. Thus, Fitzgerald's adorning of "those Persians who really do want a little Art to shape them" (cited in Bassnett 2002, 14) according to the general Victorian aesthetics can be considered a successful strategy in that it introduced 'those Persians' to the British public, ultimately paving the way for subsequent translations.

Fitzgerald's example may be used to challenge yet another axiom of the translation studies, that of the translator's 'invisibility' (Venuti 1995/2008). It may be argued that the pioneering translator, on the contrary, is highly visible, as his or her role[226] is that of the 'explorer' of the whole literature, where "a translator assumes a large responsibility in undertaking to produce a text that will become representative of the source literature and, indeed, of the entire source culture for the receptor audience" (Tymoczko 1995, 17). Vera Rich, associated with Belarusian literature, was very protective of her right to represent this literature, which she came to be associated with.

Literary fame came to Constance Garnett (May 2004), whose prolific translations of Russian classics stimulated "the Russian craze". The translator rose to such fame as *the* translator of Russian classics that even as late as the 1950s all subsequent re-writings of Russian classics in English only tentatively mentioned the "imperfections" in her translations. They are beginning to be questioned only now as

---

[225] Obviously, endorsing just one method in translation means being too prescriptive, as texts can have different purposes and readerships; however, some generalisation with regard to general translation assessment is possible.

[226] Often such literary explorers were women. It might be possible to speak of a certain tradition of "literary philanthropists" (Bassnett 2009) who include such famous names as Constance Garnett, Dorothy Sayers, Lady Gregory, Charlotte Guest, which will be discussed later in Chapter Six.

new re-translations gradually appear. Rachel May (2004), in discussing the reasons for Garnett's long-standing reputation, mentions the issue of trust in the translator who in the minds of the readers becomes the only trusted agent representing previously untranslated and unknown literature. In the above-mentioned examples, the translator became an ambassador for the people they represented (Persians, Belarusians or Russians), a voice that could be trusted and associated with the previously untranslated literature. Thus, if all writing is re-writing (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998; Lefevere 1992; Tymoczko 1995), then ground-breaking "classic" translations from 'minority' literatures would almost certainly *require* the foreign text to be rewritten in order to create empathy built on familiarity with already existing situations and patterns in the TL literature. Later, as translated texts come to be included in the realm of the familiar, further translations of classic TTs may follow, allowing greater dissemination of the STs in the TL polysystem.

In conclusion of this subsection, this research asserts that Belarusian literary translation experience as a 'minority' literature in translation, outlined more in detail in the subsequent chapters, challenges and/or adjusts some of the propositions of the ground-breaking monograph by Venuti (1995) which have since become axioms of translation studies in application to translation from 'minority' literatures.

Firstly, it challenges the division between 'foreignised' and 'domesticated' translations based on the high degree of 'strangeness' or noticeable 'remainder' contained in the TL translations of 'minority' SL texts produced largely within 'domestication' principles. The difficulty of assigning 'scholarly' translations to a purely 'foreignising' type of translation due to their metonymies is another factor in the critique of this dichotomy.

Secondly, the strategy of 'foreignisation' used to undermine the 'domesticating' tradition within the Western translation discourse is largely inapplicable to translations

from 'minority' literatures due to the above-mentioned 'degree of strangeness', where the degree of the remainder would be too high for the Anglophone reader[227].

Finally, it adjusts the history of the 'invisibility' of the translator to include a specific case of a 'pioneer' translator who often carries out the role of an activist disseminating knowledge of an 'undiscovered' literature and is elevated to the position of a literary celebrity as a trusted guide to that literary heritage.

The practical illustrations of these theoretical postulates as well as the metonymies within the representations of the two discourses of 'Belarusianness' will be provided in the following four chapters which will outline the history of the literary translation from Belarusian into English.

---

[227] Unless, the target audience is mainly specialist, in which case these often would have the necessary linguistic competence to read the original.

Chapter Four. Discovering the 'Exotic': Early Translations (1830s –1940s)

This is the first of four chapters which will concentrate on the general tendencies and characteristics of literary translation from Belarusian into English, tracing its development over a hundred years and concluding with its status today. Issues regarding the representation of the ST culture are examined against the literary and political trends which occurred at various historical periods, allowing for reflection on matters of cultural hegemony and power imbalance explicitly or implicitly displayed in translations and in translation practices as discussed later.

Unlike her neighbour, Russia, whose literary classics have enjoyed wide popularity in the UK, from time to time enchanting both readers and writers[228], Belarus and, consequently, her literature, has remained *terra incognita* for the English-speaking world if not until the present moment, then at least until very recently, despite the country's long history. Possible factors behind this may include the numerous political and geographical transformations over the centuries of the country's turbulent past. The irony is that Belarus was not unnoticed by Britain. Numerous visitors from Belarusian lands, including magnates (the Radzvil Princes, Kazirmir Oginsky, Tadeusz Kosciuszko[229], Princess Isabella Czartoryjska), provided a small yet steady flow into the country (Hardzienka 2010, 16-19). One of the first is reputedly Jan Lettou, or "Lithuanian", who became in the 1480s the first printer to be registered in the City of London, three years after the establishment of Caxton's printing house in Westminster

---

[228] Russian themes in English literature have been the subject of quite a few studies, among them: D. Brewster, *East-West Passage: A Study in Literary Relationships* (1954), A.G. Cross, *The Russian Theme in English Literature from the Sixteenth Century to 1980: An Introductory Survey and a Bibliography* (1985), Davie, *Russian Literature and Modern English Fiction* (1965) and *Slavic Excursions* (1990), *Dostoevskii and Britain,* edited by W.J. Leatherbarrow (1995), *Tolstoi and Britain,* edited by W. Gareth Jones (1995), *Ivan Turgenev and Britain,* edited by P. Waddington (1995), P. Kay, *Dostoevsky and English Modernism* (1999), G. Turton, *Turgenev and the Context of English Literature, 1850-1900* (1992) and R. May *The Translator in the Text* (1994) to name just a few. An exhaustive bibliography on the subject is *The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, edited by Joanne Shattock (1999).

[229] Kosciuzko, who was in charge of the anti-Russian revolt of 1830-31, was travelling to the USA and had a two week stopover in London where he was visited by Charles James Fox, Richard Sheridan, Charles Grey and other distinguished guests (Hardzienka 2010, 19-20).

(Hardzienka 2010, 15; Pikhura 1965, 4-6). In the 18th century Britain provided a safe haven for many of the gentry dissatisfied with the division of Rzech Pospolita. It also served as a welcome stop on their grand tour of Western Europe (Hardzienka 2010, 18). In the 19th century, British economic and technical progress attracted many Belarusians, from doctors seeking vaccination for smallpox to mechanics studying agricultural innovations[230]. The failure of the 1830-1831 revolt in Belarus led to an increase in the immigration of those gentry involved in revolutionary activities. Moreover, the British government made a decision to support former participants of the revolt, and in 1834 passed a bill to provide 10,000 pounds annually for that purpose, a sum which subsequently rose to 15,000 in 1836. One of these revolutionaries (who, incidentally, did not claim support) was Alexander Rypinski who, in 1846, settled in Tottenham where he established "a Polish press" and printed his long poem *Niachystik* ('Demon') in Belarusian (Maldzis 1966, 40-43). More immigration followed after the failure of yet another revolt, that of 1863-1864, for political reasons, and yet again in the 1870s-1950s, mostly for economic reasons[231]. It was possibly one of the immigrants who brought with them probably their favourite folk-song, an English translation of which appeared in *The North American Review*, "a widely distributed publication" (Kipel 1983, 124) printed in Boston, Ma. An anonymous publication, it contains a brief introduction before the translation itself and reads as follows:

The following little elegy in the White-Russian dialect, we have always considered as one of the gems of poetry. It is a sigh of deep, mourning, everlasting love.

The Dead Love

White art thou, my maiden,

---

[230] In 1851 at the World Exhibition in London Jan Jusaf Baranowski, an engineer and inventor from Smilovichi, was awarded a golden medal for his machine which printed and checked railway tickets. His system of automatic signalling was used by several railway companies.

[231] Hardzienka (2010, 26 – 30) divides the latter into two sub-categories: the immigrants of 1870s-1914 and those who immigrated between the two world wars.

Can'st not whiter be!

Warm my love is, maiden,

Cannot warmer be!

But when dead my maiden,

White was she still more;

And, poor lad, I love her,

Warmer than before (Anon. 1836, 111).

In his review of the translation and early Belarusian presence in America, Vitaŭt Kipel′ highlights the fact that in "American scholarly literature [...], as early as 1834, the Byelorussian language was recognized as the language of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and it was acknowledged that the Bible in the Byelorussian language was published in Prague at the beginning of the 16th century" (Kipel 1983, 125). At the same time, Belarusian presence in contemporaneous British European literary scholarship was essentially non-existant.

On the other hand, Belarus itself, with its fairly central position in Europe, attracted the attention of Western travellers, politicians, and missionaries. Incidentally, the first record of Belarusian lands in the West was made in the late 13th century by a missionary from the British Isles. The author of the manuscript, an anonymous Irish monk[232] and preacher who worked among the then-pagan Ietwesya and who was present at the coronation of King Mindaugas of Lithuania in 1253, mentioned Belarus (Alba Ruscia) in *Incipiunt Descriptiones Terrarum* (Description of Lands), a manuscript account of his travels, kept in Trinity College, Dublin (Colker 1979). He mentions a "Vaislanus whom the author calls "socium meum" in section 25, where it is said that

---

[232] Possibly from the Dominican or Franciscan order, according to Gorski (1983).

Vaislanus, preaching in White Russia, was urged to convert the Karelians" (*ibid.* 714)[233].

There is evidence of an English diplomatic presence in GDL, as illustrated in an

Elizabethan newssheet of 1579 and Walsingham's correspondence with Thomas North,

Mariner, in 1582 (*JBS* 1965). There are even letters by Symon Budny to an English

historian, John Fox, one of which is kept in the Bodleian Library (Saverchanka 1993, 41;

Hardzienka 2010, 15). The unsuccessful revolt of the Irish Earls O'Rourke against

Elizabeth I brought them to Europe and eventually to Belarusian lands where they settled

near Navahradak (Jelinskaya 2000). Even one the earliest vernacular books of English

literature, mentions the then Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Rus' (Rich 1971, 14). In the

prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer notes concerning the much travelled Knight

that 'In Lettow hadde he reysed, and in Ruce' (Chaucer et al. 1924, 30).

However, despite these early references and various travel accounts, there seems

to have been fairly little cultural interaction between the British and Belarusians until

quite recently[234]. This explains the fact that literary translation from Belarusian into

English did not begin in Britain until the 1890s.

4.1.   Wratislaw's Translations of Slavonic Fairy Tales (1890)

The upsurge of interest in the 'mystical' Orient in Victorian Britain caused the

country to cast a closer look at Eastern Europeans as the Occident's 'eastern neighbours'.

It was on the wave of this general interest that the first Anglophone scholarly

investigation into Slavonic languages appeared as part of the series of monographs with a

telling title 'The Dawn of European Literatures'. The seminal work by William Richard

---

[233] Górsky suggests the name of the companion was 'Voislavus' rather than 'Vaislanus' (para. 25),
a "familiar Polish name which occurs in the *Miracula* of the Dominican Saint Jacek (Hyacinthus)" (1983,
255).
[234] Most of the British studies of East European immigration do not mention Belarusians: cf., for
instance, Kay and Miles 1992; Lane 2004. Some mentioning of Belarusians can be found in works
dedicated to Polish immigrants to the UK: Stachura 2004; Zubrzycki 1956.

Morfil, *Slavonic Literature,* published in 1883, describes various Slavonic literatures[235],

placing 'The White Russians' as a sub-category under Russians who themselves belong

to the 'Eastern Division' of Slavs. Morfil follows the traditional order of Russian-

Ukrainian-Belarusians, which he describes as 'The Great Russians (Velikorousskie)' –

'The Little-Russians (Malorossiane)' – 'The White Russians' (1883, 2). According to

Morfil, they 'inhabit the western governments, amounting to 4,000,000' (*ibid.*). In his

classification of languages he singles out White Russian as a separate language but does

not list any dialects, unlike in the case of Russian where he mentions four, or Little

Russian where three dialects are listed (*ibid.,* 4). Incidentally, his remark regarding

Lithuanian is "The language is now fast dying out, and in a few years will be extinct"

(*ibid.,*10), an interesting comment in hindsight. Morfil goes further, making a general

statement: "Altogether, this Lithuanian people has had a curious fate; their language has

never been anything more than a tongue of peasants, and those who talk of the

Lithuanian principality must remember that the language of its laws and court was White

Russian" (*ibid.,* 12). Further on, Morfil mentions the Lithuanian Chronicles, the

importance of 'White Russian' in GDL, Francis Skaryna's translations of the Bible and

correctly identifies the "Slavono-Krevitchian" dialect of *Piosenki Wieśniacze* (misspelled

by him as *Piosnki Wiesnacze*) by Jan Czeczot as "none other than White Russian" (*ibid.,*

112). However, his general conclusion regarding Belarusian literature is that "it is but

scanty and almost entirely oral" (*ibid.*).

　　　Morfil's work became a platform for further exploration of Slavonic literatures,

and since quite a few of them, like Belarusian, were still "scanty", the discovery started

---

[235] The work's epigraph is taken from Pushkin:
"Slavianskie 1' rouchi solioutsa v' Rousskom moré?
Ono 1' izsaknet? Vot vopros. Poushkin.

Shall the Slavonic streams flow into the Russian sea?
Or that be dried up? That is the question" (*ibid.*).
This unacknowledged translation is given together with the original. This pan-Slavonic thought can be traced later in Wratislaw's translation, based on Erben's *Chytanka,* a pan-Slavonic project, as argued in more detail later.

with their folklore, enthusiasm for which was awakened by the Romanticists in what Casanova has termed "the Herderian revolution" (2007, 75). Alternatively called "the Herder effect" (*ibid.,* 79), it produced a number of anthologies of folktales, and Slavonic tales. By this time the study of 'folk-lore' in Britain had acquired a 'scientific' approach, a fact which was reflected in the collection of *Sixty Folk-Tales from Exclusively Slavonic Sources* published by Albert Henry Wratislaw (1889)[236]. In the preface to his translations, Wratislaw places his work in the context of the contemporaneous research:

> So much interest has lately been awakened in, and centred round, Folk-lore, that it needs no apology to lay before the British reader additional information upon the subject. Interesting enough in itself, it has been rendered doubly interesting by the rise and progress of the new science of Comparative Mythology, which has already yielded considerable results, and promises to yield results of still greater magnitude, when all the data requisite for a full and complete induction have been brought under the ken of the inquirer. The stories of most European races have been laid under contribution, but those of the Slavonians have, as yet, been only partially examined. (Wratislaw 1889, iii).

Having highlighted the lack of research in the area, Wratislaw reminds the reader of his previous contribution to the field[237] and points to the infancy of his subject

---

[236] Albert Henry Wratislaw (1822 – 1892) was the grandson of a Czech émigré, and the son of William Ferdinand, 'Count' Wratislaw von Mitrovitz (1788–1853), a solicitor in Rugby (Seccombe 1885-1900, 69). He received his education at Rugby School, followed by a BA in classics from Cambridge where he subsequently taught as a Fellow before moving on to become headmaster at Felsted and then in Bury St. Edmonds. Before taking on his administrative duties, in 1849 Wratislaw visited Bohemia where he studied Czech while living in Prague, and upon his return to London he published 'Lyra Czecho Slovanska, or Bohemian poems, ancient and modern, translated from the original Slavonic, with an introductory essay' (1849).

[237] Wratislaw by that time had established a reputation in Bohemian studies, having published a poetic translation of *The Queen's Court Manuscript, with other ancient Bohemian Poems* (1852), *Adventures of Baron Wenceslas Wratislaw of Mitrowitz. What he saw in the Turkish Metropolis ... experienced in his captivity, and, after his happy return to his country, committed to writing in 1599* (1862); *Diary of an Embassy from King George of Bohemia to King Louis XI of France* (1871) and, finally, his well-known work *Life, Legend, and Canonization of St. John Nepomucen, Patron Saint and Protector of the Order of the Jesuits* (1873), the last mentioned "being a most damaging investigation of

in the Anglophone world: "I cannot make any pretence to having exhausted the mine, or, rather, the many mines, which the various Slavonic races and tribes possess, and which still, more or less, await the advent of competent explorers" (*ibid.*). In support of both his materials for selection and introductory comments, Wratislaw turned to the authority of a fellow folklorist, Karel Jaromír Erben, who published a collection of one hundred Slavonic fairy tales in their original languages, *Sto prostonárodních pohádek a pověstí slovanských v nářečích původních*, in 1865. Initially, Wratislaw was interested in the book as a scholarly reference, "that of obtaining an acquaintance with the main features of all the Slavonic dialects" (1889, v), but was then "tempted, by the extreme beauty of some of the stories, to translate the major portion of them" (*ibid.*). Out of a hundred fairy tales making up the original selection[238] Wratislaw chose sixty, as some other tales, mostly Russian, had been previously "so admirably translated, edited, and illustrated by my friend [...] Mr. W. R. S. Ralston" (*ibid.*).

In arranging his translations, Wratislaw 'travelled' from the West to the East and went South: the sources of the tales are subdivided into '(*a*) The Western Slavonians, (*b*) the Eastern Slavonians, and (*c*) the Southern Slavonians' (*ibid.,* vi), and even the division within the groups is made on the West to East principle, i.e. 'White Russian stories' precede 'Little Russian Stories (from Galicia)', followed by 'Little Russian Stories (from South Russia)' and only then end up in 'Great Russian Stories'. It is noteworthy that the conventional sequence of these countries when listed like that in the Russian Empire at the time[239], was quite the opposite: 'Russia – White Russia – Ukraine', implying Russian cultural dominance as the colonial power. In doing that, Wratislaw followed Erben's leading. However, Erben's audience was Czech, and therefore it made sense for him to

---

the myth contrived by the Jesuits in 1729" (Seccombe 1901, 69). The collection of Slavonic tales was his last project.

[238] Wratislaw refers to it as 'Čítanka' ('a Reading Book'), which is actually the second title of the collection, rather than the first.

[239] This tradition follows the one introduced by Ivan the Terrible in his title and was preserved in the Russian Emperor's title. In the Soviet Union, the 'unwritten rule' also demanded the preservation of the order in this enumeration.

start his exploration of the Slavonic people with Western Slavs. Wratislaw's choice in this situation appears to have not been as well-grounded, although in the preface he lays out the structure of Erben's *Čitanka* (*ibid.*, 4-5), probably suggesting he would follow the original composition in its structure as well. However, if he chose to deviate from the contents by leaving out some of the fairy tales, these guidelines do not seem to be that rigid and could have been restructured. With that said, it is quite possible that Wratislaw recreated a route which a Western traveller could take to explore *Pax Slavonica,* thus quite literally taking the reader to the foreign land, in line with von Herder, Schleiermacher and Goethe's ideas of following one of the translation maxims, which "requires that [...] we cross over to the foreign and find ourselves inside its circumstances, its modes of speech, its uniqueness" (Robinson 1997, 222).

The Eben collection – and subsequently Wratislaw's – contains three Belarusian fairy tales (or "White Russian" in the author's terminology). When compiling his collection, Erben consulted several Russian and Polish ethnographers. In particular, Belarusian fairy tales were taken from the famous two volume collection published by Alexander Nikolayevich Afanasyev in 1885. Both Afanasyev and Erben aimed to keep as close as they could to the "original" transcripts, making the basis of their collections "the fairy tales which were recorded directly from the words, with preserving, as much as possible, local, regional hues of language" (Afanasyev, 1885/1985, 349)[240]. It is worthwhile mentioning that Belarusian fairy tales, much like Ukrainian, are shamelessly incorporated into Russian ones, without any mention of where those "regional hues" came from – at least in the first edition[241]. Even though the study of folklore meant studying "local hues of language", to many, including Afanasyev, it was the same Great Russian language nevertheless. In this sense, both Erben and Wratislaw's collection were

---

[240] "Для предпринятого нами издания «Народных русских сказок» главным материалом послужат сказки, записанные прямо со слов, с сохранением по возможности местных, областных оттенков языка" (Afanasyev, 1885/1985, 349).

[241] Although Afanasyev does mention plans to do "thematic" structuring in the future. For the first edition, he claims, the main goal is just to get it all published (Afanasyev, 1873/1985).

more favourable to the "White Russians". Thus, unlike Afanasyev, Erben adds a descriptor: "Z gubernie Grodenské" ("From Grodno[242] region") in his description of the fairy tales' origin. It is not clear who helped Erben to choose the fairy tales and compile a short dictionary of various words from numerous Slavonic languages (including Belarusian) translated into Czech. In his introduction he thanks several scholars; the most likely helpers in Belarusian matters could have been either Professor Piotr Lavrovski from Kharkov/Kharkiv who provided him with "important excerpts of some ancient Russian legends from old manuscripts and his works in the Little Russian[243] language"[244] (Erben 1885, vii) or Mr Aleksandr Hilferding from "Petrohrad"[245], "who have done me a great favour by graciously providing me with valuable printed collections [...] in Russian"[246] (ibid). Suffice to say that Erben's approach was to represent various Slavonic nations and their languages as "all possible differences in languages and scripts of great Slavonic people which live on a vast area, from the Bavarian mountains even beyond the Urals, from Athos up to the North Sea under various governments and comprise now about 80 million souls"[247] (ibid., iii). Wratislaw's aim in translating the fairy tales into English was slightly different, as he aimed to present them to a different audience, while his attitude was less panslavistic than Erben's. However, both of them followed Afanasyev's lead in placing Belarusian (as well as Ukrainian) fairy-tales under the category of 'Russian'. Moreover, Wratislaw seems to include a religious component as part of their national identity. Thus, describing Erben's dictionary, he comments: "This vocabulary is divided into two parts, one illustrating the tales of those Slavonians who

---

[242] Grodno is Russified transliteration for Hrodna.

[243] Old ethnonym for Ukrainian.

[244] "dležitými výpisky nkterých starobylých podání ruských ze starých rukopis i prací svou v jazyku maloruském" (Erben 1865, vii).

[245] The traditional Russian transliteration of the city's name in English is *Petrograd*.

[246] "kteí vzácnými sbírkami tištnými, jeden ruskými, druhý polskými, dobrotiv mi pispvše, službu zvlášt platnou mi prokázali" (*ibid.*).

[247] "všemi podstatnými rznostmi v jazyku i v písmu velikého národa slovanského, jenž v nesmírném prostranství zemí rozliných, od hor bavorských až za Ural a od Athos až k severnímu moi ledovému, pod rozHnými vládami obývaje, nyní okolo 80 milionu duší počítá" (*ibid.*, iii). Translated by the author. Translation checked by Katerina Dreier.

171

make use of the Cyrillic characters, and belong to the Orthodox Greek Church; and the other, those of the Catholic and Protestant Slavonians, who employ alphabets founded on the Latin characters of the West of Europe" (1890, iv). In the case of Belarusian this is an obvious simplification, as most of those inhabitants of the "Grodno region" whose fairy tales he translates (without acknowledging the location) would mostly be Roman Catholic, rather than Orthodox, or at least Uniate. Moreover, in the preface to their translations of folk songs from the same region a couple of decades later, the compilers Helena Iwanowska and Huia Onslow, state:

> To meet a Russian priest or *pop* is most unlucky, and it is customary to spit three times to avert the evil. This naturally is resented, and at various times lawsuits have been brought against Catholics for spitting openly before a passing priest in the streets (Iwanowska and Onslow, 1914, 96).

Wratislaw describes White Russians as occupying "the whole of the Governments of Minsk and Mogilef, and great part of those of Vitebsk and Grodno" (*ibid.,* 131). Russian influence is evident in the transliteration of these toponyms as well as in general assumptions regarding the alphabet in use: "We now come to the first set of stories belonging to those Slavonians who make use of the Cyrillic instead of the Latin characters" (*ibid.*). At the time of the publication though, most Belarusian literature was written in the Latin, rather than the Cyrillic, script. However, Wratislaw appears unaware of the existence of any literature: "The White Russian language possesses but little literature, but was employed for diplomatic purposes by the once powerful state of Lithuania" (*ibid.*). He supports his claims with the authority of Morfil, by providing a reference to the latter's *Slavonic Literature.* Incidentally, the page which Wratislaw chose to reference contains a claim that regarding "the country of the White Russians, it is certainly one of the least interesting parts of Russia, both on account of the dullness and

monotony of the scenery and the poverty of the inhabitants" (Morfil 1893, 113).

Wratislaw does not write much more about that dull and monotonous country but rather makes it an introduction to the customs of other Eastern Slavonic nations, commenting, for instance, that "in these stories we first met with the distinction between the Western and Eastern Slavonic terms for monarch" (1890, 131), suggesting that White Russians only ever use *czar*, rather than *karol'* (king). In doing so he contradicts himself, as in the last fairy tale, "The Wonderful Boys" it is the "каралеу сын" (*king's son*) who subsequently becomes "круль" (*king*) who is one of the leading characters. It is interesting to note that while in one of the fairy tales the hero, Little Rolling-Pea, travels to some faraway city where the *czar* lives (which is very logical for a peasant from the Hrodna region who was a subject of the distant Russian czar), Belarusian cultural memory still retains the image of the *king* in "The Wonderful Boys". Cultural hybridity was also noticed by Wratislaw in another instance, where he drew similarities between some characters of Belarusian and Ukrainian fairy tales, like "the heroes 'Overturn-hill' (Vertogor) and 'Overturn-oak'" (*ibid.*, 131-132).

Wratislaw translated three Belarusian folk tales into English: 'The Frost, the Sun and the Wind' ("Морозъ, солнце и вѣтеръ"[248]), 'Little Rolling-Pea' ("Катигорошекъ"), and 'The Wonderful Boys' ("Чудесные мальчики"). The longest of them, "Катигорошекъ" ('Little Rolling-Pea') starts out with a traditional Eastern Slavonic introduction, a legacy of *byliny* (early sagas of Kievan Rus'), which is written in free verse which abounds in parallelisms (underlined below) and rhymes (marked in brackets):

Неўкаторам царстве (*a*) i неўкаторам гасударстве (*a*), на моры-акіяні (*b*), на оставе на Буяні (*b*), стаіць дуб зелёны (*c*), а пад дубам бык печоны (*c*), i ў яго

---

[248] The spelling used here is the original Russian spelling used by Erben in his Čítanka who followed the contemporaneous pro-Russian spelling of Afanasyev.

баку <u>нож точоны</u> (*c*): сейчас ножык добываецца — ізволь кушаць! I <u>то яшчэ ні</u>
<u>казка</u>, <u>толькі прыказка</u>; а хто маю казку будзе слухаць, так таму <u>собаль</u>, і <u>куніца</u>
(*d*), і прыкрасная дзевіца (*d*), <u>сто рублёў на свадзьбу</u>, <u>а пяцьдзесят на прагулянье</u>
(Erben 1865, 129).

Wratislaw chooses to recreate it in prose, keeping if not the conventional form
then, at least, conventional contents: the fanciful island of Bujan, oak and roasted ox, and
rubles as currency. His most evident foreignisation is the aforementioned *kazka* and
prikazka, inserted in the text itself. In terms of domestication, it is interesting that he opts
for "empire" (царстве, *kingdom*) and "province" (гасударстве, *state*), choosing a
hierarchy instead of the original mere repetition. He also substitutes "куніца" (*marten*)
for "horseskin cloak":

> In a certain empire and a certain province, on the ocean sea, on the island of
> Bujan, stood a green oak, and under the oak a roasted ox, and by its side a
> whetted knife; suddenly the knife was seized. Be so good as to eat! This isn't a
> story (*kazka*), but only a preface to a story (*prikazka*): whoever shall listen to my
> story, may he have a sableskin cloak, and a horseskin cloak, and a very beautiful
> damsel, a hundred roubles for the wedding, and fifty for a jollification!
> (Wratislaw 1890, 132-133)

There are a few other substitutions: Wratislaw opts for a hypernym *pin* (rather
than the SL *hairpin*) which child prodigy Little Rolling-Pea found in the street and
brought home for his father to make it into a "seven-pood* mace". Seven-pood is a rare
occasion where the translator chooses to introduce a footnote: "*A pood is 40 Russian, 36
English, pounds" (Wratislaw 1890, 133). However, the result of this adventure in the TT,
when the smiths "put the iron in the fire and began to beat it with hammers and pull it,

and made a seven-pood mace" (*ibid.,* 134) is less miraculous than in the ST. There, similarly to the New Testament loaves and fishes, the original scarcity of material provides a miraculous over-abundance in the end: "шчэ асталася" ("there was some left over") (Erben 1865, 131). Some traditional epithets, like "чистую дарогу" ("clear pathway", *ibid.*) are substituted for the more conventional "long journey" (Wratislaw 1890, 134). The eager spontaneity of Overturn-hill's answer to Rolling-Pea's invitation to become his comrade "можно! Хачу табѣ служиць" ("Why not? I want to serve you", *ibid.,* 131) is less certain in the TT: "Possibly I will be at your service" (*ibid.,* 134). In line with Victorian aesthetics, "чортаво стерво" (devil's b-ch), as each of the three dragons[249] call their horses, is translated as "devil's carrion" with a footnote "An insulting nickname" (*ibid.,* 135). Either the presence of a footnote (as in Afanasyev's text) or replacing it with a more conventional greeting could have been a more consistent choice for translating the traditional Belarusian salutation, which Wratislaw renders as "'Praised' [be the Lord Jesus Christ]!" (*ibid.*, 132). In fact, the TT is slightly confusing in terms of its rendering of the central conflict of the fairy tale, i.e. why the Frost, the Sun and the Wind were arguing over this phrase. In general, though, Wratislaw's comprehensive style and the referential character of the volume explain his "charming collection's" (Seccombe 1901, 69) subsequent reprints (Wratislaw 1977; 2008).

4.2.   Edwardian Translations: 'The Cambridge Set' (1914 – 1924).

Interest in Slavonic cultures continued to develop and Britain's discovery of Russia's legacy was slowly turning into the "Russian craze". The majority of Russian classics was being translated in the late Victorian and early Edwardian periods, with the most famous translations carried out by Constance Garnett, who undertook "a herculean

---

[249] Little Rolling-Pea ends up fighting not just one but three dragons, one after another, and then the wives of the dragons as well.

task, translating seventy-two volumes in half as many years" (May 1994, 37). A rather sudden appearance of "the novel of a country new to literature" (Arnold 1887) was a fascination to many of the English literati, to the point that "now, when English writers made a list of the best novels in the world, the majority were Russian novels" (May 1994, 31). Enthusiastically commenting on the modern fiction of the time, Virginia Woolf wrote,

> The most elementary remarks upon modern English fiction can hardly avoid some mention of the Russian influence, and if the Russians are mentioned one runs the risk of feeling that to write of any fiction save theirs is a waste of time (1925, 193).

One may wonder, however, if it was all really Russian. Thus, in Woolf's *Orlando*, her own improvisation on a 'Russian' theme, Sasha, a Moscovite Princess, has the very 'un-Russian' name of 'Princess Marousha Stanilovska Dagmar Natasha Iliana Romanovitch' (Woolf 1928, 38). No doubt, Woolf was parodying Russianness, but the point here is that the object of her parody was not typically Russian as such. Two of the proper names, 'Stanilovska' and 'Romanovitch', would be typical names of *szlachta*, or the nobility of Belarusian lands. The abundance of first names is also not typical of Russians who have just two, their first name and patronymic, according to the Russian Orthodox code. It is only typical of the Roman-Catholic tradition, which was predominant in Belarus and Ukraine at the time when the story was set.

However, not all researchers of Eastern Slavs tended to blend 'White Russia' with Russia, even when the terminology still survived, and Belarus was translated as White Russia. An awkward example of this confusion is the first article on Belarusian suppression under Russian rule published in London in 1904 in *The Anglo-Russian* edited by Russian émigrés. The article, signed by an anonymous writer using the pseudonym

Palisander Heb, was a translation of a paper previously published in German in Vienna and was titled *The White-Russians. A Nation driven back into the Middle Ages under Muscovite rule*[250]. The confusion was further exacerbated after the October Revolution of 1917 when a multitude of emigrants flooded into Western Europe seeking political asylum and identified themselves as *White Russians* as opposed to *Red Russians*. The tradition, however, continued and the name was widely used in travel writing by British travellers and missionaries, such as Hugh Stewart's *Provincial Russia* (1913), Scott A. McCallum's *Beyond the Baltic* (1925), and Mrs Cecil Chesterton's *My Russian Venture* (1931). Although they recognised the unique position of Belarus in the Russian empire and then in the Soviet Union (in the case of Chesterton, a feminist and author of several books on women rights, Belarus was already an established republic since 1919), they, nevertheless, regarded it as part of Russia. The theme of backwardness was also evident: having established the sovereignty of White Russian princes in "the Kieff hegemony" (Stewart 1913, 106), Stewart nevertheless comes to the following conclusion as to the attitude of 'the White Russians' to their western and eastern neighbours:

> The introduction of Polish influence affected adversely the position of the Russian peasantry [i.e. White Russian peasantry]. The White Russian language had no longer any official status. There followed all the ferocity of religious persecution, and the Polish seigneur inaugurated a system of serfdom much more oppressive than was ever felt in Central Russia. Under these miserable conditions masses of the peasants fled to the unoccupied steppe, and the rest, as a Polish writer notes, 'prayed to God that Moscow should come.' It was only in the seventeenth century, however, that Moscow won suzerainty over the northern districts, and only at the end of the eighteenth was the whole of White Russia annexed to the Great Russian empire. At the date of the emancipation, the country had not recovered from the Polish régime. Harrowing and

---

[250] The Kipels assume the authorship belonged to Anton and Ivan Lutskevich (Kipel 1988, 6), while Hardzienka believes it was written by Ivan Lutskevich (Hardzienka 2010, 31).

well authenticated descriptions are given of the prevailing poverty. As corn-laden

barges moved along the Dvina to Riga, it was no uncommon sight to see hundreds of

starving half-naked creatures who knelt on the banks praying for bread, and threw

themselves on the food flung to them, and tore at it like wild beasts. To-day White

Russia is one of the poorest and most backward parts of the empire (Stewart 1913, 106-

107)[251].

If Russia was barbaric to most Westerners, then Belarus in this account is

regarded as the epitomy of backwardness, populated by "half-naked creatures" who

behave like beasts, a pitiful sight for all those who are passing by, a spectacle to marvel at

and take pity on. "Careful and close-fisted [...] in money matters" (*ibid.,* 111) they are

plagued by "the besetting vice of drunkenness, perhaps more prevalent here than in any

district of the empire" (*ibid.,* 111). It is no wonder that in these circumstances the level of

general education perceived by Stewart is extremely low, to the point where he blatantly

remarks "In White Russia there are no intellectual classes. Everyone who has passed the

secondary schools seeks refuge elsewhere" (*ibid.,* 111-112). However, he admits that

"amid all the dirt, squalor, and poverty, there is, however, much that is attractive and

even picturesque" (*ibid.,* 114), giving examples of *Kupalle* celebration (Midsummer

Night ceremonies) and marriage ceremonies (*ibid.,* 115). Moreover, he finds these

ceremonies to be a rich ground for enthographic research, since "in the life of this

uneducated and imaginative people, ghosts, boodles, and spirits, naturally play an

important part" (*ibid.,* 117). Stewart proceeds to describe the White Russian "speech",

which, he considers, is "nearer akin to the Little than to the Great Russians" (*ibid,* 109 –

110). Having described some of its characteristic phonetics (akannie, palatalised *t* and d),

Stewart claims:

---

[251] The author's orthography has been retained. Here, the pro-Russian imperial interpretation of Belarusian history is identical to the rhetorics employed by the 'New/Soviet Belarusianness' in its description of the subjugated position of the Belarusian peasantry at the hands of Lithuanian and then Polish landowners.

There is no White Russian literature, and it is difficult to see the cogency of the

arguments advanced by those who deplore that Great Russian alone is taught in schools.

In Little Russia the case is slightly different. There a literature has been produced, small

in bulk, but of fine quality. But in both districts at the present day the speech of the

people can be considered little more than a patois, and Imperial considerations must

take precedence of sentimental (*ibid.,* 10).

Written at the time of the *The Nasha Niva's* movement nearly a decade after the

success story of St Petersburg's Belarusian publisher Zahliane Sontsa I U Nasha Akontse

('The Sun Will Shine Into Our Window Too'), the factual support for Stewart's

conclusions of "Imperial considerations" is less than convincing. Thus, by the time that

Stewart's ethnographic account appeared Zahliane Sontsa had published thirty-eight

books (if publications in Cyrillic and Latin font are accounted as separate editions[252])

with a circulation of over one hundred thousand copies (Aleksandrovich 1968, 169;

Turonak 2006, 125-126). Written from a pro-Russian perspective, Stewart's description

of the "White Russian" is not too distant from Kupala's comic representation of the

pseudo-scientific ethnography of the XIX century parodied in *Tutejshyja.*

However, not everyone in Britain was unaware of the Belarusian movement. It

was particularly *White Ruthenia* (Belarus) which became a matter of some interest in

Cambridge student circles before World War I. There, a "late-Edwardian malaise

masking as optimism and love of self and youth" (Fromm 1987) prompted fascination

with pre-Christian (and, hence, interpreted as non-dogmatic and free) beliefs and rituals.

Famously dubbed 'Neo-pagans' by Virginia Woolf, they were led by soon-to-be-

renowned Rupert Brooke, who, together with the four daughters of Sir Sidney Olivier,

twice Governor-General of Jamaica and a Fabian founder, comprised, according to Paul

---

[252] The list and basic bibliographic description of them is found in Turonak 2006, 127-128.

Delany (1987), the core of the Neo-pagans. The Olivier girls "believed in beautiful bodies, roaming the woods, bathing in the nude, but reserving sex for marriage" (Fromm 1987). Among other central figures of this group, titled 'the Cambridge Set' by Picarda (2005a; 2009), Delany includes Katherine (Ka) Cox, a daughter of a Fabian stockbroker; Gwen and Frances Darwin (two cousins who were granddaughters of the famous scientist); Jacques Raverat, a young French painter; and Justin Brooke, an heir to the Brooke Bond Tea company. Besides the 'central' group, the 'Neo-pagans' also included some "fringe" members. According to Delany, these were Brooke's former schoolmates Geoffrey Keynes (prep school), James Strachey (Rugby and Cambridge) and David Garnett (a son of Edward and Constance, who gave him a very liberal upbringing not dissimilar to that of the Olivier sisters). They shared a common background, one of privileged upbringing and education: attending the fashionable Bedales co-educational school, studying at Cambridge, in particular at Newnham College, as well as being members of the Fabian Society, which was quite active at the time. To those "fringe members" of the 'Cambridge Set' Picarda adds a couple more names: musicologist Edward Dent, and biochemist Muriel Wheldale (Picarda 2005a; 2009).

Led by Brooke, who seemed to have shared a "fine disregard for the rules" with another Rugby pupil, albeit in a different field, the group shared an "exuberant, romantic, untrammelled unintellectual delight in physical existence and in nature" (Spalding 2004, 174). Other than Neo-pagans, they became known as the 'dewdabblers' (from the English folksong: "Dabbling in the dew makes the milkmaids fair"). However, apart from nude bathing, Brooke's "idiosyncratic proclivities extended to folk music, dietetic, biochemistry, pre-nuptual chastity during courtship (not, however, excluding under-age sex), midsummer bonfires" (Picarda 2009, 324).

It is no wonder, given the Newnham connection and midsummer bonfires[253],

that the group attracted yet another "fringe" member, Helena Iwanowska (or

Ivanoŭskaya). She was a Cambridge student born into a Belarusian family well known

for their intellectual and nationalistic stance. Helena (or Hela) was the fourth child of

Leonard Iwanowski (1845 – 1919), a chemist and nobleman who regarded himself as

Lithuanian in the historical sense, i.e. of GDL. This fact was reflected in his children's

choice of nationality: two of Helena's brothers, Yury and Stanislaŭ, professed themselves

Polish, Tadevush a Lithuanian, while Vatslaŭ became Belarusian (Turonak 2006, 141,

152-155). It was Vatslaŭ who played a significant role in the pro-Belarusian movement,

establishing, together with the brothers Lutskevich, the first pro-Belarusian political

party, the Belarusian Hramada (1904), and Zahliane Sontsa I U Nasha Akontse[254]

publishers in St Petersburg. As a new party seeking support, it turned its attention to the

UK and, particularly, London, which "as a great forum of international opinion, was to

become as an important centre of the movement's overseas propaganda" (Picarda 2009,

323). According to Kipel's bibliography, a series of tracts in Belarusian and English were

published here, including *The White Russians* by Heb. Palisander, a pen name of Ivan

Lutskevich. Picarda also mentions the printing of numerous Belarusian "pamphlets and

hutarki in Leytonstone between 1903 and 1906" (Picarda 2001, 9-16). The Iwanowskis

made several trips to the UK: Leonard visited The Royal Chemistry Society with his

distinguished colleague Dmitri Mendeleev. In 1902 his son Jury (1876 – 1965) came to

London, bringing with him a pamphlet to be printed for the Belarusian Revolutionary

Party (BPR) (Turonak 2006, 170). Helena's brother Tadevush (1882 – 1970) read natural

sciences in the Sorbonne, while "she for her part having learnt in Russia of the reputation

---

[253] Traditional midsummer celebrations with bonfires with couples leaping over them are still popular in Belarus; these would have been even more widespread in the early 1900s. A summary of Belarusian paganism is given in Dzermant 2007.

[254] Iwanowska and Onslow translate the name of the printing house quite literally, word-for-word: "The sun will look, and into our window", and provide a footnote: "In White Ruthenian *Zahlanie sonce i u naše akonce*" (1914a, 92).

of Newnham, as a progressive college for young ladies, duly matriculated there" (Picarda 2009, 324) to read agronomy (Iwanowski and Iwanowska-Kornecka 2002, 170). She would have fitted well into the 'neo-pagan' wide circle of friends as a representative of a country with a long tradition of paganism, much of which she would have shared with her Newnham friends, Ka Cox[255] and Muriel Wheldale:

> The great forests which still cover the land have had a profound effect on the character of the people. They are the last virgin forests of Europe, and in them still linger a few *Zubr* or European bison. Up to the fourteenth century they afforded the inhabitants a means of evading their enemies, and caused them to be untouched by the civilisation and Christianity which swept over the more accessible countries, so that they were one of the last peoples in Europe to be robbed of the glories of paganism. Their religion was nature-worship, symbolised by trees, fire, and serpents. Within the *puszcza* (virgin forest) the *Znicz*, or inextinguishable fire [At Vilna in the cathedral lies the stone on which the *Znicz* was kept burning, and outside stands the tower from which the *Krive Kriveyto* used to address the people], was tended by virgins, and it was there also that the high priest, *Krive Kriveyto* (the judge-of-judges), used to worship, and under him seventeen different orders of priests (Iwanowska and Onslow, 1914, 93-94).

This fascination with the ancient religion and virgin forests of the historical Lithuania had made an impression on Brooke. A couple of years later, during his infamous nervous breakdown, exacerbated by guilt over his relationship with Ka, Brooke used this dark background for a play, *Lithuania*, written in 1912[256]. The play is a

---

[255] Following her miscarriage of Brooke's child in 1912, Ka Cox fled "through Poland to stay with a friend somewhere in Russia" (Wheldale 1924). In Picarda's opinion, based on Wheldale's *Memoir*, it was Iwanowska's estate Liabiodka, in the Lida province of Western Belarus, where Ka stayed with Helena's family, enjoying some horse-riding and hunting (Picarda 2005a; 2009).

[256] Brooke wrote it in Germany in 1912 whilst "feeling pretty dead: and very unenergetic" (Keynes, 386). His letter to Frances Cornford dated May-June 1912 makes reference to a play produced by Justin Brooke and goes on to state: "I sit here in Berlin – in the Kensington of Berlin – and niggle with plays, too. But mine are severely in prose, and they are full of characters..., who murder strangers with hammers. But they don't go ahead much" (Keynes 1968, 386).

macabre story of a prodigal-turned-rich son, who returns home incognito after fleeing from it when aged thirteen. His family, worried they would "never get through the winter" (Brooke 1915, 18), are quickly tempted by his expensive clothes, gold watch and a large sum of money he shows to impress them. "The game" costs the Stranger, named Ivan after his father, his life: he is killed by his sister ("squarer, heavy-faced and immobile") and his "worn and rather bent, quiet" mother. The literary roots of the play lie in Elizabethan drama which the depressed Brooke was reading "for hours", admitting to Jacques Raverat: "I sit in a luxurious pension near Dudley's, and write plays about murders in Lithuania" (Keynes 1968, 376). Picarda, the first to notice the Belarusian overtones within Brooke's Lithuanian play[257], commented on its grounding in early modern English dramatic traditions:

> The macabre theme, with its suggestions of lust for money, incest, concealment followed by a gruesome murder with a blunt axe, interspersed with rambling discussions on the legitimacy of relieving a thief of his illgotten gains, belongs to the seamier type of Elizabethan and Jacobean melodrama (Picarda 2005b, 2).

In fact, the "Belarusian element" in the play is noticeable, as pointed out by Picarda, through toponyms (Mohilev), proper names (Anna, Ivan, Paul), the description of living conditions (typical Belarusian *hata*) and landscape (pine forests). This hypothesis is also supported by en-masse emigration from Belarusian lands to America at the time (Picarda 2005a, 2, 4). Based on local material, the play can be considered the first example of a "Belarusian theme" in English literature. Unlike Brooke's 'Five Sonnets', it, however, did not produce any lasting influence, but it does seem to have been favourably received by W.B. Yeats and John Masefield and, on the wave of

---

[257] His unpublished article on the subject is titled "Lithuania" [or "Litva-Belarus"]: A One-act Melodrama on a Belarusian theme by Rupert Brooke" and is kept in the archives of The Anglo-Belarusian Soviety..

Brooke's posthumous fame, was staged on 12 October 1915, opening the 1915-1916 season of the Little Theatre in Chicago[258] (Francis 1999), and at Her Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket, in London in May 1916 (Picarda 2005a, 1).

Apart from becoming an inspiration for a minor dramatic work, Helena's influence was to have a more direct and positive effect. During her studies at Newham (1906 – 1910)[259], Helena met the younger son of the fourth Earl of Onslow, the Governor of New Zealand, Victor Alexander Herbert Huia Onslow, more commonly known by his Maori name *Huia*[260]. Onslow was reading natural science and mechanical engineering at Trinity and was "interested widely rather than deeply in many activities, in science, literature and art, in mountaineering, hunting, and other sport" (Punnett 1924, 926). It is not quite clear what attracted him to the idea of being involved in literary translation, as this proved to be a one-off event, rather than the beginning of a career in translation. His wife's memoirs seem to suggest a link between Huia's past experience of involvement with minorised cultures (Maori) and the existence of a possible similar sentiment in relation to White Ruthenian peasants. It seems reasonable to suggest that Onslow's interest was first and foremost ethnographic: the 'scientific' manner of the prefaced publications in a scholarly journal as well as his introductory article in *The Spectator* can serve as proof of his methodological approach. Iwanowska's interest in translations was probably that of disseminating knowledge of her country in the Anglophone world: passages from prefaces to translations (especially the first two batches) often contrast

---

[258] The play received fairly good reviews, but was not successful with the public (Francis 1999).

[259] According to Picarda, the meeting happened in her last year at Cambridge in 1909.

[260] Huia Onslow, born on 13 November 1890, was the "first vice-regal child born in New Zealand, and in the colony's 50th jubilee year" (Galbreath 2010; Onslow 1924). This meant that he would need to have a name of significance, and it was "variously suggested that he be given a distinctively New Zealand name, and that Queen Victoria might honour him and the colony as a godmother" (Galbreath 2010). Hence Huia, as he was known, was named after the New Zealand's native bird, a symbol of nobility. He was christened in St Paul's Cathedral Church in Wellington, with Queen Victoria as his godmother and the mayor, C. J. Johnston, as a godfather "representing the people of New Zealand" (*ibid.*). He was also ceremonially elected a chieftain of two Mayori tribes, Ngatihuia and Ngatiraukawa (1914) at Otaki. The royal connections associated with Huia's name were remembered again, years later, when as one of his last actions as a governor, Huia's father, William Onslow, successfully introduced the law for establishing bird sanctuaries on the islands.

White Ruthenians with neighbouring nations. Thus, they are distinctly different from Russians (who are not mentioned at all, other than the despised *pop*) and Poles (who are represented as landowners with a higher culture which was imitated by Belarusian peasants).

Onslow and Iwanowska produced the first direct translations from Belarusian into English. Moreover, this was the first publication of Belarusian folklore which was strikingly different in its representation from previous collections. Published in Russia, where the Belarusian language had been considered a dialect of "Great Russian", rather than a separate tongue, previous ethnographic findings tended to assign Belarusians only with the status of provincial North-Western Russians. A noblewoman from an old Great Lithuanian family who had their own crest of Rahala (Iwanowski and Iwanowska-Kornecka 2002, 170), Iwanowska, on the other hand, made sure her co-authored translations were free from pro-Russian views. The prose translations of folk songs from her estate of Lebiodka[261] were published under the title 'Some White Ruthenian Folksongs' in the *Folk-lore* journal which contained "transactions of the Folk-lore Society: A Quarterly review of myth, tradition, institution, and custom" (Folklore 1924, front matter). Thirty-eight Belarusian folk songs written in the Latin, rather than the Cyrillic, script[262] were accompanied by prose translations written in stanzas to the right of the ST, as a mirror-image of the original. They appeared in four instalments in 1914 and 1924 with two publications in each year, printed a month apart in both instances (Iwanowska and Onslow 1914a; 1914b; 1924a; 1924b).

The first part, published on March 31, 1914, included six songs: *Oj! pahnala dzieuchynanka* (The maid was driving grey oxen)*, Zašumieŭ duboček* (The oak-tree rustled)*, Och, ty pole* (O! my field!)*, Hdzie ty chmiel* (Where hast thou spent the winter?)*,

---

[261] According to the biography *Zemiane polscy XX wieku*, Iwanowska was a co-owner of two estates: Lebiodka and Kopciuha.

[262] Vatslaŭ Ivanoŭski preferred the Latin script to Russian and helped to perfect the codification of the *latsinka* spelling.

Zasumela u boru sasonka (In the forest the pine murmurs)*, Siwy koniu* (The grey horse).

The songs are introduced with a lengthy preface explaining their origin, as well as a short

history of White Ruthenians, who are "sometimes called Byelorusses or White Russians,

but incorrectly, since no White Ruthenian would ever allow himself to be called by a

name which would imply that he was Russian" (Iwanowska and Onslow 1914a, 92). The

introduction mentions the "old religion" and its close ties with folklore, especially in the

form of various numerous superstitions, which account for most of the article's contents.

The second part, published a month later, contains translations of nine songs: *Prylacieli*

husi (The geese came)*, Smutna ja smutna* (Sad I am, sad I am)*, Siwy holub (a) and (b)*

(The grey dove)*, Oj, ty dzieucyna* (Oh! my Maiden)*, Ja w alsyni wale pasla* (In the alder

wood I grazed my oxen)*, Tuman, tuman* (The mist, the mist)*, Nie idzi mostom* (Do not

cross the bridge)*, Dalina* (The valley) (Iwanowska and Onslow 1914b, 212-226).

The ten-year gap between the two translations is easily explained, taking into

account some major events happening at the time. Most obvious of these was World War

I which brought an end to the Cambridge "Neo-pagans" as their leader was lost in "some

corner of a foreign field" (Brooke [1914] 2007, 15) in 1915. For Belarus, it was a time of

numerous political changes, with the country's name being changed several times and

several armies looting the land[263]. Iwanowska, who returned home after her studies and

was involved in horse-breeding and equestrianism in Lebiodka, "suffered the hardships of

the War in Poland"[264] (Iwanowska and Onslow 1924a, 64). Huia Onslow, who had been

---

[263] In 1915, the Russian 40th army corps stayed in Liabiodka, leaving bare trees and fields after their retreat. The German army, which came subsequently, continued looting and even locked up Leonard when he tried protesting (Turonak 2006, 200).

[264] It is not quite clear where she spent the time between two world wars. Most likely she lived in Lebiodka, helping her father Leonard and looking after Vatslau's children. The biographical reference *Zemiane polscy XX wieku* claims she looked after the estate and was involved in horse-breeding in Lebiodka until 1939 (Iwanowski and Iwanowska-Kornecka 2002, 170). Yury Turonak does not provide any account of her whereabouts while Picarda claims that after the looting of Liabiodka by the Bolshevick army before German occupation, she was forced to leave and went to St Petersburg where "the family lived in modest circumstances". It is not clear who the family is. Turonak, on the other hand, states that Vatslaŭ Ivanoŭski moved to Vilnia in 1913, to Oryol in 1915, to Petrograd in 1916 and to Minsk in 1919 and to Warsaw in 1922 (Turonak 2006, 200-218), while his wife with their three children moved to Lebiodka in 1915 (*ibid.*, 195). Turonak mentions that she wrote agrarian pamphlets in

paralysed after a skiing accident in 1911, died in June 1922 before the third and fourth parts of the translations were published. Iwanowska travelled to the UK shortly before his death but little appears to have been done by them at the time in terms of translations. The preface to the third part of *Songs...* mentions that "the preservation and completion of this valuable collection of fast-vanishing folk-songs" only became possible due "to her recent visit to this country, and to the devotion of the wife of Mr. Onslow" (*ibid.*, 64). Thus, part III, published with the help of Muriel Wheldale, who married Huia in 1919, contains the following songs: *Pajdu ja dolam, luham* ("Oh! I will walk through the lowlands and meadows")*, A u sadu sosna kalyhcalasia* ("The pine-tree sways in the garden")*, Zakuj, zakuj, ziaziulenka rano* ("Sing, sing, cuckoo, in the morning")*, Oj recunka, recunka* ("Oh ! river, my river")*, Zasumiela sum dubrouka* ("The rustling oak-wood murmured")*, Sabirala dzieucynunka* ("The maiden gathered cherries")*, Pajdu ja na kiermas* ("Oh ! I shall travel to the fair")*, A u poli krynica* ("There's a spring in the field")*, Oj, isli try kazaki* ("Oh ! three Cossacks were walking")*, Stojic jawor pry darozie (a) and (b) versions* ("A hornbeam stands by the road-side"). Part IV completes the collection with: *Oj, pasou winahrad* ("Oh ! the vine was climbing")*, Zahrukacieli* ("The black horses")*, Nas malady jak surawieska* ("Our bridegroom is like a mushroom")*, Leta* ("Harvest song 1 and Harvest song, sung after the midday meal")*, Pawiej wiecier* ("Harvest song, Sung at any time of day")*, Nie syt, ni halodzien* ("Harvest song, III, (Sung after the midday meal)")*, Da uzo wiecer* ("Harvest song, IV, Sung just before

---

Belarusian which were published by his brother in Vilnia (*ibid.*, 193). Upon the death of Leonard Ihnatouski, 15 October 1919, the "juridicial status of Liabiodka was not clear for a while" (*ibid.*, 218) and it is possible that Helena stayed there to look after the 180 ha estate while legal issues were being settled. In 1924 she married Mr Skinder with whom she lived in Liabiodka until 1939. Turonak states that the husband was "deported to the East" (*ibid.*, 227), while *Zemiane* simply states that the couple was divorced (Iwanowski and Iwanowska-Kornecka 2002, 171). The reason for her move to Vilnia was quite simple: Western Belarus was re-joined with Eastern Belarus, and the former "exploiters", having seen the Red Army in action only a decade earlier, feared for their life. Since Vilna was a Lithuanian city, it was possible to find shelter there. The estate was in a state of disrepair while the family burial vault was defiled, with local children playing with the skulls of Leonard and Jadviha Iwanowskis (Ivanauskas T. Memuarai. Family Archive. Cited in Turonak 2006, 227). After that she moved with Vatslaŭ's ex-wife Sabina to Kouna (Kaunas). Sabina, with her daughter Anna, and Helena were given the title of "Righteous Among the Nations" in 2001 for saving and hiding two Jewish girls during WWII (Righteous Among the Nations 2011).

sunset"), *Huduc, huduc paludnicki* ("Call, call for your midday food"), *Oj, pajdu ja darohaju* ("Oh! I shall wander down the road"), *Trubił backa* ("The father sounded a horn"), *Zajcyk* ("The hare" [Dance Tune]), *Mikita* ("Dance Tune").

The translations are generally carried out in line with traditional "scholarly" foreignisation, with the visible presence of the translator who acts here as an ethnographer. Footnotes, explaining cultural information in the texts, abound. For instance, introducing the songs for special occasions in part IV, the compilers note:

> The first four are wedding songs, and their peculiarity is of course the extreme sadness of both words and music. This is not really so surprising as it seems at first, for in White Ruthenia weddings really are mournful ceremonies, or at any rate until quite recently they were so. For, when the peasants were serfs, their landlord had not only almost the power of life and death over them, and could have them beaten at his discretion, but he also could and did exercise his privilege of arranging their marriages, much in the same way as was done in America with the slaves. Thus often love and marriage came to appear mutually exclusive (Iwanowska and Onslow 1924b, 166).

In this case, as well as in several others, explanations of traditions or folk tendencies draw on cultural parallels with Anglophone realities. In some cases beliefs are identical, as with the singing of the cuckoo: "There is a belief, as there is also in England, that the number of calls the cuckoo gives on the first occasion in the spring, indicates the number of years that will elapse before the hearer marries" (Iwanowska and Onslow 1914a, 107); or at least comparable, as in wedding witnesses: "Drużatka (or drużko), one of the young men who accompany the bridegroom and are exactly analogous to the druika (bridesmaid). The nearest equivalent in English seems to be the best-man" (1924b, 3). In other cases, in the absence of "direct equivalents", the translators either employ other languages, such as French (""*ciahalsia*" – "*idle then*"

188

[There is no exact equivalent in English. The nearest is the French, flâner]" (1914a, 105)) or state the impossibility of finding adequate cultural substitutes: *"Oj niechaj jon skate jak Biełka – Oh! let him dance like "Towser"* [Biełka. The commonest name for a dog in White Ruthenian. There is no English equivalent]" (1924b, 170); "*Kudzielka* (nominative of *Kudzielku*). A word denoting the ball of unspun upon the distaff, for which there is no equivalent in English" (1924a, 74). The visibility of the translator in the *Songs...* is less threatening to the reader who is assured of the quality of translation due to the presence of footnotes resembling notes from ethnographic expeditions: "The maid cast forth / Four measures of salt" ["This is evidently a charm in the nature of a libation. Enquiry, however, among the peasants elicited no explanation of the ceremony, nor could any allied custom or superstition be discovered"] (1914a, 102).

The visibility of the translator-ethnographer is evident from the foreign lexis often transliterated in the text, such as *kamory* (1914b, 215), where the footnote provides information that "Kamora is the word used to denote the small room leading out of the main dwelling-room in peasants' cottages. Usually these two rooms compose the whole house" (*ibid.*). Sometimes translations of cultural lexis are done word-for-word: *U brzozowych lapcikach –You wear birchen shoes,* but it is still accompanied by a footnote "The peasant shoes, lapcie, were generally made of birch, lime, or willow bark" (1924a, 75). Unusual folklore comparisons are usually explained as well, whether they are transliterated or translated word-for-word: *"U čystym poli, pry dalini, / Lażić moj drużoček, jak malina – Down in the wood by the valley, / Like a bud my dear one lies* [Malina (a berry or raspberry) is a word applied to both men and women. It indicates the highest praise, being synonymous with youth, beauty, and freshness]" (1924a, 72); *Nas malady jak surawie'ka – Our bridegroom's like a mushroom* (1924b, 169). Often footnotes contain generalisations, rather than factual statements, as in the case of *bylina: Wysluzyd ja sabie, / Da bylinocku / Da u cystym poli, / Da mahilocku. -*

189

And that I have earned / Naught but a bylina, / And in the green field/ Naught but a grave (1914a, 104). The footnote to the word states that "the *bylina* is a plant which grows in the steppes. In the winter it loses all its leaves, nothing but the dry stalks remaining. It is therefore used here as the symbol of fruitlessness. The Cossacks were in the habit of returning from the wars with rich spoil" (1914a, 104). While this particular generalisation is likely to have been mostly true, some other cases reveal ethnographic guesses ("The Russian influence is most apparent, and in this instance it has probably been affected by those peasants who have returned home after having served in the Russian army" (1924a, 65)) or patronising attitudes. In the latter case, Iwanowska seems to equate the landowner-peasant relationship to the parent-child one, where Belarusian peasants are portrayed as uneducated, naive, and in some ways unspoilt: "Some [songs] are more like ballads than any hitherto published, and in two of them there is an attempt at humour of a peculiarly grim, rustic kind that is not usual among the peasants, *who are scarcely even cynical* [my italics]" (1924a, 64). She notices that "Owing to this Polish gloss the song is popular and considered smart, since everything Polish is much sought after, because the Poles, being the land-owning class, are accordingly looked up to" (1924a, 66-67). Obviously, that was not the case in the eastern part of Belarus, where landowners were Russian, making the "much sought-after Polish" statement true only locally.

The Polish and Russian influences are constantly highlighted in prefaces, with the translators making sure the reader is made aware of the most "unspoilt" songs: "The Polish and Russian languages, which sometimes affect not only the words but also the sentiment of these folk-songs, have left Nos. 7 to 15 practically unaltered" (1914b, 212). In one case, the Russian word for a famous spirit in the ST is even substituted with the neutral "drink" in the TT: *Twoja wina mnie nie mila, / Hej ! twoja wina mnie nie mila, / Twoja <u>wodka</u> ni salodka, / Ni salodka. – Your wine cannot please me, / Oh ! your wine*

cannot please me, / Your <u>drink</u> is not sweet to me, / It is not sweet" (1914b, 224). A footnote to the word states: "Literally *vodka. Harelka* is a more usual word than vodka in White Ruthenian" (1914b, 224).

As can be seen from the last examples, the translators are far from being too literal, otherwise *vodka* would have been employed with no explanation provided. This – and other examples – gives reasons to suggest that domestication was also widely employed in the translation. One example of that can be the usage of diminutives, on which the translators comment in part II: "As is usual, diminutives which can hardly be rendered in English have been made use of throughout. They do not, however, have very much meaning even in the original, being applied both to adjectives and nouns more from habit and the exigencies of the metre than from any other reason" (1914b, 212). It is, however, obvious from a later example that diminutives *do* have meaning, both as a feature of the genre as well as a conveyor of a multitude of emotions. In the same place where they make this statement, one of the songs contains three different variations of the adjective "near" which form the comparative and superlative degrees and have their own diminutives: "*A do hetoj bliziusieńkoj* [*Blizka, blizieńka, bliziusieńka. Blizieńzka* (nearer) is a diminutive of *blizka* (near), and is used as the comparative degree; *bliziusieńka* (nearest), which serves as the superlative, is the diminutive of *blizienka*, and has itself a diminutive *bliziusieniecka* (very nearest)]" (1914b, 218).

Another example of domestication is the translation of proper names: *Maryli – Mary* (1914a, 106), *Jasieńku kachany – John, my beloved!* (1924a, 81), *Jasieńka – John* (*ibid.*, 71), *Kasieńka – Catherine*[265] (*ibid.*, 71). An interesting combination of domestication and the foreignisation of proper names is the following example: "*Jedna panna Anna, / A druha Maryanna, / A trejcia Alutuńka - Mistress Anne was first / But*

---

[265] The last three examples are the diminutive forms of Jas' and Kasya, which are substituted by traditional full, rather than shortened, Anglophone forms.

Then next came Mary Anne / Andra was third [Alutuńka, lit. Alexandrina]" (*ibid.*, 78). Alexandrina, which normally would be shortened to Alex or Sandra, is given the more rare variation of "Andra", with translators keeping the flective "a" in traditional Slavic names.

Sometimes the ST information undergoes some significant changes:

Smutna ja, smutna,	Sad I am, sad I am,
Nie razwiesielusia,	And ne'er shall I be gay,
Chlopcy nie lubiac,	**Never a lad will care for me**,
Pajdu utaplusia.	I shall go and drown myself.
Pajdu utaplusia,	I shall go and drown myself,
U zialonoje wino.	**Among the green vines**.
Pajdu ja zabjusia,	I shall go and hide myself,
U puchowu piarynu.	In a feather bed (1914b, 215).

This is a fairly lighthearted song and the original *Chlopcy nie lubiac* means "Boys don't like me", which is less gruesome than the TT's predictive "Never a lad will care for me" and is not what the girl is seeking a remedy for. She is trying to drown herself not "among the green vines" but rather *in the green vine* and then go and crawl, rather than "hide" (*zabjusya*), into her bed. Less dramatic are also the thoughts of the two newly-wed husbands. In one example, *Oj jon lażyć dy dumaje, / Oj jon lażyć dy dumaje, / Što černiawu żonku maje. – Oh! as he lies there he is thinking, / Oh! as he lies there he is thinking, / That they married him to a dark wife* (1924a, 68). In the ST the husband literally "lies and thinks that he has got a dark-haired wife", while the husband in the TT is feeling more like a victim of circumstances. In another example a husband

who is not happy with his new wife's inability to take care of him (for which he, incidentally, does not blame her but his mother who married her off too soon) says: "*Sto nie umieješ paścielunki slaci, / Sto nie umieješ z milym razmoulaci*[266] – *For you cannot make the bed, / Nor even talk with your beloved*" (*ibid.*, 70). The intensifier "even" is not present in the ST.

A more literary "reworking" of the originals is evident from their usage of archaic pronouns and auxiliaries *dost, thee* and *thou*: "*Hdzie Ty chmielu zimawou – Where hast thou spent the winter, my hop?*" (1914a, 105); "*Jak ja cibie lublu, skaraj ty mnie Boie, – Should I not truly love thee, may God kill me*" (1914b, 225) among others. The translations also omit some references to God in exclamations, as in the example of "*Ach, Boże moj! ach Boże moj! Boze milusieńki! – "Alas ! Alas ! Alack-a day!*" (1914a, 102). Finally, there two instances of incorrect translation: *Učiora byl <u>paniedzielok</u>, / A dzisiaj <u>Utorak</u> – Yesterday was Sunday, / And to-day is Monday* (I, 102), while, in fact, the ST mentions Monday and Tuesday. In another example *Kazali swaćika bahata, bahata, / Ainu jona <u>lupata</u> – They say the "match-maker" is so rich, is so rich, / But she has got thick <u>lips</u>* (1924b, 171). The ST *lupata* means the matchmaker has goggly eyes. In spite of these inadequacies, the main meaning of the song is not changed and the translations in general demonstrate a very thorough and careful approach to the ST. The focus on the Anglophone reader interested in folklore provides a necessary platform for the dissemination of Belarusian culture, which makes the *Songs* a significant step forward in the development of Belarusian-English cultural and literary relations.

Another milestone in this process was an article in *The Spectator* published on May 8, 1915 by Weyland Keene. The title of the article, "The Polish People", is quite misleading as it describes Belarus, rather than Poland, as we know it today, and contains a poetic translation from Belarusian. Guy Picarda who made this discovery, suggested,

---

[266] "Sto" and "razmoulaci" would need to have been spelled "Što" and "razmoŭlaci" according to *latsinka* rules.

given Huia's Belarusian connections, that the authorship belonged to him[267]. The connection of the article to the Onslow family is quite strong, as a copy of it, including the translation, is kept in the family archives in the History Centre in Surrey. However, the description there assigns the article to Huia's brother, the Fifth Earl of Onslow (ref. 5337/10/(59)). The reasons for this assumption could be the considerable experience of the Earl in the Foreign Office and his interest in Eastern Europe[268] and in "the Polish question". In 1931, having retired from his work, he authored an article for *the Slavonic and East European Review* titled "Polish Self-Help under Prussian Rule, 1886-1908", which described the ways of resistance of the Polish minority to Prussian dominion (Onslow 1931). Nevertheless, the depth of knowledge of White Ruthenian issues in the article and Muriel Whelsdale's assertion that the authorship belongs to Huia support Picarda's opinion, creating another link between the Cambridge milieu and the dissemination of information about Belarus in the UK.

However, this link did not last. The First World War brought an abrupt end not just to the activities but also to the members of the 'Set': the death of Brooke brought the final end to "Neo-pagans" as the "core" of them was all gone [269]. Helena Iwanowska had moved from her native Lebiodka to Vilna and then to Poland, where after the war she worked as a translator at a help centre founded by British Quakers, and later moved to Kozenice where she lived until her death in 1973 "among kind and good people, receiving a small income which was paid by the Quakers and gave foreign language lessons" (Iwanowski and Iwanowska- Kornecka 2002, 171). She never did any other

---

[267] The discovery of the 'Set' and its activities belongs to Guy Picarda (2005a).

[268] Richard Onslow held a position in the British Embassy in St Petersburg in 1904 – 1907.

[269] In 1925, a year after Muriel's *Huia Onslow: A Memoir*, and not long before the death of her husband Jacques, one of the 'core' neo-pagans Gwen Raverat, nee Darwin, wrote to Virginia Woolf: "Anyhow it's all over long ago; it died in 1914 I should think, though it was sick before – Neo Pagans, where are they? Here's Jacques & me very old in Venice, & Ka so pathetic & lost in Cornwall; & do the Oliviers exist or not? Frances [Cornford] I believe carries on the tradition in the fields of Cambridge – at least as far as neo-paganism can be combined with evangelical christianity, (which I think anyone but Frances would find difficult.) And all the others are dead or have quarrelled or gone mad or are making a lot of money in business. It doesn't seem to have been a really successful religion, though it was very good fun while it lasted" (Pryor 2003)

translations from Belarusian into English or featured in the literary process. It was the other "fringe" members who provided a link between pre-war Cambridge and the Anglo-Belarusian Society founded in 1954, when Auberon and Mary Herbert, the former members of the wider circle of Onslow's friends, were among the Society's first founders.

4.3. First Soviet Translations

The first translations from Belarusian into English to be published in Belarus[270] appeared a couple of decades after the first English translations. In 1933, a newly founded literary magazine, *Soviet Culture Review*, published in English in Moscow, printed translations of two poems by poet laureates Janka Kupala and Jakub Kolas. This was the time of the start of Soviet mass-propaganda and in an attempt to find new channels for the dissemination of knowledge of Soviet culture and ideology new journals for foreign readers were founded. The two politicized translations appeared in the year of the poets' 50th birthdays (both of them were born in 1882) to mark the occasion, as well as to show their "correct" political stance. For instance, Jakub Kolas' verse 'Belarusam', translated by M.L. Korr as *To White-Russians*, is a typical example of an ideologically charged translation, with Korr's innovations being "the masses" or "our future common zeal", which are not mentioned in the original. The TT is the product of ideological manipulation aimed to present the "right" message to the Entente. Its transformations mentioned above display a banality and superficiality of style, making the work the first example of an English translation of a Belarusian work according to the standards of "social realism". It was also published in one of the worst years of anti-Belarusian

---

[270] Or, more precisely, in the Soviet Union, as most translations were printed by specialized publishing houses in Moscow. The first of them was *Foreign Literature* founded in 1930s. None of the English translations at the time appeared in Western Belarus.

sentiment within Moscow's governing circles. Written at the height of Stalin's purges[271] of all National Democrats and, hence, of everything evoking short-lived Belarusian political independence, the title of the poem is, understandably, *To White-Russians*. Here, with Belarus again reduced to the status of a province of Russia, political hegemony is evident from the translator's choice who could have easily chosen "Byelorussians" or "White Ruthenians", as had been previously suggested by Iwanowska (Kolas and Kupala, 1933). However, any association with "the Western press" was too dangerous and it is doubtful whether M.L. Korr knew of Iwanowska's translations since there was little communication between translators and presses from the opposite sides of the Western and Communist camps. Translators necessarily needed to be allied to either one or the other, creating two separate groups which used different channels for translation production and its subsequent distribution.

Janka Kupala's poem is his famous "А хто там ідзе?"(*Who Are They That March?*), which had a 'safe' stamp of approval as it had been admired and translated by Maxim Gorky. Next year the same poem appeared in a different translation (*Who Goes There, Who Goes There?*), разам з *On This Lofty Spot* ("Дзе стаяў двор панскі") выходзіць у *Literature of the Peoples of the USSR* (no translator is acknowledged).The period before and shortly after World War II was the time when the works of Belarusian authors were translated mostly, if not exclusively, by Soviet translators who were not native speakers of either of the languages involved in the translation process. Due to the Stalinist repressions of Belarusian intelligentsia[272] the accent was placed on politics and not the aesthetics of any literary activity, including translation. Translated texts mostly consisted of articles and speeches, and their target was not one of recreating a literary work but rather of letting 'them' know of the writers' social activities and their political

---

[271] The year 1933 saw one of the worst purges in Belarus. Only three years before Kupala had been proclaimed an 'ideologist of bourgeois national revivalism'; he had been summoned before the GPU several times and on 20 November 1930 he made a suicide attempt.

[272] Kupala himself had a narrow escape after his suicide. His death in 1942 in a Moscow hotel is considered suspicious and there are speculations that he was assassinated.

views. Close reading of the originals and the analysis of translations were done in terms of their representation of the social classes' struggle. Therefore, the traditionally sought-after qualities of literary translation, such as originality, aestheticism and, moreover, the cultural aspects of translation[273], were neglected, easily omitted for the sake of new ideals. Thus, several of Kolas's schematic and highly ideologically charged speeches were translated and published in the late 1940s-early 1950s (Kolas 1946, 1949, 1950). Even the writers themselves were forced into adopting this paradigm, e.g. in one of his speeches translated into English and published in the *Soviet Literature* journal in 1946, Jakub Kolas stated that serving the people is the essence of his 'work as a deputy and as a poet'. It is remarkable that the word 'deputy' takes precedence over 'poet' (Kolas 1946, 66). The next two chapters are going to discuss translations carried out in the Soviet Union and in the West during the 1960s – 1980s. This most prolific period for Belarusian-English literary translations saw the establishment of two different representations of 'Belarusianness': 'the New/Soviet' which was propagated in the USSR and 'the Old/European' disseminated by Belarusian communities in the West.

---

[273] Most of the authors on trial were charged with 'natsdem propaganda' (National Democrats), and therefore the ethnicity (Belarusian theme) in the works of their colleagues who were still free was to be sacrificed for the global (future Communism in every nation) or human (psychological) causes.

Chapter Five. 'Cold War' in Translation: 'New/Soviet Belarus' (1950s – 1980s)

After the London publications, the translation of Belarusian texts came to a halt in the 1930s. The period spanning World War II and the immediate post-war reconstruction in Belarus was, predictably, less prolific in terms of translation: the country had lost a quarter of its population, and several of its major cities, including the capital, Minsk, were nearly levelled to the ground[274] by both Nazi and Soviet armies. It is hardly surprising in these circumstances that a new period in the history of translations from Belarusian into English did not start until the 1960s, the time of the 'thaw' announced by Khrushchev[275]. Over the next two decades, the leading producer of Belarusian translations in English was the USSR (more specifically, Moscow). It is possible to see a link between the rise in the number of translations from Belarusian into English and one of the most successful periods of Soviet translation. These two decades saw a significant development of 'theory of translation' into an academic discipline as well as the mass-production and distribution of literary translations, both inside and outside the USSR.

The development of 'theory of translation' was rather fast-paced. Thus, in 1918, at the establishment of *Vsemirnaya Literatura Publishers*, Kornei Chukovsky was faced with the necessity of compiling a set of guiding principles for literary translators, a "manual" for a new discipline. Only decades later, in the much extended soon-to-be-classic version of the initial brochure *Высокое искусство* ("High Art")*,* he recalled the dire situation of the late 1910s in translation studies, when he felt like "a loner wandering down an unknown road" (Chukovsky 1988, 6). That road, which started with the total

---

[274] Over 90 per cent of the buildings in Minsk were destroyed.
[275] Alexander Gershkovich expanded the "weather" metaphor to cover the 70 years of Soviet rule, starting from "the intoxicating spring of the 1920s, then the long Stalinist winter with its subzero temperatures, and the brief and fickle Khrushchev thaw, which, by the late 1960s, turned into more permanent-looking Brezhnev frosts" (Gershkovich 1989, 1). By the mid-1980s, however, the famous "wind of change" brought in a storm that would result in a complete re-shaping of the republics' political and cultural climate.

lack of any single Russian monograph on translation at the time, led Chukovsky[276] to the point where he was able to conclude: "Now this is ancient history [...] Now times have changed" (*ibid.,* 6-7)[277]. By the time of his writing in the 1960s the field had witnessed a massive theoretical development: in the 1960s there appeared the second edition of Andrey Fyodorov's *Введение в теорию перевода/ Introduction to the Theory of Translation* (1958), Korney Chukovsky's *Высокое искусство / High Art* (1963/1988), Yefim Etkind's *Поэзия и перевод / Poetry and Translation* (1963), G.R. Gagechechiladze's *Вопросы теории художественного перевода / The Issues of Theory of the Artistic Translation* (in Georgian in 1959, translation into Russian in 1964), I.I. Revzin and Rozentsveig's *Основы общего и машинного перевода / The Basics of General and Machine Translation* (1964), the collection of articles in *Мастерство перевода*[278], *Теория и критика перевода/ Theory and Critics of Translation* (1962), *Тетради переводчика / Translator's Notebooks* (1963-1967). These monographs, written in accordance with the guiding principles of Soviet realism, laid a foundation for a "Soviet theory of translation". The guiding principles of this theory were outlined by Andrey Fyodorov in *Введение в теорию перевода / Introduction to the Theory of Translation,* a seminal work which underwent several successful reprints. Fyodorov's four guiding principles included:

---

[276] Famous for his translations, as well as research in literary history (the works of Nekrasov) and translation studies, Chukovsky received international acknowledgement for his accomplishments, including an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Oxford.

[277] Chukovski recalled that at the time of the first publication "there was not a single Russian book devoted to the subject of translation. When trying to write such a book, I felt like a lonely traveller walking on a unknown road. Now it is ancient history [...] Now the times have changed" /"Тогда не существовало ни одной русской книги, посвященной теории перевода. Пытаясь написать такую книгу, я чувствовал себя одиночкой, бредущим по неведомой дороге. Теперь этодревняя история [...] Теперь времена изменились" (Chukovsky 1988, 6-7).

[278] A series of thirteen collections of papers devoted to the issues of translation under the general title *Искусство перевода* (*The Mastery of Translation*) appeared between 1959 and 1985. They were edited by the best translation scholars and translation practitioners in the USSR, which included I.A. Kashkin, S.Ja. Marshak, K.I. Chukovski, P.M. Toper, G.R. Gachechiladze, E.G. Etkin among others. The first six issues were published between 1959 and 1969.

1) Adherence to principles and planning in the process of the selection of material for translation.

2) Range and variety of translated material.

3) General high level of skill, based on faithfulness of translation and keeping the artistic originality of the original, i.e. on truthfulness of translation, which is conditioned by: a) high quality of native language, which presupposes resistance to literalism and any sort of violence against native language and b) variety of devices, used in every concrete case.

4) Creative attitude towards translation and the absence of dogmatism in the principles of translation, which would allow greater freedom and flexibility in their application.

5) Research-based foundation in translation, including editing and production of translated literature (Fyodorov 1958, 125-126)[279].

The theoretical foundations of the guiding principles of Soviet translation, though, need to be interpreted in the context of their time and, therefore, "translated" for contemporaneous society. In the light of this the above-mentioned principles would today need some extensive reformulation or amendments. Thus, while Soviet translators were offered a variety of translated material and were fairly free in their aesthetic principles of interpretation (as long as these did not contradict the guiding principles of Soviet realism), the very selection of texts was a highly charged ideological matter. It is not

---

[279] "Эти особенности:
1) Принципиальность и плановость отбора переводимых произведений.
2) Широта и разнообразие переводимого материала.
3) Общий высокий уровень мастерства, основанный на идейно-смысловой верности перевода и сохранении художественного своеобразия подлинники, т. е. на правдивости перевода, условиями для которого являются: а) высокое качество родного языка, предполагающее борьбу с буквализмом, со всякого рода насилием над родной речью и б) разнообразие средств, применяемых в отдельных конкретных случаях.
4) Творческое отношение к переводу и отсутствие догматизма в самих принципах перевода, допускающих большую свободу и гибкость в их применении.
5) Наличие научной основы в организации работы по переводу, по редактированию, по выпуску в свет переводной литературы. Характерно, что в советских издательствах (начиная с деятельности издательства «Всемирная литература») выработался особый тип научного издания классических произведений иностранных и братских национальных литератур. Господствующим стал тот принцип, *что* работе переводчика должен предшествовать выбор наиболее достоверного и авторитетного текста подлинника – с учетом существующих редакций и вариантов, последней авторской воли, отдавшей предпочтение тому или иному из них, с учетом работы комментаторов-текстологов и существующих реальных комментариев" (Fyodorov 1958, 125-126).

accidental, therefore, that the first guiding principle is the principle of selection, or, more realistically, of text *manipulation*, refraction and metonymy in the representation of both individual authors and whole literatures[280]. In this context, the "truthfulness" of Soviet translation can only be regarded as a joke, albeit a cruel one, especially regarding those translators whose names were blotted out of the multi-volume collections of works or literary histories (Vitkovski 1998). If selection of material is accepted as the leading principle of the Soviet translation school, then it is possible to suggest that other principles (variety of material for translation, reverence of the ST, creative approach, and textual congruity) were compromised by, or at least are dependent on, a successful selection process. In practical terms, the selection of material for translation (both for distribution within and outside of the USSR) meant that Soviet translation had to comply with another set of conditions:

1) censorship (since most printed materials needed to go through a detailed selection process and be approved by Glavlit and the Committee for Printing Matters);

2) projection of a desirable Soviet image or values (i.e. propaganda);

3) Russification (in the case of foreign publications, most of the USSR had to present a unified front before the West and, since most foreign literature was translated and printed in Moscow, it had to be done either via Russian or use Russian as the intermediary language).

While the first two conditions have received fairly wide scholarly coverage[281], the third principle of Russified translation has hardly been mentioned in specialist literature. The Belarusian example can in this case be used to highlight this aspect of Soviet translation policies. This could also be a response to Baer's suggestion in his introduction to *Contexts, Subtexts and Pretexts: Literary translation in Eastern Europe*

---

[280] For more on Communist principles of translation see Monticelli (2011, 187-200) who terms it "totalitarian translation" and Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2009.

[281] For more details on Russian censorship, cf. Bliss Eaton 2001, Choldin 1985, Choldin and Friedberg 1989, Dewhirst and Farrell 1973.

and Russia that a "Belarussian" perspective on the international dialogue on the issues of Eastern European perspectives in translation studies should be included (Baer 2011). With this challenge in mind, the rest of this chapter will contain a general overview of English translations of Belarusian literature by Soviet translators and published in the USSR. When analysing the general tendencies of Soviet translations of this period, it is possible to point out some distinct characteristics of each of the three decades it covers:

1) the start of translations in the mid-1950s – early 1960s with periodicals and the first books by individual authors;

2) the "decade of anthologies" in the 1970s, where the first anthologies of Belarusian poetry and prose appeared in English, all of which became representative of the literature of the period and are unrivalled to this day;

3) the peak of translation in the 1980s with the highest number of translations published.

Since it is impossible to provide a comprehensive analysis of each book mentioned in the overview, the first anthology of modern Belarusian poetry will be analysed in more detail, as it is believed it represents all three of the qualities of Soviet translation theory discussed above. The issues of censorship, material selection and Russification of translation will come into focus in a concrete form as experienced by Walter May, a translator of nine books of Belarusian poetry into English. Some of his other translations will be mentioned as well, with a slightly greater emphasis on his work in comparison with other Soviet translators, a bias justifiable by his dedication to the translation of Belarusian literature at the time.

5.1. Translating 'ByeloRussia' in 1960s: Periodicals and First Books

The reasons for including Belarusian literature in the extensive programme of translations of 'Soviet multinational literature' into English were first and foremost, political. As founding members of the UN, Belarus, together with Russia and Ukraine, were protesting against the threat of war, and Belarus's image of a suffering Partisan Republic was actively promoted in its international representation. At the same time, the Soviet dream of establishing global Communism was being implemented partly with the use of Russia's former imperial tactics. As a result of the appearance of the "Soviet Bloc" in Eastern Europe, Belarus found itself a strategic line, safeguarding the "heart of the empire", "dear capital [...] the golden Moscow" (Lisianski 1951, 135), from possible invasion[282] from the West. In such circumstances, producing a unified front with other members of the Union, and particularly with Russia, was to be the cornerstone of Belarusian politics and, inevitably, its literature and translations.

In the 1960s, Soviet publishing houses became more involved in propagandistic activities. This is when Progress Publishers, a publishing house specialising in producing translations from the languages of the fifteen republics of the USSR into mostly Western European languages, was given its special status. It was first founded in 1931 as Издательское товарищество иностранных рабочих в СССР (Printing Partnership of Foreign Workers in the USSR). In 1933 it changed its name to Издательство литературы на иностранных языках ("Literature in Foreign Language Publishers"), and in 1963 became Прогресс / Progress (BES 2012). The vast majority of Progress' publications were translations of Soviet books, brochures and tracts reflecting Communist interpretations of a historical, economic or philosophical nature:

---

[282] Even today, on the border of Belarus, all trains arriving from Poland have to change wheels as the width of the Soviet rail tracks is different from the European standards. As a precautionary measure against future invasions it was particularly utilized after World War II.

A vast array of books written by Marx and/or Engels, plus Lenin were for sale. This

included the "Complete Collected Works" of Lenin in 45 volumes. Needless to point

out that a 2-volume "Reference Index to Collected Works of V.I. Lenin" could be

purchased to help you, perhaps, from nodding off by looking up a detail. Most, if not

all, the historical Russian/Soviet books were published by Progress Publishers in

Moscow (Wilder 2012).

Literary translations included Soviet and Russian classics: Gorky, Sholokhov,

Pushkin, Lermontov and Turgenev, among others. A special interest was shown in

translations of children's literature, of which the most popular were books illustrated by

Russian and Soviet artists, especially Bilibin[283]. In the USA, distribution was undertaken

via an intermediary company, *Imported Publications*, which provided an exclusive

service of ordering and shipping Soviet books[284]. In the UK, a company called Collets

served as an intermediary, according to Fr Alexander Nadson, the librarian of Francis

Scorina Belarusian Library in London (2011).

Since part of Progress' activities was the active promotion of Soviet

"outstanding achievements" in the literary field, it had to turn to the literatures of the

Soviet republics. Hence, since English was quickly rising to prominence in international

relations, Anglophone translations from Belarusian started to appear. These efforts were

further sustained by a specialised journal *Soviet Literature,* which was printed in English,

French, German, and Polish. The Moscow-based journal's focus was on translations from

the languages of the USSR's republics. Its English version from time to time included

translations from Belarusian literature, most of which were done with the help either of

---

[283] The Russian Collections of the British Library website has the image of Ivan Bilibin's Pushkin's *Skazka o tsare Saltane* published in St Petersburg in 1907 (BL 2012).
  [284] An associated risk of ordering from the publisher was the immediate visibility of your supposedly pro-Communist tendencies. Ann Elizabeth Wilder recollects: "In the years between 1970-1984, and more pointedly in the earliest of those years, if you were in the United States, the majority of titles from Imported Publications were unavailable from any other source. If one purchased books from Imported Publications, the thought crossed one's mind that somewhere a little check was made by your name – such was the fear of being thought a Communist sympizer" (Wilder 2012). The study of Progress' distribution and its reception in the West could be a subject of a further study, which is beyond the scope of this research.

Russian translations, or Russian *подстрочники,* word-for-word translations from the ST into Russian. Most of the time, these translations were published to celebrate an event, such as the 90th anniversary of the birth of Kolas and Kupala marked by Zheleznova's translations (Kupala 1972)[285], or the 70th anniversary of the publication of Maxim Bahdanovich's only book, *Вянок / Garland,* which saw a short article dedicated to his poetry and a translation of his *Sonnet* by Peter Tempest (Bahdanovich 1983). *Soviet Literature* gave a platform, albeit still an imperfect one due to ideological constraints, for the revision of existing clichéd representations of Belarusian poets[286]. Thus, in 1955, it published the first post-Stalinist, i.e. less ideologically censored, translation of Kolas' short story *Паміж дзвёх рэчак* ('Where the Brook Joins the River') translated by Margaret Wettlin (Kolas 1955).

A special issue of *Soviet Literature* in 1962 was devoted to Belarusian literature and fine arts and introduced several new translations of the then contemporary writers (Lyn′koŭ, Bykaŭ, Adamovich, Shamiakin, Melezh, Bryl′, Makayonak) and poets (Tank, Broŭka, Kuliashoŭ, Hlebka, Panchanka, Rusetski, Vialyuhin and Baradulin).

In general, English translations of Belarusian ST published in the USSR were carried out either by English native speakers who lived in Moscow and worked for Progress, or Belarusian translators who learned English at the Minsk State Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages (MSPIFL)[287]. In both cases, Russian intervention was necessary: for native speakers, Belarusian was a language commercially unviable, while Belarusian translators were educated through the medium of Russian in Belarus, including their translator's training courses at MSPIFL. Preference for Russian in

---

[285]Irina Zheleznova's translations included two translations of Kupala's verses *Who Goes There?* (another version of "А хто там ідзе?") and *We Are Proud Men and Free* ("Мы людзі свабодныя"). These translations were reprinted a year later in a separate brochure *National Poets of Byelorussia,* which was reprinted again to mark the centenary of the poets' births in 1981.

[286] Cf. Kolas' speech "Down the warmongers!" in "Soviet Literature" in 1950 which uses the world peace theme to call for action against "the warmongers", i.e. capitalists.

[287] Founded in 1948 as MSPIFL, since 1993 it has been known as the Minsk State Linguistic University.

translations meant phonetic changes in proper names, while little knowledge of Belarusian realities brought inadequacies in translations. Moreover, translations into a non-mother tongue learnt in a closed country with little exposure either to the TL or TL audience led to inadequacies in the pragmatic usage of language.

The limitation to one language of translation which was used for "international communication" within the SU was exacerbated by the censorship of ideas, especially with regard to "nationalistic issues". Glavlit[288], led by Pavel Romanov from 1957 until 1986, carried out propagandistic, conservative and protective functions. In 1966, its work was restructured and all of the 'creative workers' had to submit their work to their "trade unions" or respective organisations: the Unions of Writers, Artists, Sculptors, etc., to the editors of newspapers and journals. They, in their turn, sent the work to Glavlit, whose censors were forbidden direct correspondence with the 'culprits', making them "mythical clandestine figures who were allowed to be referred to (however, only in speaking, not in writing), but the ones no one ever saw" (Matokh 2007). Since most of the newly hired censors were usually university graduates with a degree in humanities, they were able to pick up hidden allusions and reminiscences. For Belarusian authors this meant it became impossible to raise the issues of Belarusian history or literary heritage outside of the limited circle of "safe" settings, such as village life or World War II. Consequently, most of the translations of the time present an image of Belarus as a country whose history contains nothing but constant oppression from Polish and then czarist (but not Russian) governments, a "Partisan Belarus" who experienced enormous sacrifice during the war and rose victoriously afterwards[289] – in line with the ideological discourse of the "New/Soviet Belarusianness". A telling example of the themes of war and village intertwined is the blurb of *Home Fires*, a collection of stories which contains the

---

[288] Glavlit was the main censoring organ of the USSR.
[289] The stereotype of "the peasant nation" began changing only with Perestroika in the late 1980s which is reflected in the selection of the material for translations.

following information on its back cover (it is the only introduction, as there is no preface to the edition):

> Their [most of the authors'] roots run deep into that very Byelorussia which suffered so greatly at the hands of the Nazi invaders during World War II, when whole villages were razed to the ground, and their residents massacred. The entire world knows of the genocide. But the people of Byelorussia found the strength to resurrect their country from the ashes after the war ended. The task of rebuilding war-ravaged Byelorussia was enormous, but it was undertaken with the enterprise and industry typical of its people. They put their creative talents to work to build a new life, they bore fine, sturdy sons and daughters, nourishing them with the fresh, life-giving juices of their native land. Some of these young people became writers, and following in the footsteps of their elder colleagues who defended Byelorussia during the war, they devoted their talents to telling the story of their beloved land (Moroz 1986, back cover).

The rhetoric of war, tragedy, massive loss, of different generations who draw their strength from the "juices of the land" from which they come, is conveniently borrowed from that developed by anthropologists and historians of imperial Russia. One of them, Bez-Kornilovich, a historian and a Major-General of the Russian army, sums up the history of the land in his monograph written a few decades after the Napoleonic war. In the passage which follows the description of the consequences of that military conflict for Belarus, he remarks:

> Byelorussia is a country where the disputes of feuding peoples have been solved by the sword; every mile in it has been argued for with courage, bought with blood, celebrated with glory! Byelorussia can be called a massive graveyard of countless dead who fought for the faith, rights of their masters, their honour and property; the dwelling place of

peaceful people, unlucky victims of war who have found their last peaceful abode in the

the bowels of the very earth on which they saw God's light for the first time, worked,

suffered and finished their temporary life with a prayer to God, with hope in their hearts

for a better life, everlasting![290] (1855, 18)

The previous Communist passage, evoking mythologies and metaphors almost

identical to those of Russian imperialism, is different in that a "better life" is being

promised to the poor 'unlucky' dwellers of that land in the present, or, rather, in the near

future, a rhetoric typical of "New/Soviet Belarusianness", which points towards a

continuation of the pro-Russian colonizing discourse in Soviet times. After World War II

it seemed that the future was coming indeed – at least, it was promised and that promise

was printed in bulk. The massive print production programmes in the late 1950s – 1960s

meant that Belarusian translations began to appear not only in periodicals but as separate

books as well. In 1955, the first book of fiction translated from Belarusian was published.

It was a collection of short stories written by Janka Bryl′ (Bryl 1955) and translated by

David Skvirsky, which contained the famous essayist's stories dedicated to village life

and its changes from being in demise under the Poles to a much more glorified position

under the Soviets.

The mass-production of English books translated from Belarusian, however, did

not happen until the next decade. The second book-length translation from Belarusian

appeared much later, in 1963. It was a novel *Third Rocket* by Vasil Bykaǔ the original of

which was printed only a year before. Published in Moscow and reprinted in 1966 and

1974 (Bogomolov et al., 1963; Bykov 1966), it became the first of many translations of

---

[290] "Бѣлоруссія – страна, гдѣ мечемъ рѣшались споры враждовавшихъ народовъ между собою; въ ней каждая верста была оспариваема мужествомъ, куплена кровью, ознаменована славою! Бѣлоруссію можно назвать обширнымъ кладбищемъ бесчисленнаго числа побитыхъ, сражавшихся за вѣру, права своихъ властителей, ихъ честь и достояніе: селищемъ мирныхъ жителей несчастныхъ жертвъ войны, нашедшихъ себѣ послѣдній спокойный пріютъ в нѣдрах той самой земли, на которой въ первый разъ взглянули на свѣтъ Божій, трудились, страдали, и кончили свой временный бытъ съ молитвою къ Богу, съ надеждою въ сердцѣ на другую жизнь лучшую, вѣчную!" (Bez-Kornilovich 1855, 18).

his works to follow. The first translation from Bykaŭ was soon followed by another classic of his, *Alpine Ballad*, a Hemingwayan portrayal of love in extreme circumstances of war (Bykov 1966). This translation was also subsequently reprinted (Bykov 1989). In fact, judging by the quantity of his translations, Bykaŭ (or, Bykov, in Russian transliteration) has been the most popular of all the Belarusian authors to be translated into Western languages. The author's popularity may be explained by his existentialist stance and psychological exegesis of an individual's choices made in the inhumane conditions of war and suffering. Another reason for Bykaŭ's good standing with Soviet publishers was the fact that he was a "safe" author who had received awards from the state and wrote on the "safe" theme of the sufferings of Belarus in World War II. Finally, most of Bykaŭ's works were easily available in authorised translations in Russian which significantly eased the translation process for native English speakers. The vast majority of Bykaŭ's translations contained the Russified versions of proper names, including his, and as a result he was not acknowledged as a Belarusian author.

The 1970s brought about another translation of Bykaŭ's: it was his novel *Сотнікаў / Sotnikaŭ* which appeared in Moscow in Brian Bean's translation as *Sotnikav* (Bykov 1975). It is interesting to note a mixture of Russified and Belarusian spelling in this version (according to the Library of Congress Belarusian transliteration system it would be spelt as *Sotnikaŭ*, while Russian transliteration would be *Sotnikov*). Apart from Bykaŭ's legacy, the 1970s could be perceived as "the period of anthologies": two influential and representative anthologies of Belarusian poetry in English were published (Rich 1971; May 1976). As one of them, by Walter May, will be analysed later in this chapter, and the other one in the next, it will be suffice to state here that both of them played a significant role in raising awareness of Belarusian literature in the West. In terms of prose, the first book of translations appeared in 1972. An anthology of short stories, *Colours of the Native Country* (Volk-Levanovich, 1972), contains the works

written by contemporary authors, many of them quite young at the time. It was translated

by Belarusian and native English speakers, who used a Russian translation as a support.

Despite this generally quite successful attempt at translation, because of the use of the

Russian language as a relay, numerous cultural symbols were transformed or

misinterpreted[291]. The preface written by Aleh Loika dates the beginning of Belarusian

literature in the 19th century, namely, Bahushevich's works and highlights the role of the

Soviet revolution as well as the toll taken by World War II. The new discourse of the

'Soviet Belarusianness' could not have been more obvious, and was noticed in a review

by Thomas E. Bird who wondered if the application of the name 'Belarusian' rather than

'Soviet Belarusian' was appropriate in its title as the anthology represented the work of

contemporaneous Soviet authors (Bird 1975, 134-136) .

Two prolific Belarusian writers of the time were honoured with an English

translation of their work: Ivan Shamyakin's *Snowtime* was published in 1973 in Olga

Shartse's translation, and Ivan Melezh's *People of the Marsh* was translated by Natalie

Ward and printed in 1979. The Russified transliteration gives grounds to suggest they

were translated via Russian media. Moreover, the preface to Shamyakin's novel mentions

the existence of Russian translations, stating that the popularity of the book "spread much

afield after it was translated into Russian and published in large impressions" (Shamyakin

1973, 3). How "far afield" the book reached is not entirely clear, but the writer, Nikifor

Pashkevich, considers it necessary to give the novel a wider context as "it may well be

that *Snowtime* will be the first encounter of our foreign reader with Byelorussian

literature, and so before speaking of the book itself I think I should say a few words about

the Byelorussian literary background, in the most general terms, of course" (ibid., 3). The

general introduction comprises 21 pages, which, paraphrasing Tymoczko (1995), may

prove an informational cost too high for a popular translation. It, nevertheless, was

---

[291] For analysis of some of the translations from *Colours from the Native Country,* see
Skomorokhova 1999.

favourable reviewed by Thomas E. Bird who predicted a surprised reaction from the English-reading public due to the novel's "forthrightness and plainspokenness about the continuing existence in Soviet society of careerism, professional competitiveness, friends gones stale, and onemanupmanship" (Bird 1978, 147). Having noted its psychological depth, the reviewer heralds the novel as "a capital introduction for the English reader whose familiarity with contemporary Byelorussian authors is generally limited to the selections contained in Vera Rich's splendid anthology, **Like Water, Like Fire** [sic.], or to one of the half-dozen of Vasil Bykov's titles available in English translation" (*ibid*.). The last comment makes it obvious that the 'other anthology' by Walter May as well as a few volumes of translations which had been produced in the USSR had not become incorporated into the perceived idea of 'Belarusianness' with the Anglophone readership. The division between the two camps and two discourses of 'Belarusianness' was obvious.

5.2. Upsurge of Belarusian-English Translation Practice (1980s)

Only a couple of years later the English-reading readers Thomas Bird was addressing would have found it difficult to ignore the increasing traffic of literary translations from Belarusian. The 1980s witnessed a real boom in English translations from Belarusian literature. Among the first books to appear in that decade were further translations of Vasil Bykaŭ's *Pack of Wolves* (Bykov 1981b), *His Battalion* and *Live Until Dawn* (Bykov 1981a).

In 1982, the centenary of Kupala and Kolas' birth, five volumes of translations of the classics were published. Four were by Walter May and were published in Russia as well as in Belarus. A volume of Jakub Kolas' verses *The Voice of the Land* (Kolas 1982b) and of Janka Kupala's *Song to the Sun* (Kupala 1982b) appeared in Minsk, while two volumes of poetry and prose were published in Moscow: *Only by Song,* the

translations from Kupala (Kupala 1982b) and *On Life's Expanses* from Kolas (Kolas 1982b). The translations of Kupala and Kolas' work were more than a mere commercial project for a British Moscow-based translator who as far back as 1967 had expressed his desire to translate Kupala. May admitted:

> I had intended to translate Kupala as well[292], and then through pressure of other work, and the negative attitude of English publishers, I decided to put the task aside for a while. I had visited the places connected with Kupala, his birthplace, even Vilnius, where he worked in the library, and so on, not forgetting of course the Yanka Kupala Museum, and had read his life story, and some of his poems in Russian translation. Later with the aid of a dictionary I read one or two, painfully but rewardingly, word by word, in the original, and realised at once that I was in the presence of a master (May 1973, 3).

In fact, it was Kupala's *А хто там ідзе?* (*And Say, Who Goes There?*) which was the first poem May translated from Belarusian, without using Russian as a relay. In 1972, a decade earlier than the appearance of the four books of his translations of Kupala and Kolas, May published an article in *Litaratura i Mastatstva*, the most popular weekly on arts and current cultural issues in Belarus called "Скарбніца паэзіі" ('Treasury of Poetry') which was translated in Belarusian and slightly edited[293]. The English original, 'Gems of Poetry', was printed in *Holas Radzimy,* a Minsk based newspaper for Belarusian émigrés. In it, May produced a general and fairly consistent comparative analysis of Kupala and Kolas' work and their influence on the development of the Belarusian literature. When contrasting the poetics of the two, May states:

---

[292] The context is of his first visit to Belarus and making the acquaintance of various Belarusian poets.

[293] Most probably by Jazep Semiazhon; however, the translator is not mentioned in the publication, a typical example of the much quoted 'translator's invisibility' (Venuti 1995/2008) at the time.

I made the acquaintance of Kupala before that of Kolas, and five years ago began to

study his life and works, but of course I was inevitably brought into contact with Kolas

then, because their fates are inseparably interwoven. [...] Kolas is rather more settled,

and a little more philosophical, especially in his lyrics, and they have not quite the "lift",

the emotional "charge" that Kupala's have. .. In Kolas, the teacher, the head was largely

dominant, it was the mind which spoke, while with Kupala, it was a simple rustic heart

that was heard. By this I mean that Kolas' verses are a trifle more polished, a little more

logically worked out, and not quite so free and spontaneous as these of his dear friend

and companion Kupala (May 1972a, 1).

This analysis of the classics' work and relationship seems rather simplified and

naive. However, at the time, ideological constraints would permit only one "truth", which

May accepted without much hesitation[294]. His admiration for Kupala and Kolas' work is

obvious from an analysis of his books of translations; each one is unique in some aspect.

Only by Song, for instance, contains sixty-two translations of Kupala which makes it the

largest translated volume of his poetry up to this day (May's anthology contains only

eleven translations while the single volume collections by other translators fall behind

even this small amount). Just ten of the translated texts were also translated by Vera Rich.

A questionable advantage of the book is that of its parallel text format, since the English

version is contrasted with Russian translations, not with Belarusian originals. Another

book of translations from Janka Kupala, *Song to the Sun*, was published in Minsk and

contains all the translations of *Only by Song* with the addition of an extra twenty-four

new translations. Belarusian originals are not included.

May's translations of Jakub Kolas demonstrate his professionalism in his careful

rendition of the original (except for a few slips in religious terms), as well as his devotion

to literary translation. *The Voice of the Land* (*Голас зямлі*) contains the largest number of

---

[294] His reliance on Belarusian Soviet literary critics and translators is evident from the literal absence of all contacts with the Belarusian émigré milieu.

English translations of Kolas published in a single volume (seventy works), a fact which is commendable not just of the translator himself but also of the compiler, Vasil Siomukha, himself a well-known literary translator from German into Belarusian. The works include sixty-eight chronologically arranged poems of Jakub Kolas written by him over the decades, as well as the famous extracts from his long narrative poems *Сымон-музыка* (*Symon the Musician*, the beginning of the third part) and *Новая зямля* (*New Earth*, extracts from I, XVI, XXV chapters, namely *Леснікова пасада/ Forester's Dwelling, Вечарамі/Evenings, Летнім часам/Reaping*).

The second book of translation from Kolas, *On Life's Expanses* (*На прасторах жыцця*), contains not only poems (30 verses which are also found in *The Voice of the Land*), but also short stories (11 works), among which are extracts from his novel *На ростанях* (*Lobanovich the Schoolteacher*), the long-short story *На прасторах жыцця* (*On Life's Expanses*), and two short stories from the cycle *Казак жыцця* (*From Tales of Life: How the Birds Saved the Oak, The Cricket*). The prose translations were carried out by Ian Butler and are the only translations of the famed Kolas prose into English (except for the short story *Як птушкі дуб ратавалі* (*How the Birds Saved the Oak-Tree*), which was also translated by Rem Lipataŭ in *Colours of the Native Country* (Volk-Levanovich 1972). Once again, Russian was used as a relay, which undoubtedly left its trace on the ST, first and foremost in phonetic transcription: *Lobanovich, Koryaga, the Neman* instead of Belarusian transcription *Labanovich, Karaha, the Nioman*.

That year another volume of Janka Kupala, *Songs as Clear as the Sky,* appeared in Minsk (Kupala 1982c). The translations were by Anisia Prokofieva who was criticized by Arnold McMillin in his review in the *Journal of Byelorussian Studies* for her unnatural English due to translating it into her second language (McMillin 1982). The book, however, contains a fair number of previously untranslated texts and therefore can be acceptable on these premises alone, if for no other reasons.

Kupala's most famous poem *А хто там iдзе?* (*And Say, Who Goes There?*), which became the ideological manifesto of Belarusian self-identity and nationhood[295], was translated into over a dozen 'languages of the world'[296] and printed a year later, in 1983, in Minsk (Kupala 1983). The UK official languages represented in the edition include English (by Vera Rich) and Welsh.

While undoubtedly dominated by translations from Kupala and Kolas, that year also saw a translation of Uladzimir Karatkevich's *The Land Beneath White Wings* (1982), a poetic essay about Belarus, her culture and her literature. It was one of the rare cases of direct translations from Belarusian carried out by Apollo Weise (Apollon Veise), a lecturer at MSPIFL, and Walter May, who translated the poetic quotations[297]. Beautifully illustrated with some rare photographs from 19th century ethnographic expeditions, the book contains unique materials from Belarusian folklore, economy and geography. Its English is refreshingly informal, reflecting on Karatkevich's original style, but it is still inconsistent in its spelling, mixing both Russian (*Larisa Geniyush*, rather than *Larysa Heniyush*; *Mogilev*, rather than *Mahilyou*) (Karatkevich 1982, 30-31) and Belarusian (*Kamyanets* (ibid., 48), *Yanka and Yaughinya* (ibid., 63), *Kalinouski* (ibid., 142)) – or both in one word, as in *Frantishak Bagushevich* (ibid., 140-142)[298].

Another seminal year for translations from Belarusian was 1986. The second volume of translations of fiction *Home Fires: Stories by Writers from Byelorussia* appeared under the auspices of Raduga Publishers in Moscow. Compiled by Elvina Moroz from numerous individuals, its second title in Russian is taken from Mikhas Straltsoŭ's story *Gutting the Hog*. It was a second anthology of short stories by

---

[295] This interpretation of nationhood was especially supported by the Communist regime as it fitted the propagated view of Belarusians previously 'always oppressed' by either Polish kings or Russian czars, and then finally liberated and educated by the 'older Russian brother'. Realising this gracious generosity, 'the younger brother' is gratefully joined with 'the older brother' in timeless fraternal unity.

[296] It is also the Belarusian poem which has the largest number of English translations.

[297] Some of the quotations are from *Taras on Parnassus*, which will appear a decade later as a separate book in May's translation.

[298] The Russified spelling of the poet's name, according to the Library of Congress transliteration, is *Frantishak Bogushevich*, the Belarusian is *Frantsishak Bahushevich*.

Belarusian writers and, apart from Straltsou, introduced stories written by Vasilʹ Khomchanka, Aliaksei Dudaraŭ, Ivan Chyhrynaŭ, Vasil Bykaŭ, Janka Brylʹ, Vasilʹ Hihiyevich, Viktar Karamazaŭ, Aliaksej Kulakoŭski, Uladzimir Karatkevich, Anatolʹ Kudravets, Henrikh Dalidovich, Ivan Navumenka, Aliona Vasilevich, Barys Sachanka, Ivan Shamiakin, Viktar Kazʹko, Volʹha Ipatava, Ivan Melezh, Viachaslaŭ Adamchyk, Leanid Kalodzezhny, Janka Sipakoŭ, Jan Skryhan, Alesʹ Zhuk[299]. Most of the translators were Russian speakers, a fact which again influenced the translation strategies, e.g. proper names transliteration (Moroz 1986).

The same year marked the jubilee of another modern classic writer of the time, Maxim Tank. To celebrate the occasion, three volumes of English translations of his verses appeared then, *Red Lilies of the Valley*, translated by Anisia Prokofieva (Tank 1986c), and two by Walter May. The first of these is a selection from the six volume edition of his works comprising 120 chronologically arranged translations (Tank 1986b). The edition aims at producing a fair representation of Tank's poetry and generally succeeds. Tank was quite close to May's poetics. He was the third author on his list of most favourite Belarusian poets (Hardzitski 1977, 147). This appreciation may be explained by Tank's contribution to the development of new poetic forms in Belarusian literature (his experiments with alternative forms in poetry at the time of the predominance of traditional syllable-stress versification) and of seeking new ways of enriching its contents (a wide panorama of themes). The second book is a children's book, *A Tale of Cosmic Travels of Ant the Tramp* by Maxim Tank (Tank 1986a).

In the last years of the Soviet Union, three more volumes of translations from Belarusian appeared. The first of these was a translation of Uladzimir Karatkevich's novel *Дзікае паляванне караля Стаха* (*King Stakh's Wild Hunt*) discussed earlier in Chapter Three. The English version (Karatkevich 1989) was produced by Maria Minz,

---

[299] Given in Belarusian transliteration here, all of these writer's names were transliterated according to the Russian system in the translation.

one of the lecturers of MSPIFL, whose translation paid attention to the historical details mentioned in the ST but whose language seemed unnaturally bookish at times[300].

As can be seen from this list, Soviet translations of Belarusian literature often were done via Russian, were initially only printed in Moscow (a policy which was slightly relaxed in the 1980s) and were translated to mark special occasions, such as centenaries or significant birthdays of established literati, and rarely had more than one translation version. Soviet editorial policies of translation manipulation are vividly observed from the analysis of the first anthology of Belarusian poetry produced by Walter May at the height of the "stagnation era".

5.3. Representing 'Byelorussia': First Anthology of Modern Belarusian Poetry in English

The first anthology of Belarusian modern poetry was published in 1976, five years after its 'rival' produced by Vera Rich (Rich 1971). Translated by Walter May, after a long dispute with the editors it was named *Fair Land of Byelorussia. An Anthology of Modern Byelorussian Poetry* (May and Tank 1976). Walter May mostly translated contemporary poets but also included the trio of Belarusian classics. Altogether there were 59 poets translated, although the original idea was of a more modest edition. Thinking back to the beginning of the anthology, May recalls:

The process really began in 1967, when I visited Byelorussia for the first time, and got to know Janka Kupala[301] and a dozen of the foremost Byelorussian poets such as Tank, Brovka, Panchenko, Luzhanin, Kuleshov, Los and others. I then conceived the

---

[300] For the analysis of this translation, in particular, the cultural specifics of the ST, see Skomorokhova 2000.
[301] By 'know' May is referring to Kupala's legacy in Belarus, as the author had passed away in 1942.

idea of a small anthology of Byelorussian verse – about 80 poems or so, and on my

return to England began work (May 1973e).

What motivated this translator to come to Russia and then start translating

Belarusian poetry can provide an interesting insight into the lives of Western translators

working for *Progress* during Soviet "stagnation" period. Brighton-born Walter Cyril May

(1912 – 2006, Moscow) started writing poetry at 35 when he was a primary school

teacher at West Hove Junior School. Barely interested in poetry earlier in his life due to

what he described as a school diet of Milton and Pope, he came across a citation from

Shelley in one of his economics books. May began to be interested in Shelley, Keats, and

Swinburne, who influenced his poetic style, and, inevitably, translations (May, nd,

Autobiography). An avid learner, he was interested in the East, in its history and

philosophy, and that provoked his interest in Russia. An Esperanto enthusiast, he used it

to correspond worldwide, including to Russian poets. His first visit to the USSR was in

1959.

Upon his return, May became an avid supporter of the British-Russian

relationship and for many years was the Chair of the local Brighton branch of the

Soviet-British Friendship Society. In 1962, he started learning Russian and, taking

advice from his teacher, began reading poetry in the original. He was fascinated by

Pushkin and also did translations from Lermontov and Nekrasov, as well as his

contemporary poets, which, unlike the Russian 19th century classics, were not well

known in the UK. A number of visits followed in 1963, 1965 and 1966, when May went

to Moscow to study Russian in Abramtsevo as well as to meet Russian poets and

translators, particularly Semyon Kirsanov and Evgeny Evtushenko. In 1967, he took

part in the 1st Congress of Translators of Soviet Literature. On his way back to the UK,

he visited Belarus, where he also met several poets. At a summer cottage on Lake

Naroch, belonging to Maxim Tank, poet laureate and the Head of the Belarusian Writer's Union, the idea for an anthology of modern Belarusian poetry in English was born. However, at that stage May still lived in the UK and was mostly interested in translating from Russian. As Olga Nemirovskaya wrote in 1966, 'eight years ago he knew nothing of our language' (Nemirovskaya 1966), but by that time he had already prepared

> an anthology of Russian and Soviet poets, containing 450 poems, from the ancient Russian *byliny* up to verses just recently written. He assigns a conspicuous place in the anthology to contemporary poets (Nemirovskaya 1966, 7).

In 1968, May signed a two year contract with the weekly *Moscow News,* the official press of the Soviet-British Friendship at the time. This meant moving to Moscow, which he was happy to do to escape what he saw as growing Americanization and the commercialisation of "the sick man of Europe". Upon becoming the 'style editor', May managed to double the circulation of the newspaper in two weeks. He really believed in what he was doing and the words written under a newspaper clipping of Moscow News office years later reflect his attitude both as a style editor as a translator: "This is where I worked for peace, friendship and cooperation between the peoples. June, 1968 – Feb 1975" (May, nd, Album).

Gradually, he became less interested in editing and more engaged in translation activities, working on Pushkin and contemporary poets. Highly popular in the 1960s, poetry readings gathered full auditoria and even stadia of eager listeners. Naive, enthusiastic, black-and-white colours of poetic discourse of the time appealed to May with his appreciation of modesty and simplicity of expression. However, Soviet publishers needed more than simply aesthetic reasons to publish poetry. Since Pushkin

219

had already been translated into English, May was given another job by Progress Publishers.

It was an anthology of children's stories titled *The Immortal Trumpeter*, which contained stories by Russian writers. Even though the translation material was approved and pre-selected for May, he nevertheless had to deal with Soviet editors and their views of Soviet pedagogy. For the first time, he had to defend his position as a translator in a conflict with the "very hard-headed editor", who had "no great experience with children", as he complains in a letter to the translator Jazep Semiazhon[302]. In spite of this, the editor neglected his advice, dismissing his twenty years teaching experience (May 1972a). Voicing his complaint May did not realise that his editor would not dare to take a position on pedagogical issues, which were ideologically charged and could only be decided upon by the editors' boss, and, in the end, Glavlit. Another reason for refusing May's advice was his background: May's teaching had been in a bourgeois system, antagonistic to the Soviet, which immediately devalued his professionalism in the eyes of the censors. The fact of the book's publication in English and its distribution abroad, had very little impact on the publishers' decision, as the issue of paramount importance for them was the message they wanted to transmit.

Through this experience, however, May showed himself able to come to a compromise, and soon he received a phone call from Progress saying that "someone from the Writer's Union from Belarus was looking for him regarding an translation offer for Belarusian poetic anthology" (Serostanova 2005). Thinking back to its start in 1973, he recalled his earlier efforts in 1967, when he tried to get it published in the UK, but "then through pressure of other work, and the negative attitude of English publishers, I decided to put the task aside for a while" (May 1973a,1). The negative attitudes were fairly explicable due the predictable lack of interest in a commercially

---

[302] Jazep Semiazhon, a translator from English into Belarusian, became May's "first correspondent" in Belarus and was involved in the initial stages of the preparation of the anthology.

unprofitable project. Such an attitude is hardly surprising, given the circumstances. Moreover, the attitude of his Russian publishers was far from enthusiastic as well: "When I came to Moscow to work, I went to Progress publishers and tried to interest them in The Byelorussian Anthology [sic.] but met with no response, that was in 1969" (May 1973b,1). The publishers needed more than an aesthetic incentive for publishing poetic anthologies, and this was provided for them in 1972:

> Then came the awakening in the year of the 50th Jubilee of the Soviet Union, and the wide interest created in the various republics, and their poetry. I was told that Shamyakin[303] had been to Moscow, had spoken to the editors at Progress, and their [sic] was now real opportunity to get an anthology of Byelorussian verse published (May 1973b, 1-2).

May felt that his dream was coming true and quickly began working on it. On January 8, 1973, he wrote to his friend Yakov Khelemsky, a translator of Belarusian poetry into Russian and the first Soviet translator May had met[304]:

> My work on the Byelorussian Anthology goes on very well. You remember, that 7 years ago I started a small one, in the hope of getting it published in England. Now it is expanding every day, and has reached 5,000 lines already! (May 1973a)

Interested in working towards 'establishing cooperation between the peoples' (which May interpreted as being between various republics of the USSR and the West), he eagerly took up the opportunity. Progress Publishers gave him verbal permission to start. However, for the publishers this was not a legal agreement: on their part,

---

[303] Who had gained fame as a writer and was, coincidentally, an influential Party leader at the time.
[304] Initially, May envisioned the anthology as a small project, as he was more interested in Russian as it was the language he knew. He started translating from Belarusian as a favour to Khelemsky whom he met whilst still in the UK and who recommended Belarusian poetry to May.

permission was given for him to start the project and be paid upon completion of the book. Evidently, at this stage Progress were not too concerned about the contents and the terms of completion. Mostly likely, they were not even sure the project was going to happen. May, on the other hand, was enthusiastic about it. He already had some translations from his first visit to Belarus and wrote to Semiazhon asking him for some more materials for the anthology. He mentioned several poets they both knew, he had a list of ten poets and was willing to include "possibly another twelve". He asked Semiazhon to pass on the information to "comrade Hrachanikaŭ, who it seems will be responsible for this"[305] (1972a). It is evident that May relied on Semiazhon's knowledge of the situation, as well as his aesthetic judgment, by entrusting him with selection of the material. He still envisioned a book consisting of twenty poets' work, and, as far as he was concerned, he almost had all the material for it translated already. Naively, he had no understanding of Semiazhon's predicament: the latter simply could not "allocate" places to writers of literature. This function was only reserved for special agencies operating in full accord with totalitarian ideologies, and any judgement passed needed to have official stamps and signatures of the responsible bodies. In this case, only the Belarusian Writers' Union, authorised by Glavlit, had the power to do that, and had Semiazhon agreed to choose the "worthy candidates" for inclusion in the anthology, he would have become *persona non grata* in literature. His reputation, although quite stable, was still vulnerable and, like most translators, he was under close watch, with questions about the 'real' purpose of his study of foreign languages being suspiciously voiced behind his back (Laptsyonak 2006). The transparent, safe language of 'international communication' of the USSR was Russian. Semiazhon, however, knew the situation well, as at the time he was editing an anthology of Belarusian poetry in French for UNESCO and he had also been involved in Vera Rich's anthology.

---

[305] Hrachanikaŭ was the Deputy Chair of the Belarusian Writer's Union.

Therefore, he initiated the process using official channels, namely the Writers' Union of Belarus.

While waiting, May continued to translate. He worked on poetry by the people he met: Vasil' Vitka's , a children's writer, and Uladzimir Duboŭka, a poet and prominent Belarusian translator from English, whose translations of Shakespeare's sonnets are considered one of the best, if not *the* best, versions in Belarusian. A former victim of the Siberian labour camps for his poetry, Duboŭka lived in Moscow. This meant that he and May could exchange phone calls and even have meetings, albeit infrequently due to Duboŭka's failing health and early death in 1976. Their correspondence shows that the Belarusian poet was very pleased with May's translations and touched to be able to see his own poems translated into the language he associated with that of Shakespeare (Duboŭka 1972). Another fact evident from May's correspondence at the time is that he was translating without much recognition either from the publishers or from the Writers' Union of Belarus. Both agencies seemed unsure who would need to make the first step to 'legalise' the project and who would bear the full responsibility for it if something went wrong. 'Legal' aspects of the translation finally came to the surface in May's letter to Tank:

> "You understand that this book is illegitimate! We started, say, from the end and
>
> came in through the back door! Without it, it would not have been born at all! So
>
> that it would not be lost, have we not put much great effort into it? I offered this
>
> book to "Progress" five years ago, but there has not been any progress there till
>
> now. Luckily, Ludmila and I are doing everything needed here, but can you please
>
> make a full list of contents over there asap, because it is crucial for the official
>
> contract with the translator, and I am still working in hope!"[306] (May 1973d, 2)

---

[306] Translation is mine. ST: "Вы понимаете, что это книга незаконорождена! Мы начали, скажем, от конца, и пошли по черному ходу! Без этого, она совсем не сродилась! Не пропало бы, разве мы не все это с большим трудом делали? Я пять лет тому назад уже предложил эту книгу

However, the official machine was slow to respond and six months passed without any arrangements being made. In various letters May was wondering who would be responsible for sending future materials for the anthology, which was quite tactful for someone who had waited several years and translated over 90 poems. Finally, on December 1st 1972, he gladly reports to Semiazhon:

> Yesterday, at a Moscow celebration of the 90th anniversary of Yakub Kolas's birth, we met Shemyakin and our friend Grechanikov, and learned that a selection committee had already decided on a programme for future translations. You, presumably, were involved in this, and I am glad that things are moving now, since I am prepared to go right ahead with this work. I hear that Vera Rich's anthology is now passed for issue in Byelorussia, but I can't get a copy here in Moscow, though I have tried. I should be very grateful if I could see a copy, if only on <u>temporary loan</u>, so that I could get an idea of the contents, and not repeat things already translated, and likely to be used, perhaps, in the new anthology. I am also interested, naturally, in the level of the work of Vera Rich, and won't neglect to cast a critical eye on her translations (1972b).

May had to wait another year to 'cast a critical eye' on Rich's anthology, which passed unnoticed in the Soviet Union. Not only did hardly anyone in Soviet Belarus know the language well enough to evaluate it, those that did were too cautious to pass a verdict with regards to a book associated with the émigré milieu and 'the other' interpretation of 'Belarusianness'. It was a case of censorship for altogether different reasons, and Semiazhon could not provide May with a book that quickly went into *spets hrans* (special storage units). The translator was only able to obtain its contents page from his

---

"Прогрессу" а там прогресс не было до сих пор. Хорошо, мы с Людмилой все делаем здесь, что надо, но Вы там сочинайте так скоро как возможно этот польнай список содержания, ибо на это зависит официальный договор с переводчиком, а я еще работою только в надеждах!" Author's authography has been retained.

UK-based brother-in-law. Luckily, he did not have to wait long before receiving an impressive list of the officially approved candidatures. The list contained 50 names and was signed by Maxim Tank, the Chair of the WU, and his deputy, Anatol Hrachanikaŭ. It was stamped with the official seal of the Belarusian Writer's Union, which meant, it was 'officially approved'. In the accompanying letter of 7th February 1973, Hrachanikaŭ informs May that

> The Writers Union of Belarus has finally decided on the list of names of writers whose names must be included in the anthology of Belarusian poetry. It would be desirable if the number of verses of a particular author would correspond to the place he takes in the line of poetical names. We will need to clarify this issue with you later on (Hrachanikaŭ 1973a)[307].

This was the first time May had been confronted by the massive bureaucratic machine, demanding the rigid placing of poets "in the line of poetical names". May responded by suggesting some fluid categories as "the most major, major, not so major and minor" (May 1973). However, the issue was further complicated by Progress. Now that the project had been recognised and approved officially, the publishers were more willing to cooperate, but on their own terms. They wanted to have an editorial committee with several Belarusian writers on it to be able to exercise full control and to make sure the project had the necessary backing, even though some of the committee members had little to do with the project. The actual work was to be done by May, his wife Ludmila and Anatol′ Viartsinsky, the chair of the poetry section in the Belarusian Writers' Union. The editor-in-chief, Raisa Shubina, also demanded the list of all poems

---

[307] Translation is mine. The original is typewritten on an official letterheaded paper of the Board of the Union of Writers of BSSR. ST: "Союз писателей окончательно определил перечень имен писателей, произведения которых необходимо включить в антологию белорусской поэзии. Хотелось бы, чтобы количество стихов определенного автора соответствовало его месту, занимаемому в ряду поэтических имён. Этот вопрос нам еще предстоит уточнить вместе с Вами"(Hrachanikaŭ 1973a).

and a word-for-word translation or Russian translation of each poem planned for inclusion. Her stated preferences are quite revealing about her knowledge of the subject and potential competence in translation in general. Thus, when given a choice between a word-for-word translation of Belarusian STs or a Russian translations of poems, she states, "Russian translations are even better" (Viartsinski c.1973b, 1). Such a request, coming from a literary translation editor, seems to raise doubts about Shubina's professional competence. However, the background knowledge that everything she read would also be read by a Glavlit censor, presents her request in a different light: sending Russian translations would eventually ease the work of the "clandestine and mythical", yet nevertheless very real, censor reading them. Only after the successful completion of these requirements was May informed, on 29 March 1973, of the publishers' agreement to sign the contract.

Over the next two years, Viartsinsky and May's correspondence shows the numerous obstacles that both of them had to overcome while keeping a balance between the officialdom of Progress and the internal policies of the Writers'Union. The situation was further complicated by the decision of Progress to shorten the size of the volume to almost half of what May had expected. Only after his plea and Tank's mediation (which was sent not to Progress but to the Committee of Print) was the anthology granted its final volume of 7,000 lines. Altogether, May translated over 10,000 lines, with 8,000 of them translated in a year when he did not have any official assurances of publication or any payment for it. During that time, May started learning Belarusian and made a couple of visits to the republic. This new cultural awareness gave him grounds to suggest to the editors some changes in the texts. His first suggestion, altogether ignored by the publisher, was to do with the most obvious feature of Belarusian texts in translation, i.e. its transliteration, of which he tried to persuade the editor:

1. <u>Names of poets.</u> Byelorussian "G" sounds like a heavily accented "H", and therefore I wrote "H" for Hilyevich, Havrusov etc. However, I agree that the "G" looks more recognisable, and so let us have Gilyevich, Gavrusov, and so on.

The Byelorussian Ў, generally accepted <u>in diphthongs</u>, as U, cannot stand as "U" in <u>Uladzimir</u>, because it is <u>not</u> a dipthong there, but a <u>half-vowel.</u> The Englishman will surely pronounce this U-lad-zi-mir as it had <u>four</u> syllables, not three. Wladzimir Dubouka told me himself that his name should be spelled with "W".

I don't feel so strongly about "Y" for the Russian "Ы" although this vowel has a short sound of the English "I" really. "Y" is usually long, as in "by, my, try, cry, fly, and so on. I therefore wrote "I", but I see it has been changed, to my mind unnecessarily (May, 1975, 1)[308].

Here, the spelling which May – unknowingly – was propagating was precisely the Belarusian transliteration in English, rather than the "recognisable" Russian (Russian *g* instead of Belarusian *h,* picked up by May as the first on his list of transliteration issues) recommended for all of the translations done by Progress. It is not surprising that May's suggestions for Belarusian transcription of names (*h* instead of Russian *g*, *w* instead of *ŭ*, etc.) were too novel (and ideologically dangerous) for the time and were rejected at once. Dubowka's authority, which May used to support his argument, was not a strong one for the publishers and even eventually caused criticism from a reviewer[309]. Today, however, some of the above-mentioned cases of Belarusian transliteration were accepted as the official English spelling of Belarusian proper nouns and as such are found in the spelling of surnames in most Belarusian passports. The general legacy of Russian influence in transliteration is still strong, however. Thus, a

---

[308] The original orthography of the translator is kept.
[309] Dubowka's name is spelt as *Duboŭka* according to Library of Congress transliteration (the latter version used throughout this thesis). In his review of the anthology, McMillin uses this example to highlight the transliteration inconsistencies in the book, calling the employed spelling "somewhat russified, and in any case chaotic" (1977, 50), while Duboŭka's surname is an "improbable name Wladimir Dubouka" (*ibid.*).

recent Council of the European Union's Decision 2011/69/CFSP of 31 January 2011 exhibits irregularities in the spelling of Belarusian surnames, using either both Russian and Belarusian transliteration or just one of them (with Russian given preference in the latter case).

Another problematic issue was that of the title. May's preference was for Kupala's famous poem *But Who Marches There?*, the main theme of which is the long-suffering of the Belarusian people and their desire to be recognised as a worthy nation in their own right. However, the editors had a different opinion. Several titles were offered, including: *Blue Eyes and Rye Bread; Tender and True; To be Called Humans; Flax, Forest and Far Horizons; Flaxen Hair and Blue Eyes; Fair Land of Byelorussia; For Sunshine, For Happiness; Where the Rowan-Berries Blow; The Path Through the Forest; The Sky Above the Pines; Wide Skies Above the Pines; The Springs of Courage; Pure Springs; Through Days of Shine and Shade; Through Shine and Shade; Come, Welcome Guest! Bread and Salt of Hospitality; Brown Bread and Honey; Butterflies Over the Marshes; Bountiful Byelorussia; Byelorussian Bounty*[310]. From this list, it is evident that TL allusions, reminiscences, i.e. the reception of these texts, were not taken into account by the publishers. It exemplified, in the words of the editors of *NLO*, "Soviet translation as a multi-level system of filters which sifted culturally 'other' only as "foreign", which did not permit any dialogue"[311] (A.D. et al. 2008). The list of titles shows that 'cultural dialogue' and 'better understanding of peoples' so often proclaimed by Soviet leaders was actually quite low in the list of priorities of Progress. While Walter May did persuade the publishers that *White Storks* was not a suitable title because of the associations with childbirth, his ultimate choice for *Who Goes There?* was not granted. Out of the whole list, the *Fair Land of Byelorussia* seemed to hold

---

[310] All tentative titles here highlight 'New/Soviet' representation of 'Belarusianness'.

[311] ST: "Советский перевод как многоуровневую систему фильтров, пропускавших культурно иное только как «заграничное», не позволявшее вступить с ним в диалог". Cf. similar arguments in Monticelli 2011.

fewer implications and potentially dangerous interpretations, which explained the editors' choice. Interestingly, when reviewing the collection, Jazep Semiazhon pointed out an allusion in the title to Lewis Carrol's *Alice in Wonderland*, which was lost in the secondary Russian title "Моя прекрасная Белоруссия" / My Beautiful Byelorussia (Semiazhon). One of the compilers of the history of Russian literary translation in the 20th century, Evgeni Vitkovsky, writes decades later:

> We were told we lived in Wonderland, but it was a demagogic lie: almost all of the 20th century we lived behind a Looking Glass. We were not allowed to live out our own life: instead, we had to reflect reality[312] (Vitkovski 1998)

Thus, the "cracked looking glass" or "broken mirror" metaphor, popular in translation literature, in this case receives a deeper – and darker – meaning in the context of censored translation. It was certainly true of this collection which only allowed those poems approved by the Writers' Union. The poems, therefore, were censored on multiple levels: by the writer him- or herself, the Writers' Union, the translator, the 'technical' editor, the editor-in-chief and, ultimately, by the Glavlit censor. Censorship, as Gaby Thomson-Wohlgemuth remarks, "was present right from the early stages of the planning of projects, and by the time a translator received a manuscript for translation, a major part of this supervision and control had already taken place" (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2009, 93). With censorship happening not just at the level of "editorial control and, with respect to translations, through textual modifications" (*ibid.,* 93), the final manuscript excluded over 3000 lines of May's translations.

---

[312] "Нам говорили, что мы живем в Стране Чудес, но это была демагогическая ложь: чуть ли не весь XX век мы прожили в Зазеркалье. Жить собственной жизнью нам не разрешали: мы вместо этого обязаны были отражать действительность".

Probably the most significant and detailed letter in all the correspondence relating to the anthology which outlines the technical details of the translation process is the letter to Lyudmila Davidovich, the managing editor of the book, written by May soon after his receipt of the off-prints. A well thought-through and fairly long document, it points out various inconsistencies as well as major issues with the anthology. The translator tried to argue his case against the general Soviet policies of excluding translators from the editing process. Here, these policies are transparent, especially with hindsight that May's suggestions were altogether ignored. Some of that was inevitable: none of the Belarusian transliteration in the English spelling of proper names, which May was offering, could have been used. However, another issue that May strongly objected to was the much lamented "invisibility" of the translator, who in the Soviet context received very little recognition:

> 2. Name of translator. If I had translated two or three poems in this anthology, and not nearly 300, I should raise no objection to my name being printed in microscopic type, as if Progress were ashamed to let the reader know who translated this book, as if he was some second-rate copyist or something! You have a little idea of the love, the sweat, the hours I have poured into this work, even to the sacrifice of my health. In the Soviet Union a man is valued for his toil, and therefore, in the name of my lengthy laborious work, I demand, as I feel I have full right, that my name may be given at least a little prominence. I am not a vain-glorious man, but you must know that in the West, the translator has long ago been accorded a place of honour, on a par with that of the author (1975, 1-2).

One might argue about the place of the translator in the West, but in this case May was not 'only' a translator but a compiler as well. Moreover, if he was comparing his work with Rich's anthology and the prominence she was given, it was a valid

argument. Rich's name, written in bold at the front of the book, is significantly bigger than his name printed at the back of his in a small font. However, May was unaware of the general practice of 'forgetting' translators often undertaken by Soviet publishers, including Progress. Being a press established in the 1930s, Progress was used to 'forgetfulness'and erasing names which were out of favour and, therefore, were not very concerned with providing a translator with much recognition. In Progress's practice, some of the published translations were not signed at all, as in the case of political speeches or tourist guides, while some were signed at first only to see the names of translators vanish from later reprints. In this context, May's request concerning where exactly the translator's preface needs to be placed could only have been received as 'stepping out of line'. Initially, May asked Tank for a foreword introducing the background information of the development of Belarusian poetry, which Tank had written. Unfortunately, his introduction was of a general nature and provided little insight into the history of Belarus. May dared to ask Tank to make a few changes to it, with the TL audience in mind, but was answered there was "no time for revision" as the book was already in the "plan" for print. In response May used his own foreword to address those issues which, he insisted, needed to be included after Tank's introduction for consistency. In his reasoning for the inclusion of his work immediately after the preface he mentions "the rhyme the reader needs to read <u>before he starts the poems,</u> since some of them are unusual, and he needs a little help in understanding them. Therefore it must <u>not</u> be placed at the <u>back</u> of the book, where no-one will see it" (1975, 1-2). Needless to say, these suggestions were ignored as well. The reception of the book by the Anglophone readers and their possible confusion were of little concern to the editors who considered the work done and rushed it off to print.

After the appearance of the anthology, May became a 'safe' translator, and several books of his poetic translations appeared in Moscow, Kiev, and Minsk.

However, none of his subsequent translations were reviewed by Western critics, or, in fact, in depth by Belarusians. The Belarusian literati were excited at the possibility of seeing their work published in English but they did not know English well enough to evaluate it. On the other hand, Western scholarship was not ready to accept a Soviet-based translator living in Moscow. The verdict passed by McMillin on reading the anthology was that "May cannot approach Vera Rich at her best" (McMillin 1977b, 50). In our conversation in 2006, the chairman of the Anglo-Belarusian Society, James Dingley, expressed the view of the émigré circles that Walter May was a fictional character used by several Soviet translators rather than a real person. In such a context, the only respectable translator of Belarusian poetry was Vera Rich, who often cooperated on publication projects with Arnold McMillin, which meant she also received support based on his reputation as the only Anglophone researcher of Belarusian literature. May was associated with the image of 'New/Soviet' 'Belarusianness' which anti-Soviet diaspora could not accept.

However, May continued to work, translating for various presses in Kiev, Kishineu, Makhachkala, Frunze, Vladikavkaz, Baku, and Leningrad[313]. In 1997, together with his wife and a few other poets, he established an independent publishing company, *Кудесники/ Sorcerers.* In fifty years May published more than sixty books of verse, one third of which were for children. His translations of children's literature from Belarusian include that of the fable *The Horse and the Lion* by Maxim Tank (Tank et al., 1975) published a year before his anthology. It was then followed by his translations of *The Tom-Cat, the Cock and the Fox: A Byelorussian Folk-Tale* (May 1975), *The Bear Sits on the Log: A Byelorussian Folk Tale* (May 1979), a ballad *General Sparrow* by Vasil Vitka (Vitka 1980), *The Golden Apple-Tree* (Yakimovich and May 1981), the translation of *A Tale of Cosmic Travels of Ant the Tramp* by Maxim Tank (Tank 1986a),

---

[313] Accepted transliteration of Soviet place names.

a collection of Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian folk songs under the title *Three songs* (May 1986), and Artur Volsky's narrative poem *A Visit to the Zoo* (Volsky 1986)[314]. An interesting case for translation analysis is a probable reverse translation of a Guinean Folk-Tale *How the Rabbit Sowed the Millet* (May 1984), which May translated from Belarusian into English.

May's translations included over 400,000 lines of Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Kirghiz, Daghestani, Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Kazakh poetry. He received various awards for his work, including a gold medal for his translation of the *Manas* epos (50,000 lines) from the President of Kyrgyzstan, Oscar Akaev, in 1997. Through his translation work, May hoped to foster a better understanding between British readers and the various nations of the USSR, believing it could be achieved through poetry. Whether his dream was fulfilled or even whether his books reached the reader he hoped for, remains an open question. Given the limitations on the contents imposed by Soviet censors, the unevenness of the quality of verse (McMillin 1977b) and Soviet-related channels of book distribution in the West, his translations were not as accessible to the readers he hoped for. However, they still largely remain the only existing translations of Belarusian poetry of the 20th century, including the nation's best classics, making this imperfect "looking glass" the only treasured mirror available for this 'minority' literature.

---

[314] These are only his translations from Belarusian; May published numerous books of translations of children's literature from other languages as well.

Chapter Six. Looking through the Iron Curtain: Translations in the West (1960s – 1980s)

6.1. Periodicals and Scholarly Publications

Translations which were published in the West were significantly different from those published behind the Iron Curtain. The absence of ideological restraint meant that translators were free to choose texts for translation and were limited only by a lack of funds and opportunities to publish their work. Another feature of Western-based Belarusian translations is their connection to the Belarusian diaspora in the Anglophone countries, most specifically in the UK and the USA. Escaping the Communist regime, Belarusian literati, priests and political figures associated with the short-lived Belarusian People's Republic (BNR) after World War II, found themselves in Germany, then in the USA, Canada, and the UK. Unlike Belarusian immigrants in the previous waves, they were literate and nationalistically engaged, defining themselves as *свядомыя беларусы* ("Belarusians that are aware"). Besides being pro-active in promoting Belarusian culture and teaching the native language in their own community, they also saw the need to raise awareness of Belarusian matters in their new countries and to this end have established several active diasporic organisations. Several periodicals were published in America, Canada and the UK in Belarusian[315]. It was mostly due to the diaspora's influence that Belarusian alternative spelling, so-called *tarashkevitsa*[316]*,* was brought back to Belarus in the early 1990s and has been popular since with supporters of the Revival Movement and of the "alternative" 'Belarusianness' (Bekus 2010) in the 1990s. The level of activity of the UK-based community in particular was quite noticeable: in 1974 H. Leeming defined

---

[315] For a full bibliography of all Belarusian publications abroad, see Kipel 2003.

[316] Tarashkevitsa, after Branislau Tarashkevich, its author, was the standard spelling of the 1920s before the spelling reform of 1925, whereupon a new spelling was adopted, nicknamed by the nationalists as *narkamauka,* literally "belonging to the Narodny Committee". As opposed to *tarashkevitsa*, it was more codified linguistically, but less suitable phonetically, whereby many specific Belarusian features were not mirrored. It was, according to some claims, a step towards Russification (Mayo 1977, 43).

the London community as "one of the most active of all immigrant communities" which "has added to the amenities of the capital a unique library and museum" as well as publishing "a learned journal of international standing[317]" (1974, 123).

No doubt, post-war Belarusian diaspora immigrants were quite different from previous immigrants in their political views and level of previous political engagement[318], but it is probably safe to suggest they were mostly actively anti-Communist. This fact appealed to anti-Communist Western institutions, and in the wake of anti-Soviet, i.e. essentially anti-Russian, sentiment in the USA, Belarusians were able to propagate the idea of a pro-Belarusian, distinctly non-Russian, movement, alternative to the 'New/Soviet Belarusianness' formulated within Soviet ideology. Several scholarly publications in English appeared which were devoted to Belarus and its history, literature and culture. Some of them contained translations of Belarusian literature, though these were mostly in excerpted form. Thus, *Aspects of Contemporary Belorussia* (1955), printed by the University of Chicago Press, had yet another version of Kupala's "А хто там ідзе?" (*Who Goes There?*) translated by A. Lipson. Unlike all other versions, this publication also contained a commentary on the significance of the poem to the Belarusian independence movement. Anthony Adamovich's *Opposition to Sovetization in Belorussian Literature* (1958) contains several excerpts from various poems, including those which, due to their highly sensitive subject matter, could not be published, or rather, reprinted, in Soviet Belarus. An example of such translations in the monograph are Kupala's *Anniversary Memorial Service* ("Гадаўшчына – памінкі"), *Jews* ("Жыды"), *You Have Been Invited...* ("Пазвалі вас").

This chapter will argue that the translations of Belarusian literature published in the West were carried out either by, or in cooperation with, the émigrés, and represent

---

[317] Referring to *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies,* discussed further in this chapter.
[318] BNR still has a "representative abroad". There have been consistent claims linking several Belarusian personae of the diaspora with Nazi occupation. Cf. Loftus' publication on alleged Belarusian Nazi collaborators (1982) and Dingley's critique of it (1984).

'scholarly', rather than 'popular' (Tymoczko 1995), editions. They were either bilingual editions, which provided a parallel ST and TT, or had extensive commentary and footnotes[319].

Even though some scholarly publications with excerpts from translations appeared in the 1950s, it is only possible to speak of an upsurge in translation activity since the 1960s. This new period in the history of translations from Belarusian into English in the West started with periodicals published by Belarusian émigrés. The role and significance of journals at different times was changing, as editors faced both funding and professional personnel issues. The first to publish translations from Belarusian were *Беларускі свет* ('Belarusian Light') and *Бацькаўшчына* ('Motherland'), which were founded in the USA. They included, hidden away amongst the advertisements of various venues, a few anonymous translations of classical Belarusian poetry, making the translators truly invisible: three poetic translations from Tank (1965, 2-3), Broŭka (1965, 8) and Vialiuhin (1965, 14) poems were published without any references to a translator in *Беларускі сьвет = Byelorussian World*. However, not all of the journals supported this extreme invisibility policy which, as in the last case, was on the brink of copyright infringement. Thus, in 1962 the first Belarusian Christian journal published in the USA *Светач Хрыстовае навукі* ('The Light of Christ's Teaching') included a new version of "А хто там ідзе?" (*Who Throngs Ever Upwards*....) translated by Watson Kirkonell.

Holding a special place within translations from Belarusian into English is the Anglo-Belarusian Society in the UK. Founded in 1954[320] on the initiative of Auberon Herbert who after World War II "became concerned with the relief of refugees in Great Britain" (*JBS* 1974, 183), the Society's main aim is "the diffusion, interchange and publication of knowledge relating to Belarus, its people and its culture" (ABS 2011a).

---

[319] The only exceptions to this rule are the translations of Bykaŭ, which were all translated from his Russian translations.

[320] The original name of the Society was "Anglo-Byelorussian", which reflected the official name of the country at the time.

Under the chairmanship of Herbert, the Society began publishing a yearbook, *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies.* Although the *JBS* was introduced by Prof. Robert Auty as "a source of information for the non-specialist reader about one little-known East European people and its contribution to civilisation" (Auty 1965, 3), it was, nevertheless, a scholarly publication and was "distributed annually to universities, libraries and private subscribers in the UK, the US, the Soviet Union and other countries throughout the world" (ABS 2011b). However, unlike other similar ventures, since its focus was on the Anglophone reader who would find it difficult to travel or obtain information from the then closed country, the publication contained, besides scholarly papers on various aspects of Belarusian studies (literature, linguistics, history and, to a lesser extent, fine arts, "book reviews, a chronicle of current events, and a comprehensive bibliography for the preceding year" (*ibid.*)). Though published by an organisation whose members had distinct views on Belarusian sovereignty, *JBS* aimed to present an unbiased view of Belarusian events and publications of its day. Thus, its fairly sizable review section contained reviews of the new publications abroad as well as in Belarus itself, despite ideological differences and the fact that BSSR had an antagonistic regime that was opposed by a large proportion of its subscribers. Most of *JBS*'s papers were authored by Anglophone researchers or Belarusian expats. The chronicle of events provided details of the Society's activities as well as significant events related to Belarus. The journal provided a convenient platform for the publication of new translations, most of which were done by the Society's members. It was here that the first, and to this day the only, existing translations of Belarusian hagiography appeared. Two lives of saints: *Жыціе Еўфрасінні Полацкай* (*The Life of Saint Euphrosyne of Polack*) and *Жыціе Кірылы Тураўскага* (*The Prologue Life of Saint Cyril of Турай*) were translated and annotated by Fr. Alexander Nadson (1965, 1969), a well-known and respected member of the

Belarusian diaspora[321], then Headmaster of the Belarusian School for Boys and subsequently a librarian of the Francis Skaryna Belarusian Library in London. The translation of *The Life of Saint Euphrosyne of Polack*, it is stated, is "based on a 14-15th century manuscript copy" the original text of which is not given, as is also the case with the translation of *The Life of Saint Cyril of Turaŭ*. The translations are in modern-day English, i.e. in a language that is free from artificial archaisms. The choice of material can be explained both by the translator's occupation (and hence, natural inclination towards religious works) as well as his expertise in Old Slavonic and Old Belarusian writings and history[322]. From the point of the ST themselves, it is suggested that the *Lives* were chosen due to their unique status in Old Belarusian literature[323] as outlined in Chapter Two, as well as due to the prominence of the figures of saints. Thus, the *Lives* are dedicated to two Belarusian saints who were best known for their ministry to the common people as educators, rather than for their martyrdom. They are the best known ones – except Simeon of Polatsk – of all Belarusian saints[324] and are 'pioneers' of a kind: Euphrosyne of Polatsk, a patron saint of Belarus, is the only East Slav virgin saint and the first woman canonised by the Russian Orthodox Church (1547), while St Cyril was the

---

[321] Cf. *Сонца тваё не закоціцца* (2008) on Fr. Nadson's biography and influence on a generation of researchers in Belarus and abroad.

[322] Fr Nadson's critical articles in *JBS* discuss Francis Skaryna's legacy (Vol.II, no.4),Western Influences in Belarusian Literature (Vol.I, no.2), Naša Niva (Vol.I, no.3), Belarusian Tatars (Vol.II, no.2) and rare old books collections in Francis Skaryna Library (Vol.III, no.4).

[323] The *Lives* of both St Euphrosyne (c. end of the 12th - 1st half of the 13th c.) as well as St Cyril (13th c.) are well-known Belarusian mediaeval writings. They were part of larger collections of *Lives* copied and disseminated in Rus under the influence of Othodox Christianity. The life of St Cyril is an example of a 'short' life; it is quite schematic and adheres to the conventions of the genre. Due to its size, only the major facts of the saint's life are listed. The *Life* of Euphrosyne has, contrastingly, a vivid characterisation of the saint, her father and aunt, as well as local public and church figures. Cf. Chapter Two for more details.

Still, as literary works, the *Lives of St Euphrosyne* and *St Cyril* follow the conventions of the genre. Much like their Norman counterparts, the mediaeval writers drew inspiration from several sources. Thus, the *Life of St Euphrosyne* sources include the *Life of Euphrosyne of Alexandria* and *The Life of Alexei, a Man of God* (1076). The closeness of both church traditions is evident in the *Life* itself. Despite the infamous Church Schism in 1054, Euphrosyne still received a warm welcome from Amalric I of Jerusalem, of Anjou dynasty, during her visit to Jerusalem in April 1167. The obvious difference between the Orthodox and Roman-Catholic traditions is its language: Church Slavonic instead of Latin, which meant that the *Life* of the Belarusian saint could have been accessible to a wider audience, including the lay readership.

[324] Before the canonisations of the 1990s, the Synod of Belarusian saints consisted of 14 saints. At the moment, it consists of 73 saints and martyrs (Synod 2010).

first pillar ascetic in the lands of Rus and, incidentally, a famous writer and a public

figure. Thus, their very presence in the Belarusian canon testifies of both greatness and

privilege[325], two concepts foreign to the 'New/Soviet' representation of 'Belarusianness'

The appearance of these translations leads to several conclusions. Firstly,

making the Anglophone readership aware of the existence of such prominent figures of

the lands which later became Belarus suggests backdating Belarusian literature to a

period much earlier than the early 20th century and thus giving it the necessary aura of

authority. Secondly, such a translation would not have been possible in the BSSR due to

the obvious anti-religious views held by the government[326]. Thirdly, even though the

translation was annotated and published in a specialist journal, its modern language and

the absence of the ST for the purposes of comparison suggests a wider focus and an

audience beyond specialists. Finally, the appearance of these translations made it possible

for future publications in *JBS* of sacred texts which were analysed and translated for an

Anglophone specialist readership. One of these is the Kutsieina New Testament and

Psalter of 1652 which contains a dedication to "Bishop Iosif (Joseph) Gorbackij of

Viciebsk, Mścisłaŭ, Orša and Mahiloŭ" (Leeming 1974, 123) as well as a preface to the

"Orthodox Reader" (*ibid.,* 143) written by the printer, both of which were translated and

published alongside their Old Belarusian ST by H. Leeming (*ibid*., 139-144).

Another translation by Fr. Nadson which appeared in *JBS* is of the so-called

Jeułasheuski's Dzionnik, or *The Memoirs of Theodore Jeułašeŭski, Assessor of*

Navahrudak (1546 – 1604)[327] (Jeŭłasheŭski [1546-1604] 1968). Unlike the

---

[325] The veneration of these two saints could be partly attributed to their privileged backgrounds. While Euphrosyne came from a family of the local prince, St Cyril of Turaŭ was born into a wealthy family and after receiving an education from Greek teachers joined a monastery in his native town.

[326] The relics of Euphrosyne were confiscated from Rostov Avrami Monastery where they were transferred for temporary keeping during World War II from Polatsk and subjected to an investigation to disprove the fact of their incorruptible state to make the public aware of the deceptive practices of the institutionalised "opium of the masses". They were subsequently displayed in Vitsebsk museum of local history until World War II, when they were returned back to Polatsk to the Convent of Our Saviour and St Euphrosyne which she had originally founded, where they remain today (Convent of Our Saviour and Euphrosyne 2012).

[327] The spelling of the Assessor's name, as with all publications cited elsewhere in this research, is

hagiographies, the translation is printed alongside the ST. The appearance of the original

in this case can be explained by the relative difficulty in obtaining a copy of the ST for a

reader wishing to compare ST and TT. The fact that the ST was subsequently used as a

primary text of reference for another paper which was dedicated to the linguistic analysis

of the ST's German borrowings (Siekierski 1977, 5-8), supports this claim[328]. The

translation was edited by Guy Picarda, whose legal profession matched that of the

original writer. The translator and the stylist's approach to the archaic language in ST was

to modernise it in order to ease the perception of the TT and widen its potential audience

(Nadson 2011).

Another famous translation of the pre-1900s to appear in *JBS* was *Тарас на*

Парнасе (*Taras on Parnassus*) by Arnold McMillin and Vera Rich[329], which was one of

the first anonymous poems in the Belarusian language (McMillin and Rich 1977). It was

republished in 2008 (Janushkevich 2008). In terms of the rationale of the translators'

choice, the introduction to the translation states, "*Taras na Parnasie* is one of the most

important works of nineteenth-century Belorussian literature, and also one of the most

mysterious" (*ibid.*, 9). Having described the unknown factors, such as the author, date

and place of origin and printing, the translators conclude that "despite these uncertainties

the poem remains fresh and alive, illustrating some of the most positive features of

Byelorussian cultural development" (*ibid.*). As one of the translators' specialisms at the

time was 19th century Belarusian literature[330], the choice of material was evident as the

---

given in accordance with the original translator's variant.

[328] Sikierski places high value on Nadson's translation and annotation of the text and comments that "Alexander Nadson's excellent work has provided valuable material for both the general English-language public as well as for the specialist in the field of Byelorussian and Lithuanian studies. The second achievement is due to the fact that Fr. Nadson's publication made available once again the best edition of Jeulaseuski's *Memoirs,* done some eighty years earlier by V. Antonovic. This edition will have to continue as a substitute till such time as a new edition is made from the original manuscript, which was recently located in Warsaw" (Sikierski 1977).

[329] Commenting on her co-operation with Vera, Arnold McMillin states in a letter of July 8, 2011: "I wrote the introductions, made order out of chaos, and Vera did the translations. [...] My contribution to the translations was only the correction of occasional and obvious typos" (McMillin 2011).

[330] Cf. McMillin's monograph *The Vocabulary of the Byelorussian Literary Language in the Nineteenth Century* (1973) as well as his articles in *JBS* dedicated to the same period (1969, 1971).

translators were confident that "unassuming but polished narration, vivid language and salty humour will surely guarantee the lasting popularity of this evergreen classic" (*ibid.,* 11). The language of the TT might, however, make appreciation of the "vividness" of the SL and especially the "salty humour", more difficult due to the usage of inversions in sentences and mock-archaic forms of English pronouns and auxiliary verbs. An example of both of these not uncommon features of the TT can be noticed from the following passage, which is, according to the original, narrated by an illiterate forester Taras:

> "Whence does this road come from, and whither?"
> I to the lad my question bent.
> " 'Tis from the other world, and thither
> Straight to Parnasus it doth wend!" (McMillin and Rich 1977, 15).

In this passage, one of many mock-archaic instances in the TT, the discrepancy between the common language of the uneducated forester of the ST and the form in which it appears in the TT, is rather wide.

A number of further translations by Vera Rich appear in other volumes of *JBS:* thus, a few translations are found after their STs in the appendix which follows an article by Shirin Akiner on young Belarusian poets of 1967 – 1975 (Akiner 1976, 342-363). Unfortunately *JBS* was discontinued in the 1980s (altogether there were 19 issues published from 1965 to 1988) but later re-appeared in the 1990s as the infrequent and photocopied *Belarusian Chronicle,* a much smaller scale project, "as a continuation of the section of the same name in the Journal of Byelorussian Studies [...] designed to inform readers of the Society's activities as well as of other religious and cultural events relating to Belarusians in the United Kingdom". The *Chronicle* was edited by Guy Picarda whose research interests covered a wide spectrum of issues in Belarusian cultural studies: Skaryna and the Cabala (1992), Helena Iwanowska and Huia Onslow's translations of

folk songs, and Belarusian early modern music (a manuscript of a collection of folk songs *Golden Belarus*), among others.

While *JBS* was published in English, another famous journal, *Zapisy* (Notes), was a bilingual edition and contained papers in both Belarusian and English. The journal "began its publication in 1952, by the Belarusan [sic.] Institute of Arts and Sciences in the U.S. Volumes 1-6 were published in 1952-54 in New York; the following 5 volumes (1-5) were printed in 1962-70 in Munich, Germany. Beginning with vol.12 (1974) the *Zapisy* have been published in New York, U.S.A." (Zapisy 2011). Associated with BINIM and one of the key figures of American Belarusians, Vitaŭt Kipel, the publication, which is now rather infrequent, provides a platform to discuss issues of politics, history and language, both for Anglophone specialists as well as for Belarusian scholars and public figures, the controversial views of which would be difficult to publish in the Belarusian media:

> The basic concept of the series is to publish articles that, regardless of approach or subject, will command the attention of our readers in the several countries of the Belarusan diaspora, those in homeland, and in the scholarly world at large; and will make a contribution to the various spheres of interest which are embraced without becoming so recondite that they can be appreciated by only a small circle of specialists. [...] We find that part of what we are doing is engaging the nation in a quest for its identity. The Belarusan people are passing through a trying period, nudging forward, trying out and embracing new understandings, shedding old fears as they go. With the perspective of history, one can view this neuralgic process as the labor pains of national rebirth[331].

---

[331] The citation preserves the punctuation of the original.

Zapisy's focus was less welcoming of new literary translations, and the texts which it published were few, as it tended to focus on interviews with Belarusian public figures. Luckily, one of them was Быкаў (Gimpelevich 1999a, 1999b) whose English translations merely get a mention in an article which surveys his works published elsewhere (Kipel 1996).

The 1960s are also associated with the beginning of the career of probably the most famous translator of Belarusian poetry, Vera Rich, who became, rather than "a voice of Belarusian poetry", *the* voice of that literature in English and "the Ambassador of Belarusian culture in the Anglophone world" (Zaika 2010, 4). As in the case of Constance Garnett, she began to be associated with the literature she was propagating. Having no Slavic roots, Vera Rich took up the cause of raising awareness in Belarusian and Ukrainian literatures as her life call and vigorously protected her exclusive right to these literatures[332]. That right has been rarely challenged (especially since Walter May's return to Russian poetry translations in the 1990s). Indeed, it was not until Vera Rich's publications in the 1960s that it became possible to single out a dedicated translator from Belarusian into English.

Vera Rich (1936 – 2009) was born in London as Faith Elizabeth Joan Rich. A poet, translator, author and editor, she dedicated more time to translating Belarusian poetry than any other translator. She was also the only translator who compiled a chronological poetic anthology of Belarusian poetry, classifying the works of several authors according to various historical periods. Rich became interested in Belarusian literature after a church-led trip to a local Greek-Catholic church in north Finchley run by

---

[332] In her interview in *Vostraya Brama* in Vilnia, Siarhej Dubavets sums up Rich's arguments: "Вера Рыч раўніва ставіцца да якасьці перакладаў. Яе тлумачэньне простае – пра Беларусь у сьвеце ня ведаюць і ніколі не даведаюцца, калі пераклады ня будуць выдатнымі. У гэтай справе вялікую шкоду зрабілі камуністы, якія выпускалі ў сьвет пераклады вельмі нізкага ўзроўню, а да таго ж ідэалягічна матываваныя. У выніку і чыталі іх, у лепшым выпадку, такія самыя камуністы"(Dubavets 2005) Translation: "Vera Rich is zealous of the quality of translations. Her explanation is easy: Belarus is unknown to the world and will never be known if translations are not excellent. A great harm in this matter was done by Communists who disseminated translations of very low quality and, moreover, ideologically motivated. As a result, they were only read, at best, by other Communists".

Belarusians. From her very first step onto the premises, as she shared later, she felt it was where she belonged (Rich 2004). The discovery of a new culture turned into a "single most significant event" in the translator's life (Rich 2004) creating a lifetime fascination with the country and its literature:

> Half a century ago, it [Belarus] was even less known (in my school geography book, as 'White Russia', it was allotted half a page!) So when, on 25 October, 1953, I first came into contact with the Belarusian community in London, it was, for me, the discovery of a new country – a country which, however, it seemed then that I would never see, except through the eyes of its writers... During those thirty eight years of what we should now term 'virtual exploration' and even more so through frequent visits during the past twelve years, Belarus, its people, and its literature have become one of the main threads in my life's tapestry... (Makavik 2004, 7)

Her interest continued during her studies at St Hilda's, Oxford (1955-57), where she read Old English and Old Norse, and later at Bedford College, London (1958 – 1961), where she chose to read mathematics and Ukrainian (Times 2009). Her first book, *Outlines* (1960), was published by Wiktor Ostrowsky, an active participant in the Belarusian émigré milieu and keeper of the premises of Хрысціянскае аб'яднанне беларускіх работнікаў/ Christian Union of Belarusian Workers (CHABR) in the 1960s[333]. The book, dedicated to the author's maternal grandparents, includes twenty-five poems alongside two translations: *Song of the Bells* from Yakub Kolas's long poem *Simon the Musician* and *Caucasus* by Taras Shevchenko. The début poetry collection of the twenty-four-year-old author exhibited her poetic technique as containing complex imagery, condensed texts, and a certain romantic air (evident not least in the epithets of gem-stones employed throughout the book). In terms of translations, the appearance of

---

[333] Ostrowski was the son of a famous political activist, Radaslaŭ Astroŭski, who came to London in 1954 and emigrated to the USA in 1962 (Vesialkoŭski 2007, 136- 138).

the classics from the two literatures was also symbolic, as Rich kept her 'allegiance' to the Belarusian and Ukrainian literary legacy for the rest of her life.

In 1962, Rich founded a poetry magazine, *Manifold*, which she edited and managed until May 1969. The journal won recognition as one of the six best "little" poetry magazines in the UK (Kazaty) and at the time of its closure had about 900 subscribers. It published quite a few of Rich's translations from various Belarusian authors, both classic (Maksim Bahdanovich, Janka Kupala) as well as contemporaneous (Maksim Tank, Anatol′ Viartsinski, Larysa Heniyush, Janka Sipakoŭ, Anatol′ Vialyuhin)[334].

Her second poetry collection, *Portents and Images*, appeared a year later, in 1963, with the Mitre Press, and includes *On the Anniversary of the Battle of Słucak* (1958) which then was renamed as *On the Anniversary of the Słucak Uprising*. Two more translations were included: *Romance* by Maksim Bahdanovich, and *Dedication* by Yakub Kolas, another translation from his *Simon the Musician*. Rich's second translation from Belarusian poetry, a poem *Зімой* (*In Winter*), by Maxim Bahdanovich, appeared in 1964. However, it was not published in *Manifold* but in a poetry magazine, *The Muse*, in the USA. Later on it was reprinted in her poetic anthology *Like Water, Like Fire* (Rich 1971).

6.2. First Anthology of Belarusian Poetry in English (1971)

In 1969, Rich took a job as Soviet and East European correspondent for the scientific journal *Nature*. Because of this commitment, *Manifold,* as well as her own poetic publications, had to be suspended. However, it was at this busy time that her major translation work appeared, *Like Water, Like Fire: An Anthology of Byelorussian Poetry*

---

[334] The magazine was re-launched in 1998. It is here that the latest translations of Vera's are published. They include her new translations and the revised variants of the verses of Maxim Bahdanovich, Zmitrok Biadulia and Natallia Arsenneva.

from 1828 to the Present Day, printed in London in 1971 under the auspices of UNESCO. The anthology comprises a major collection of Belarusian poems in English and was the result of the translator's eighteen-year-long work. It was not only the first and largest volume representing Belarusian literature in the West, but also the first attempt at its Anglophone history, compiled from the translated texts, with "numerous, often witty, notes to the poems, with explanations of the historical background where necessary" (Dingley 1972, 404). The anthology includes two hundred and eight translated works, from smaller poems to the longer epics, including the full text of *Gravemound* by Kupala, extracts from *The New Land* by Kolas and *Flag of the Brigade* by Arkadz Kuliashou.

The translator's main goal – bringing Belarusian literature to the English-speaking world – is stated in the introduction, where her pioneering enthusiasm recalls the adventurous spirit of the Age of Discovery:

> The discovery of a new and 'different' writer is undoubtedly one of the most exciting events in the life of any lover of reading. The discovery of a whole new literature is incomparably more so. … The concept of a new and undiscovered, and, furthermore, a written literature, right on our literary doorsteps so to speak, in Europe itself, seems to lie quite beyond the realms of fact. Yet such lands, and such literatures exist (Rich 1971, 13)

This metaphor of the translator as discoverer characterises the work of Vera Rich. The anthology is subdivided into seven periods: the Early Period (1828-1905)[335], the Nasha Niva Period (1906-1914), the Years of Adjustment (1917-1939), Interlude – Western Belarus (1921-1939), Unification and War (1939-1945), the Years of

---

[335] This title was criticised as "misleading" by Dingley, "since the impression is given that there was nothing worthy of inclusion between Bahrym's *Play then, play* of 1828 and Bahuševič' *Byelorussian Pipe* of 1891" (Dingley 1972, 405).

Reconstruction (1945-1953), the Thaw – and After (1954-1971). The last of these is subdivided into seven parts according to poetic themes. Each chapter is followed by commentaries which provide an explanation of cultural phenomena, implicatures and intertextual features. The list of translated authors is quite comprehensive; it covers an extended period of literature in its various forms and genres, and consists of forty-one poets, from Paulyuk Bahrym with his only known poem to the latest contemporaneous poetry of the young but promising Ryhor Baradulin[336]. The three classics of Belarusian literature, in fact, 'the founding fathers' of the new Belarusian literature, are the most translated ones: Maxim Bahdanovich (17 translations), Jakub Kolas (14) and Janka Kupala (21). The well-established poets of the 20th century are quite well represented too: Arkadz Kuliashou (17), Pimen Panchanka (14), Maxim Tank (24). This representative list makes the book a seminal work in Belarusian literary translations into English and also the translator's *magnum opus*. Given its place among other published translations and the exclusive position of the translator itself, a few comments on the book from the point of translation, as well as on the main features of the translator's style, need to be made.

The introductory essay contains a general survey of Belarusian literary history, seeking to produce an account of Belarusian history and culture. To facilitate understanding, Rich uses comparisons with English, Irish and Welsh literary traditions. Thus, describing the state of Belarus in the Middle Ages and her place in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, she quotes Chaucer and his *Lettow ond Ruse* (p. 14). Speaking of Easter and spring, Rich states: "Wild geese migrating (as in Irish literature) symbolize exiles, whether political or economic, and (again as in Irish), Easter is inextricably linked with the idea of national resurgence"[337] (Rich 1971, 19).

---

[336] Baradulin was a candidate for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2006.
[337] Here, in describing the symbols of cultural awakening, Rich draws a parallel between Belarus and Éire in their symbolism for new beginnings. This fact receives prominence in the light of the earlier discussion of the two countries' similarities with regards to once being dominated imperial subjects.

This use of allusions and comparisons is typical of her translations. The classical refrain of a Slavic lullabye "lyuli, lyuli, lyuli" is translated as *Lullbye, lulla-lulla!* (ibid., p.119), and is followed by the traditional *Hushabye, my baby* (p.130), although word-for-word translation appears as well: "Spi, zasni, sakolik" as *Husha, little falcon* (p. 130). The difference of allusions in the two literary polysystems is evident from the translation of the line "Versham, autaru, narodu-chytachu" from *On my Poems* of Valiantsin Taŭlai (*For poems, bard, the nation's reading mind*) (p. 143), where Rich translates the word "aŭtar" (author) as "bard" which to an English-speaking audience prompts an allusion to Shakespeare or to Celtic epic storytellers. For the original audience, "narod-chytach" (reading nation) is immediately associated with the general reading culture, especially cultivated during Soviet times. Thus, the allusion is re-written in translation, together with another allusion, that of Claas' ashes beating in the heart of his son, Tile, from Charles De Coster's *The Legend of Thyl Ulenspiegel and Lamme Goedzak* (1867) employed in the *Flag of the Brigade* (p.155). Traditional folklore images of great warriors and storytellers are described through the analogous heroic images of old Germanic sagas: *warriors* (p.145) – bahatyry, *harp clear and tuneful* (p.55) – husli-samahudy, *harp-storyteller* (p.52) – husli-bai, *giant* (p.107) – volat, *old-time warrior of heroic race* (p.171) – asilki-zmahary. The tendency to transfer the culture of the original through the intertext of the target language culture is typical of Rich. It was first used in *Outlines,* where she translates Caucasian "churek i saklia" as Scottish *bannock and croft* (p.42), stating that Shevchenko's *Caucasus* is very close to *Address of Beelzebub* by Burns (p.53). With a background in classics, Rich sometimes interprets neutral original images rather eloquently. The line "Aposhniaj pesniyayu khvalu zhytsyu!" ('By last song a praise to life') translated as *A hymn to life, a last paean of praise* (p.172) alludes to ancient Greek paean hymns to Apollo and Artemis and recalls the flowery style of metaphysical poets, contrary to the ST aesthetics.

The book also gives a table of the transliteration of Belarusian proper names.
Rather than using the conventional Library of Congress transliteration for approximating
Slavic names to English, Rich follows *lacinka*, widely accepted in émigré milieus[338]. It is
used to transcribe authors' surnames (*Valancin Taulaj*), names of villages, rivers, and
lakes (*Staraya Ruś* (p. 155), *Lažyna* (p. 155), *Sož* (p. 164), *Biesiadź* (p. 155), *Nioman* (p.
71, 164), *Hajna* (p. 164), *Dźvina* (pp. 97, 164)), towns and cities, etc. (*Połack* (p. 164),
Minsk (p. 164), *Turaŭ* (p. 164), *Biełavieža* (p. 164), *Palessia* (p. 164), *Hrodna* (p. 164),
Novahrudek (p. 166), *El'brus* (p. 179), *Sunicy* (p. 180), *Palessian gravel* (p.156), *Łukiśki*
(p. 133)), proper names (*Janka and Symon* (p. 46), *Uładzik* (p. 71)). However, the usage
of *lacinka* in the book lacks consistency: occasionally Rich employs Russian
transliteration (*Volga*)[339], or Ukrainian (*Dniapro*) (pp. 164, 184), or both Russian and
Belarusian together (*Smalensk and Poltava* (p. 165); cf. *Biełaruś* (pp. 58, 114, 174) and
the Byelorussian nation (pp. 107, 155), *the Byelorussian custom* (pp. 170, 179))[340]. There
are also a couple of mistransliterations (*Zasłaŭ* (p. 164) – Zaslaul, *Vialla* (p. 97) – Vilia).
Only one place name is written according to the historic rules of English spelling:
"vozera Chudskaye" – *Lake Peipus* (p. 165).

Rich's style of poetic translation is focused on the ST, where she adopts the
generally impossible goal of rendering *all* of the original words and their connotations.
Defending her strategies, she stated:

A poet myself, I would feel a betrayal of my task in producing any version that did not
reproduce the poetic form of the original. If a poet expresses his thoughts in a poem, the
form, as much as the content, gives shape and meaning to those thoughts. A sonnet, for
example, 'says' something by the very arrangement of its rhymes that fourteen lines of

---

[338] Various arguments can be made in favour of either one or the other; however, this research
follows the conventional Library of Congress transliteration as the one approximated according to the
rules of TL and also more widely available for the public wishing to find out the rules for themselves.
[339] *Volha* according to Belarusian orthography.
[340] Other examples of inconsistencies were found by Dingley (1972, 405).

unrhymed verse cannot hope to convey. The rhymes of the original are preserved therefore – if not always as 'perfect' rhymes, at least in the form of an assonance, dissonance, half-rhyme or eye-rhyme. Moreover, in almost every case, the difference between 'masculine' (monosyllabic) and 'feminine' (disyllabic) rhymes have been preserved (Rich 1971, 22)

Her striving to make a perfect translation is also supported by a number of similarities between Belarusian and English literary polysystems: the similarities between the two languages which are "albeit somewhat distant kin" (Rich 1996, 47) as Indo-European ones and the stress-bassed of typical poetic patterns, where "in retaining the rhythm of the original I am therefore, for the most part translating into my own native metrical idiom" (ibid.). Finally,

A third bonus is that of geography – Belarus lies in the northern hemisphere, so our times and seasons match, while her landscape, although very different from the townscapes and countryside of twentieth century England, nevertheless shares much with the landscapes of our literary past, and, in particular, our folk-lore and fairy-tales, with their wolves, their storks, and their dark, mysterious forests. But much of our flora and fauna are identical, and Bahdanovič's cornflowers and swallows are more familiar to us than, say, the olive-trees and hoopoes of Mediterranean poetry (Rich 1996, 47).

Every poem from the anthology aims for the same (or approximated) rhythmic and rhyming pattern as the original. There are only a few exceptions: for instance, consonances and assonances, as in *fate – embrace* (Rich 1971, 58). However, Rich's ability to recreate original rhymes is remarkable, e.g. Yanka Kupala's verse *To the Reapers*, where Rich was able to keep the internal rhyme:

Sontsa palits <u>ahniom</u>, pot liyetsa <u>tsurkom</u>...

Hey, pry<u>vy</u>kli da hetaha <u>vy</u>!

Yak vy tolki <u>uzrasli</u>, k pratsy tsiazhkai <u>ishli</u>,

I nikhto ne zhaleu vas <u>ani</u>! (Kupala II: 291).

Like a fire the sun <u>glows</u>, in streams the sweat <u>flows</u>,

But for <u>you</u> this is nothing <u>anew</u>,

Hardly grown to a <u>man</u>, you your hard toil <u>began</u>,

And no one had pity for <u>you</u>! (Rich 1971, 48).

Rich also uses rhymes typical of English literary tradition: ballad rhymes, eye rhymes (*now – snow, cover – over* (ibid., p. 49)), near rhymes (*devotion – separation* (p. 67); *rarely – comparing* (p. 111); *over – gather* (p. 132); *breathing – freedom* (p. 163); *summer – from him* (p. 181)). Sometimes rhymes are omitted, as in *station – take me* (p. 152), *one – truly* (p. 155); *there – there* (p. 182) and it is typical of the cases where the translator, seeking to keep all the original words, had exhausted all the possible variants of the uninflexional English. Such cases, however, are an exception, as Rich's translation exhibits her skilful technique by using complex rhymes (*gun-slits there – Sunicy* (p. 182)), alliterations (poem *In Winter* (p. 73)), epithets (*grizzled time* (p. 116)), and anaphors (p.145).

Rich's translation makes her poetic variants sometimes too literal or formal. Often, instead of substituting an English idiom, Rich translates it as word-for-word, as in the following parable, where a colloquial English variant would have been more preferable: 'You help the horse, but by that rule / Illnesses are helped by coughing!'(p. 111). Rich's misunderstanding of the aesthetic shifts happening as a result of such translation choices makes the translated poems uneven in quality, and while "in many cases she succeeds in producing real English poetry (particularly Vasil Vitka's *Miracle*

251

and Ryhor Baradulin's *The Ward of the Sappers*) rather than merely accurate

translations […] at other times the English becomes, perhaps, unavoidably, 'quaint' "

(Dingley 1972, 405). Examples of such quaint language are especially evident in her

usage of *thou, thee* and *-st,* although the originals do not prompt it. It may again be

explained by her inclination towards archaic poetic diction, very often quite contrary to

the twentieth century Belarusian originals. While in some cases this tendency does not

come across as differing from the original's style (as in some romantic verses of

Bahdanovich and Kupala) other more 'down-to-earth' verses of 'country folk' seem to

lose their appeal to the 'commoner'. This is evident in Yanka Luchina's *To our Native*

Land: 'Matsi-ziamlitsa, I umalotami / Khleba na merku ne dash zvychajnuyu' – 'My

mother, my country, and thou in thy harvests / No undue bounty of bread to us givest

(Rich 1971, 35). Moreover, even the derogatory lexis is interspersed with archaisms, as

in Kupala's *Gravemound*: 'Thou dotard and fool. Whoe'er did thee rear, / Thou

degenerate scion of base breeding!'(Rich 1971, 55).

This raises the inevitable question of why the translator, whose main material

comes from a literature with strong ties to folklore, which is oral and rustic, rather than

stilted and elaborate in its ST, chooses to rewrite it in literary language in the TT, and,

moreover, makes it deliberately archaic. When interviewed in 2005, Rich offered very

little explanation, other than "thee and thou" being forms of endearment in northern

English dialects (Rich 2005). Her long-time advisor and friend, Fr Nadson, also claimed

to have challenged her several times, but concluded it was her style (2011). These

features of Rich's diction, as well as her dedication to a literature unknown to her

Anglophone audience, make it possible to include her as part of a tradition of female

translators in English literature which Susan Bassnett titles "literary philanthropists"

(2009), placing her alongside Dorothy Sayers, Lady Gregory, and Charlotte Guest, as

"all these women were passionate about the language and literatures of their particular

interest, all badly wanted to propagate awareness; but all tended to use archaizing devices and hence to produce texts that did not appeal very widely to contemporary readers" (Bassnett 2009). Similar to these literary figures, whose passion for their SL literatures became well-known, Rich became associated with the literature of the people whom she represented. She produced four books of translations from modern and classic Belarusian literature, aiming to provide her readers with a wide range of poetry. She further championed her cause by being involved in the pro-Belarusian movement, supporting the right to freedom of speech, where her "appetite for clandestine escapades led her to slip across the Polish-Soviet border, disguised as a headscarf-wearing Belarussian [sic.] peasant, to meet fellow activists" (Rich 2010). Even though she described her decoration with the Ukrainian Order of Princess Olha in 2007 as the "peak moment" of her life (*ibid.*), her "greatest commitment was to Belarus, a country for which she felt great compassion as it struggled, against a post-1991 dictator, for free expression, democracy and the right to use its own language, suppressed under the USSR and now the symbol of a long awaited freedom" (Vidal-Hall 2009). Her involvement in the fight for Belarus as well as the exclusiveness of her dedication to literary translation from Belarusian, won her high status in that country[341]. Today, her translations are regarded as classic by both specialists and the wider Belarusian public. Comparing the work of Walter May and Vera Rich, McMillin concludes: "The work of both translators varies enormously in quality. May cannot approach Vera Rich at her best (in Bahdanovič, for example) and he seems careless by comparison" (McMillin 1976, 50). Following this trend, factually, most scholars and readers with an interest in Belarus in the West accept only Vera Rich's anthology, dismissing "the other one". For

---

[341] In Rich's obituary the editor of *Index for Censorship* recalls one of her last visits to Belarus and the welcome the translator received: "The esteem, not to say veneration, in which Vera was held by Belarusian intellectuals was extraordinary. I had personal experience of this in 1995 when we went together to Minsk. I was the invited keynote speaker, Vera came along for the ride. But in our many wanderings through the megalopian streets of the capital or being entertained in the evenings, it was made quite clear that I was merely the royal bag handler and she the queen of all she surveyed" (Vidal-Hall 2009).

instance, commending Rich for her 'classic' translations of Bahdanovich, as recent as 2002, a Belarusian-American scholar Liavon Jurevich states,

> well known to everyone, effectively recognized as classic, the translations of Bahdanovich into English were carried out by Ms Vera Rich, whose anthology 'Like Water, Like Fire' is a unique edition even today; it is indeed the only one of its kind in a positive sense, because of its quality and coverage, but also in a negative sense, it being the only one[342] (Jurevich 2002, 122).

Despite the fact that the anthology's status as 'the only one' is arguable, its scope and diachronic method make it as yet unrivalled. Undeniably the coverage and the encyclopaedic character of the data presented in the book are extensive. This can be noticed from the very first pages, where even the list of thanks is exhaustive: having expressed her gratitude to the thirteen UK and overseas libraries, Rich thanks "the Royal Horticultural Gardens, Kew for checking so many details of the flora of Byelorussia, H.M. Office, for advice on the management and control of tanks, and British Rail [...] , for details of the logistics of rolling stock" (Rich 1971). She proceeds to thank various individuals "for supplying details of the complicated background to the trial of Valancin Taulaj, [...] English folklore parallels to certain of these poems, [...] some Welsh parallels, [...] matters connected with horse-rearing, [...] the curing of pork both now and in the past" (*ibid.*). Despite its inaccuracies (translation of *Nasha Dolia* as *Our Will*, rather than *Our Fate*), inconsistencies in spelling (different variants of the spelling of the Dnieper) and unsupported guesses (Duboŭka's poem influencing the choice of colours for the flag of BSSR), the anthology is unique because of its detailed account of Belarusian literature and culture. In terms of the 'quaintness' of its language, it is possible to predict that, just as in the case with Constance Garnett whose prolific

---

[342] Translated from Belarusian into English by Svetlana Skomorokhova.

pioneering efforts to translate all Russian classics were later questioned and revised, Rich's work may be in line for further revisions as well due to her disregard of contemporary literary aesthetics in her translations. However, her pioneering status as a "literature discoverer" remains unchallenged.

6.3. 1980s: Bykaŭ's Translations and ABS/BINIM-Related Publications

Similar to Soviet translations from Belarusian literature, the publication of Belarusian literature in English translations became more frequent in the West in the 1980s, despite that decade being less productive for the best known translator of Belarusian literature. Due to her involvement in human rights and the 'freedom of the press' movement in the former USSR and Eastern Europe[343], Rich had little time to devote to literary matters[344].

A large segment of all translational activity in the 1980s consistes of the translations of Vasilʹ Bykaŭ's work which started appearing in the early 1970s, several years after the first Soviet translations into English appeared in Moscow. However, the first Western-based English translation of Bykaŭ's work appeared only two years after it was written: *Сотнікаў*, authored in 1970, was translated in 1972 by George Clough as *The Ordeal* (Bykov 1972b)[345]. However, it was the only book of Bykaŭ's to be published in the 1970s, while the early 1980s were much more productive in terms of his

---

[343] Rich was involved in the campaign against the abuse of psychiatry for political purposes, working with the Workers' Defence Committee (KOR) and its successor, Polish *Solidarity*, the *Beszelo* group and *Duna Kor* in Hungary, etc. In 1971 she published *The Medvedev Papers*, translated from Russian and devoted to unveiling Soviet censorship in academia.

[344] Illustrative of Rich's activities in the 1980s is her co-authored book *The Image of the Jew in Soviet Literature: The Post-Stalin Period* published for the Institute of Jewish Affairs, London, by Ktav Publishing House, Inc., New York. The book consists of two separate parts. The first one, *Soviet Russian Literature*, was written by Jakub Blum, an East European scholar who used a pseudonym (pp. 3–97), and the second part, *Jewish Themes and Characters in Belorussian Texts* was authored by Vera Rich (pp. 100–271). The book was one of the first papers written on the topic, and certainly the first treatise of the subject in Belarusian literature in the West.

[345] It was published in London by Bodley Head and in New York by E.P. Dutton.

translations. Thus, 1981 saw the publication of three of his translations: *Дажыць да світання* (1972a) and *Яго Батальён* (1975) appeared together under one cover and were translated, accordingly, as *Live Until Dawn* and *His Battalion* by Jennifer and Robert Woodhouse (Bykov 1981). *Воўчая зграя* (1975) was translated by Lynn Solotaraff (Bykov 1981) and was published as *Pack of Wolves* in New York. The late 1980s was a time when *Знак бяды* (1982) was translated "into English almost simultaneously in Mensk in 1989 and in New York in 1990. Neither of the translators knew that the other's work was in preparation" (Kipel 1996). The translation published in Minsk, *Portent of Disaster*, was by Nigel Timothy Coey, while the New York edition was titled *Sign of Misfortune* and was produced by Alan Myers. Speaking of the translations of his works into English, Быкаў expressed his dissatisfaction in a letter to Zora Kipel: "For my entire life, I have never happened upon an adequate translator [...] All of those that came along, did, in general, poor translations" (Kipel 1996). His disappointment with the translators of his work was expressed again in two interviews with Zina Gimpelevich, and perhaps can be explained by the fact that literally all of these translations (even though the last one mentions being translated from Belarusian) were translated via Russian. Быкаў was acutely aware of this situation as it was part of a general trend with his works: "Most translations of my works into European languages were made from Russian" (Gimpelevich 1999a, 73). Therefore, the author self-translated all of his works into Russian, as he felt it was "difficult to find well-qualified translators from Belarusan[346] into Russian, and even harder to find Belarusans who can translate into other European languages" (*ibid.*). In fact, Быкаў's translations into Russian were done with further translations in mind, where he felt he needed to "take Russian translations so seriously and try to make them as close as possible to the original", which in practice meant re-writing them "at least seven times in order to make the Russian text closer to Belarusan"

---

[346] This is an alternative spelling of Belarusian, mostly used in the USA.

(*ibid.*) However, rewriting did not always help: some of the Russian texts published in Soviet times were changed by the editors with significant distortions of the content. Thus, speaking of the Russian translation of *Знак бяды / Portent of Disaster,* Быкаў remarked:

> After I had done my translation, the novel was then severely re-edited for publication in the Druzhba Narodov, where it was published first; and later by the Molodaia Gvardiia publishers in Moscow […] How it all transpired is a dramatic story in itself. Editorial variations were so numerous that I lost all count of them. Worst of all was the fact that part of chapter 16, about "raskulachvanne" (seizure of farmers' property) was cut out (Kipel 1996).

Some of these distortions, particularly concerning the translation of the latter novel, were discussed by Zora Kipel (1996) and Zina Gimpelevich (1999a, 1999b). These discussions raise the issue of translation via the third language, a refracted version of the original ST1, even though ST2 could have been self-translated by the writer himself. Connected to it is the issue of the representation of the writer in the TL culture, as, in the case of Bykau, he would often be perceived as a Russian, rather than Belarusian, which is a major issue for a minority language writer wishing to propagate his culture and its issues to the wider community via foreign language translations of his work.

In 1982 a second book of translations by Vera Rich was published under the title *The Images Swarm Free: A Bi-Lingual Selection of Poetry by Maksim Bahdanovich, Ales Harun and Zmitrok Biadula* (Bahdanovich et al. 1982). It was edited by Arnold McMillin and published by the Anglo-Belarusian Society in Liverpool. As Vera Rich later stated, she was hardly involved in the edition:

> when Professor Arnold McMillin produced *The Images Swarm Free*, he simply compiled it out of existing published versions, or my draft manuscripts deposited in

the Francis Skaryna Belarusian Library in London. I had virtually nothing to do with

the production of this book[347] — I was up to my ears in journalistic and human rights

activities at the time (it was the time of Sakharov's exile and the academic boycott of

the Soviet Union — to say nothing of Martial Law in Poland), and did not even see the

proofs (3) [Hence, alas, the large number of misprints, including the omission of a

number of significant lines] let alone have time to revise any of the texts! (Rich 1996).

Misprints are undoubtedly present in the book but it is still a significant edition: it

is the first case where Belarusian and English texts are printed in parallel; many of the

translations appear for the first time; and the total number of translated texts is quite

significant. The editor also added an article on the input of each one of the authors into

literature. Another advantage was the choice of the represented authors: instead of the

classical trio of Kupala, Kolas and Bahdanovich, the book suggests an 'alternative' trio

consisting of Bahdanovich, Harun and Biadulia. The twenty-one translations of

Bahdanovich, published in the book, allow the reader to enjoy what is often referred to as

the most successful translations of Vera Rich (McMillin 1977b; Dingley 1972; Jurevich

2002). Perhaps it is the similarities between the poetics of the author and the translator, as

well as their romantic inclination and experiments with the literary form, which make the

translations of Bahdanovich by Rich so popular with the Anglophone émigrés. It was

Bahdanovich's *The Weaver-Women of Słucak* which became one of the earliest translated

poems by Vera Rich from Belarusian, a choice probably predetermined by the poem's

significance to Belarusians as it established a cornflower as the national floral symbol.

The version printed in *Images* is the only translation of the poem to appear in print. In her

translations, Rich again focuses on the recreation of the form in the translation of

Bahdanovich's triolets, sonnets, imitations of Persian, Scandinavian and Spanish poetry.

---

[347] According to Alexander Nadson, that is not entirely correct, and Rich did cooperate in the process of selection of the material for this publication. Fr Nadson also claims the decision to include the three poets was taken by several people, including him, involved with the Anglo-Belarusian Society (Nadson 2011).

The rhyming patterns are maintained in translation, sometimes as partial rhymes, as in *The Chronicler* or eye rhymes (in triolet to *S. Paluian*): 'Shukau – i, ad usikh dalyoki, / Ty byu, iak mesiats, adzinoki' (Bahdanovich et al. 1982, 32) – 'You sought – and, far from <u>everyone</u>, / You were, like the moon, <u>alone</u>...' (ibid, 33). Cultural symbols are transmitted with the help of equivalents or described: "Pahonia", "Vostraia Brama" are explained in footnotes (p. 55). One of the rare occasions of cultural mistranslation is "Ya khatseu by spatkatsa z vami <u>na vulitsy</u>" (p. 48) – *I should like to meet with you on the highway* (p. 49). Bahdanovich is writing about meeting at night in Vilna's old town, with its narrow mediaeval streets, while the translation speaks of a highway. Perhaps on a highway one may observe the stars better; however, it is not a common place for romantic walks, which the poem suggests. The mismatch may be explained by the omonymy of the Belarusian "na vulitsy", which is translated into English both as *in the street* and *outside* (the latter is the variant one may wish to use in this translation). The translations from Ales Harun (sixteen texts) and Zmitrok Biadulia (eleven texts) also exhibit the detailed approach typical of the translator, and are analysed in more detail in Henry Gifford's review of the work (1982). The reviewer notes Rich's "conspicuous merit is fidelity to the sense, even though considerations of form have to be overriding", "wordiness", "damages to verisimilitude" but concludes that "she is uncommonly dependable" and that she has not "failed them [the poets]: much of the force and the colour of the original comes through" (Gifford 1982, 76). In general, it can be stated that translations published in *The Images Swarm Free* represent a previously unpublished selection of the ST which, despite the translator's dissatisfaction, gives a new representation to the body of previously – and subsequently – unrepresented texts of these poets.

A year later, in 1984, the Anglo-Belarusian Society published Sakrat Janovich's *Miniatures*, a collection of his short stories, in a parallel Belarusian and English edition,

with translations carried out by Shirin Akiner (Janovič 1984). Having researched the work of Belarusian diasporic writers living in Poland[348], Dr Akiner's attention naturally turned to the most popular Belarusian writer of Bialystok, Sakrat Janovich. In the introduction Akiner describes the history of the Belarusian minority in Bialystok and concludes with the importance of national self-identification for the writer by saying that "in truth Janovic is a Byelorussian writer not merely because he writes in Byelorussian, but because his whole being is informed with an awareness of his Byelorussian identity. He does not consciously strive to express it; it is a natural part of his outlook. ... His ultimate involvement with it gives him the power to reveal it in sharp relief and at the same time to transcend its local boundaries and find in it the universal" (*ibid.,* 14-15). The translation introduces a new genre, that of literary miniatures, a "genre that Sakrat Janovič has made peculiarly his own" by using "a sensitive, immensely precise, lapidary style", "finely honed imagery and powerfully restrained lyricism" as well as "considered economy that makes comparison with poetry inevitable" (McMillin 1988, 72).

Another unusual book to be published in the 1980s is the translation from Old Belarusian of the celebrated tale of Tristan and Isolde which was carried out by the eminent mediaevalist and Belarusian scholar Zora Kipel, a co-founder of BINIM[349] (Kipel 1988). *Byelorussian Tristan* is a rare case of the reverse translation of a Western European romance *Tristan and Isolde,* which in the Belarusian transcription appears as *Tryschan i Izhota.*

Commenting on the literary influence of the legend in a recent *Handbook of Tristan and Isolde,* Joan Tasker Grimbert states:

---

[348] 'Contemporary Byelorussian Literature in Poland (1956-81)', *Modern Language Review,* 78, 1 (1983), pp. 113-29.
[349] Belaruski Instytut Navyki I Mastatstva, Belarusian Institute of Science and Arts, the major centre of Belarusian studies in the USA.

As one of the founding myths of Western culture, it has been told and retold from the Middle Ages to the present day. It flourished first in the British Isles, France, and Germany, countries where its appeal has remained most enduring, then quickly spread to Italy, the Iberian Peninsula, Scandinavia, and well beyond, for there are even early versions in Czech and Byelorussian (2009, xiii).

The spread of the legend "well beyond" its original literary confines is unsurprising. The lands of Belarus were at the time part of the the Great Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) which had well established commercial and cultural links with Western Europe. The Belarusian manuscript is dated as late 16th century. *Tryschan* is a part of the so-called *Poznan Collection*, together with *The History of Attila* and *The Chronicle of Rachynski*. The Collection belonged to the family of Richard Unikhowski, whose wife was a distant relative of the famous Chancellor of GDL, Prince Leo Sapieha (1609-1656). It was probably bought from one of the scribes of the GDL's Chancellory, and then "after the Unikhowsky family it belonged to the Radzivill family in Niasvizh, which can be seen from remarks in the manuscript"[350] (Brazhunoŭ 2009, 24). The Belarusian Tryschan is very similar to the *Tristano Veneto* of the 15th century, and their closeness led to a unified recognition of the Italian version as the original source for the Belarusian translation (Sgambati 1983; Kipel 1988). The plot of the Belarusian version kept the main features: the love triangle, the drink necessary to justify the lover's unethical behavior. However, the emotional turmoil experienced by Tryschan due to the conflict between love and duty is less tragic in the Belarusian version as the translator shortened several love passages. A possible reason for cuts in the plot could have been cultural or temporal differences: by the 16th century the ideals of courtly love had

---

[350] ST: "Пасля сям'і Уніхоўскіх уласнікамі зборніка былі нясвіжскія Радзівілы, на што ўказваюць пазнакі ў рукапісе" (Brazhunoŭ 2009, 24). It is unclear how the manuscript appeared in Poznan. Adam Maldzis suggested that the Collection was stolen from Radzivill Library. The researcher states that in 1822, Kazimier Kviatkowski, the Niasvizh librarian, stole 96 rare manuscripsts from the Radzivill Collection and sold them for 2000 talers to a rich magnate from Poznan. The manuscript was discovered by Badzianski in 1842, remaining in Poznan to this day (*ibid.*).

undergone a major change and the translator was not just culturally but also spatially removed from them. He also omitted or changed any obscurities, particularly of a mythological or literary nature: thus, Merlin is described as a prophet who is kept trapped underground by some witch (that witch is Elaine, but that information is not there in *Trystan*). One of the stories of Lancelot du Lake, or Antsalot, which does not concern Tryschan, is deleted. It is quite possible, argues Ales Brazhunoŭ, that the translator wanted to concentrate attention solely on Tryschan, particularly on his adventures and chevalerie. It also means that love scenes were shortened, only those scenes which are to do with adventurous effects were left, such as the deception of Mark on the wedding night, the orchard scene, etc.

Surprisingly, a heroic and 'censored' version of the legend is not dissimilar to the British versions of the story, especially in *The Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones* by Thomas Malory, where *Tristram* is based mainly on the prose *Tristan* and reflects the tastes of Malory's 15th century English audience, drawing on the national conventions of romance. The focus is much less on Trystram's reputation as a great lover than as a celebrated knight. The hero seems to be preoccupied mainly with obtaining "worship" and enjoying the bonds forged in the fellowship of Arthur's knights. The main theme is thus *chevalerie* rather than courtoisie, but chevalerie in a heroic context. The appearance of the back translation of the romance from its Belarusian version into the language of the territory where its main protagonists come from, is a rare event. The return of the romance back to its roots in the main Western literary tradition could suggest another reason for its selection as a ST for translation: a claim for further authenticity and Western literary tradition shared by Belarusian literature. A proof of this can be found in the name of the translation, *Byelorussian Tristan,* where the name of the main protagonist is transliterated not in its local version but in the internationally accepted

one, while the defining adjective clearly claims it as work belonging to Belarusian literature.

In conclusion, it is evident that most of the English translations (with the exception of Bykaŭ's texts) which were carried out in the West in the 1960s – 1980s were done in cooperation with, or produced within, émigré circles of the UK and the USA. The focus of the translators on prominent figures of Belarusian history, particularly, saints, mediaeval texts or representative selections of poetry or prose by Belarusian authors, could be explained by their willingness to propagate Belarusian literature, believing it to have a rich legacy and contain works which transcend the local focus of a 'minority' literature. Thus, Belarusian diaspora was promoting the image of "Old/European Belarusianness" while the image of "New/Soviet Belarusianness" was created in Belarus itself.

Chapter Seven. Current State of Belarusian-English Translation (1991 – 2012)

It would seem logical to suppose that Belarus gaining independence as a separate state in 1991 might cause an upsurge of translation from Belarusian. As Belarus was establishing itself as a sovereign state with the titular ethnos of the same name, attention might have been focused on raising awareness of its literature and culture on the international scene. However, the expected surge in translation did not occur. Possible reasons for a decrease in translation activity in the last two decades (in comparison with the 1960s and 1980s) could include several factors. First and foremost would be the unstable situation in which the country found itself, since it "did not so much win independence as have it thrust upon it" (Rich 1996), in Rich's bitter paraphrasing of the famous Shakespearean lines on attaining greatness. As a result of the Belavezha Agreement on the dissolution of the USSR, Belarus, "the conveyor belt" of the Soviet Union, was faced with the problem of restructuring its economy, previously programmed to cater for large-scale centralised industry, into a much smaller market one. In those conditions, unprofitable business ventures, such as publishing literary translations had to be abandoned. The economic recession, typical of most post-Soviet states during the 'transitional economy' in the 1990s, was exacerbated by the country's unstable politics, which reached a certain predictability after the election of a pro-Russian leader in 1994, whose main focus has been on strengthening the alliance with Russia. In opposition to most Eastern European countries of the former Soviet block which embraced the move in the direction of the West and the European Union, Belarus' foreign policy has had a definite focus on Eastern, rather than Western, allies. In terms of English translations from Belarusian, this policy meant a certain indifference to the status of its image in the Western cultural arena. The former state-supported

programmes of translations aimed at changing the image of the "Soviet person" in the minds of Anglophone audiences had been abolished, yet nothing was established in its place. The situation with Western-based publications has not been encouraging either, due to a limitation of funds and language specialists.

However, even in these conditions translations continued to be published. What this chapter is going to argue is that there has been a reversal of roles between the translations published in the West and Belarusian-based publications, compared with their clearly defined roles in the 1960s–1980s. If Soviet publishers – including those in Belarus – used to produce translations with definite political overtones, then what can be observed at the moment is a tendency for 'political' translations to be published outside Belarus. The current government leader of the Republic, President Lukashenka, who came to power in 1994, has been deemed "the last European dictator" (Marples 2005; Bennett 2012; Wilson 2012) in the Western press where the current publicity for the country is produced along the lines of discussing human rights and freedom of speech. Wishing to disengage from this polemic are Belarusian publishers who, having experienced living in a totalitarian country, aim to steer clear of ideologies and produce translations as "art for art's sake". Thus, Belarus-published translations now fulfil "the aesthetic role" previously carried out by Western-based émigré publications[351], since their services in disseminating the previous representation of "New/Soviet Belarusianness" are no longer required by the state.

---

[351] This research is aware of the tentativeness of both terms, as 'political' translation does not necessarily exclude aesthetic merit. However, the general thematic distribution between the translations which are produced by the different camps seems too striking to be omitted.

7.1. Translations and Periodicals of the 1990s

The first years of independence saw very few translations, the absence of which in Belarus could be explained by a lack of previously available funding for state publishers. For Anglophone countries, formally active in the production of translations from Belarusian, it could be explained by the closure of some of its journals which previously published such translations, as in the example of *JBS* which was discontinued due to a lack of funding and editorial staff. The attention of the diaspora at the time was duly taken up by post-Chernobyl children rehabilitation projects. Although its effects were not publicised in Belarus until 1989, its consequences for Belarus included a mass resettlement of part of the Homelʹ and Mahilioŭ regions, the growing cancer rates and the existences of 'zones' of high radioactivity. Various programmes of rest and rehabilitation were started with the governmental support of various European countries and numerous NGOs[352]. On the wave of this publicity there appeared a translation of *След чорнага ветру* (*Footprint of the Black Wind*), a book written by children affected by the Chernobyl disaster (Jakavenka 1997). Apart from being translated into several languages (English, German, Japanese, Portuguese) it also received some publicity in the Anglophone media, with the author of this research featured in one of the BBC documentary *Rewind* Series in 1996. The English translations were carried out by a number of Belarusian translators, a possible reason why Rich chose to re-translate some of the excerpts from the book. In 1996 her translations from the book were used in performances by youth theatre groups from Aberdeen, Gomel, and Clermont-Ferrand (France) staged in Aberdeen.[353]

---

[352] The most famous and widespread are the programmes in Ireland (Children of Chernobyl Charity) and Italy. The UK also runs several programmes by various charities.
[353] All the cities involved in this project are twinned with Homel, a Belarusian city which, together with its borough, has been affected on a large scale by Chernobyl.

In terms of Belarusian fiction in translation, the few projects published in Belarus in the 1990s were either done while the publishers could still use the funding available from former bodies (as in the case of Prokofieva's translation) or they had to delay publication until some funding became available (May's translation discussed further). A book of translations from Bahdanovich by Anisia Prokofieva, *The Burning Candle*, was published in Minsk (Bahdanovich 1991). This pocket-sized 79-page modest publication is typical of the poor print quality of the time when books were published as black-on-white rotaprints. Yet while its translator and editor, both of whom were non-native speakers of English, unfortunately let stand some of the more awkward linguistic structures which had previously caused McMillin's criticism (1984), the publication did at least introduce several new translations of Bahdanovich. However, in spite of a fairly large circulation for the time (1000 copies), it is doubtful the book ever reached its target audience, as even the Francis Skaryna Library in London does not hold a copy. Compared to this, the last translation of Walter May from Belarusian, published only seven years later, is strikingly different. Published as a generously illustrated hard-back multilingual edition, a famous anonymous satirical poem of the 19th century, attributed to Kanstantsin Veranitsyn (Kisialioŭ 1971), *Тарас на Парнасе/ Taras on Parnassus*, appeared in three languages (Belarusian, Russian and English) in Minsk (*Taras* 1998). Since Walter May's translation focus moved from Belarusian to Russian literature in the late 1980s, the translation was probably carried out much earlier. The reason for the book's publication being postponed for a number of years is likely to have been the lack of funding. Compared with Rich's version of the poem, May's is written in a more modern English, which does not contain the inversions or archaisms present in Rich's work, and has very few footnotes. Given that the poem was an anonymous satirical production written in "peasants' language" and based on the burlesque opposition of high and low content (the revered Olympian gods dressed and

behaving like Belarusian peasants), its English version significantly transforms its ST modality. The almost tangible link of the ST with folklore (deliberate simplicity, irony and humour, use of colloquial language and informal tonality) is kept in translation in some parts but has generally lost its dominance and is not substituted by English informal or dialectal features but by a neutral language.

It was at this time of the scarcity of translations that Vera Rich's rise to unquestioned prominence as "the Ambassador of Belarusian culture in the Anglophone world" (Zaika 2010, 4) took place. Using her journalistic contacts, Vera Rich was actively promoting Belarusian matters in periodicals: she published several translations of Belarusian poetry and prose in *Index on Censorship*. A special issue of this journal titled *Belarus and Ukraine: Nation Building in Babel* published some of the works of authors who, otherwise, would remain unpublished today. The volume included two poems by Anatol' Sys (1993, 13), two stories by Anatol' Kazloŭ (*The Wolf's Banqueting* and *The Birthday*, *ibid.,*16-19) and Adam Globus's *Death is a Man: A Tale in Short Stories* (*ibid.*, 7-15).

Apart from *Index*, in 1998 Rich relaunched *Manifold: Magazine of New Poetry* which she edited and produced. The magazine published both original poetry in English as well as translations into major Western European languages, such as French, German, Italian, Spanish, and also into Latin. It also contained poetic translations "from less-known languages; these should be accompanied by the original text and (where appropriate) permission from the original author" (Rich 2010). The magazine gave Rich an opportunity to publish her latest translations from Belarusian, in particular those of a famous USA émigré poetess Natallia Arsenneva[354]. Among the translations from the latter there are such verses as: *My Native Land*, *Happiness*, *If We Had the Heart of Vikings...*, *Under the Blue Sky*, *To Young Poets*, *If I Had Wings* (*Manifold* 29, Spring,

---

[354] Arsenneva's poem *Prayer* is an "alternative" hymn of Belarus.

1998) and *New Year's Eve* (*Manifold* 30, Winter, 1998/99). In *Manifold,* there also

appeared Rich's last translations (and re-translations) of her favourite Belarusian poet,

Bahdanovich: *You Tell Me* (*Manifold* 31, Spring, 1999), a revised version of *Romance*

(*Venus, new-risen*) (*Manifold* 33, Harvest, 1999) and *I should like to meet with you on*

the highway... (*Manifold* 34, Year's End, 1999), *Ah, how the blue-eyed bird is singing so*

sweetly... (*Manifold* 37, February/April, 2001). Miscellaneous translations of other

Belarusian poets were also frequently featured: *In the Night Fields They Sing...* by

Zmitrok Biadulia (*Manifold* 32, Midsummer, 1999), Maxim Tank's *Mother's Hands*

(*Manifold* 35, Spring, 2000), *Quetzalcoatl* by Carlos Sherman (*Manifold* 36, Summer,

2000)[355].

     Apart from *Manifold,* Rich continued in her role as a freelance literary critic and

political observer, contributing to a number of periodicals, such as the *Times Higher*

Education Supplement, Physics World, The Tablet, and *Index on Censorship*. Until her

death in 2009 she was a deputy editor of *The Ukrainian Review*, and of *Central Asia*

Newsfile. Among her publications of the 1990s there are both articles on political and

current affairs, as *Belarus: A Nation In Search of a History: 1991 and all that* (Rich

1996), as well as current affairs and literary reviews, including those of literary

translation: in 1993, the main literary weekly, *Litaratura i Mastatstva,* published her

essay *Regarding a Centipede* (Rich 1993), where she emphasised the importance of

creativity in artistic translation. She continued by publishing a paper *"Slutzkiya*

Tkachykhi" (*'The Weaver-Women of Slucak'*)*: A Translator's View"* in BINIM's

Zapisy (1996). As an active participant in various literary events related to Belarus, she

presented and later published several papers in literary conference proceedings. One of

them, *Belarusian Poetry in Emigration 1945–1990,* was printed in 2003 in *The Role of*

the Belarusian Diaspora in Preserving and Developing Belarusian Culture compiled by

---

[355] Since the journal was produced by Vera herself and does not have an ISBN, it has not been possible to provide references for these translations.

the Skaryna Belarusian Library in London, following the 2001 conference (Rich 2003).

Her tribute to *Vasil Быкаў: Belarusian Writer and Patriot*, an obituary highlighting the

writer's role in the human rights movement in Belarus, was published in one of the

Belarusian leading 'thick'[356] literary journals (Rich 2003). Her last paper to be

published in conference proceedings is *The Law is an Ass*, which appeared in the

conference proceedings held in Minsk to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the

birth of Vincent Dunin-Martsinkevich (Janushkevich 2008).

7.2. Publications of the 2000s

The situation with English translations from Belarusian started changing in the

2000s. Already in 2001, Uladzimir Drazdow[357] had two plays published in *The*

Albatrosses: Direct Train To Paris With All Interchanges; Lady Luck (2001). The

trilingual edition contained Belarusian as well as Russian and English translations (the

English translation kept the Belarusian transliteration), with the English variant

produced by the author himself with the help of Guy Picarda (Drazdow 2001, 3)[358]. *The*

Direct Train To Paris With All Interchanges was staged by Vitaly Barkowsky of the

Belarusian State Theatre as *Chagall, Chagall* in 1999 and portrays "memory fragments"

of the last days of Chagall, which takes the artist to his native Vitebsk in Belarus. The

play won numerous awards at international festivals, including the Fringe First Award

at the Edinburgh Festival (2000), and the Belaya Vezha International Festival in Brest

(2000), and was staged in Torin (Poland), Chishinau (Moldova) and Friuli (Italy)

---

[356] 'Thick' is an English calque of a Russian term which denotes a particular type of literary journal which publishes current literature and literary criticism.

[357] The playwright's pseudonym belongs to Uladzimir Schastny, an Ambassador of Belarus in the UK at the time of publication. He had also been translator of Anglophone classics into Belarusian, and published his translation of E.A. Poe's *Murders on Morgue Street* in one of the first Belarusian books of translations of detective stories. For more details, cf. Skomorokhova, 1999.

[358] The copy given to Guy Picarda, located at the Francis Skaryna Library in London, contains a hand-written note from the author, "To Mr. Guy Picarda with sincere gratitude for the assistance in preparing the English version and best wishes, *Author*, 10.08.2001".

(Drazdow 2001, 46). Belarusian drama was taking on, albeit briefly, an international dimension. Moreover, in the next year Belarusian literature was taken even further afield, beyond Europe. In 2002, some of the Belarusian poetical classics were re-created in India by G. Mukerjee. *The Mournful Melody of Violins* was published as a relief project in aid of a village in India, with the entire proceeds from the book sales directed towards the relief. The nature of the project explains the selection of the material which draws parallels between the oppressed condition in India and in Belarusian villages (Mukerjee 2002).

The book includes translations from the Russian poets of the 'Silver Age', such as Anna Akhmatova, Vladimir Mayakovski, Boris Pasternak, and the famous authors of the 1960s – 1970s (Yevgeni Yevtushenko, Andrey Voznesensky, Robert Rozhdestvensky) as well as from Belarusian classics, namely Janka Kupala and Jakub Kolas[359]. In terms of Belarusian translations, they, quite differently from previous translations, were significantly transformed in terms of their original poetic form, rather than "faithfully" re-created according to the English syllable-stress which would have been identical to that of the STs. Mukerjee termed his blank verse translations as 'transcreations' (*ibid.*).

Belarusian classics also attracted some attention in their native country when in 2002, the year of the celebration of the 120th anniversary of Janka Kupala's birth, Zh. Dapkyunas and Viachaslau Rahoisha published the sonnets of Janka Kupala and their translations into Belarusian (some of the early originals were written in Polish), English, Spanish, German, Polish, Russian, Ukrainian and French (Kupala et al., 2002). The English variants belong to Vera Rich and this is the first book to be published in Minsk which included her work. The sonnets are of classical Petrarcan form (with *abbaabbacdcdcd* rhyming) with a few changes in the last sextet as the rigid form was

---

[359] Their names, "Janka" and "Jakub", are spelt as "Yanka" and "Yakub".

slightly deviated from by Kupala, possibly due to Polish influence (Minskevich 2004, 138). Vera Rich's standard attention to form explains some more examples of her traditional inversions. In this example she uses them to recreate Anglo-Saxon rhymes to describe *Belarusian*:

> Vos belarus, shto haruye i veryts,
>
> Vos belarus, yakoha skrutsila
>
> U bahne biadoty tsemra-khimera[360] (Kupala 2002, 17).

> A Belarusian this – he <u>loves</u> and <u>suffers</u>,
>
> A Belarusian – into need's swamp, past saving,
>
> He was brought down by darkness, that <u>stepmother</u> (Kupala 2002, 47).

Only two years after this venture, in 2004, another anthology of Belarusian verse translated by Vera Rich appeared. *Poems on Liberty* ("Верш на свабоду") represents a collection of poems on freedom written by over a hundred authors, most of them young poets. Since the idea of the book was initiated by Radio Liberty and came out of their broadcasts of Belarusian poets willing to align themselves with the opposition to the current government, the anthology represents a compilation of verses by modern Belarusian poets united by one theme only, namely liberty or freedom[361]. Each author is represented by one poem, translated into English with Rich's particular attention to detail, form and Belarusian themes (Makavik, 2004). There is a certain lack of consistency with regards to the standards of aesthetic quality among all the poems presented there, a fact which is explained by the translator in her preface: "In this collection [...] we have more than 100 poets, ranging from the most eminent in

---

[360] Here is a Belarusian, who suffers and believes, / Here is a Belarusain, who is bound / In the swamp of trouble by darkness-chimera.

[361] As Rich states in her introduction, *svaboda* i *volia* differ from their usual English dictionary equivalents, *freedom* and *liberty*. ...

272

contemporary Belarusian literature down to those who would hardly claim to be poets at all – but who, in the name of freedom, were inspired to try their hand" (Rich and Makavik, 2004). The list of names reveals some obvious omissions of eminent literati, a fact commented on by Arnold McMillin in his review of the book:

> Despite the relatively large number of verses, many poets are conspicuous by their absence, not only because they may not have been selected from those originally broadcast, but no doubt, in some cases, because their interests are more in preserving a close relationship with the authorities, rather than taking the risk of a broadcast or publication (McMillin 2005).

McMillin's explanation is quite plausible, especially in the light of the fact that many of the eminent literati still remember the recent censorship issues and may feel threatened as a result of an affiliation with the proverbial "opposition". In fact, as this chapter will show further, very few of the established "reputable" poets are translated into English.

The book is valuable from the point of view of it being the translator's last discussion of her professional techniques and views on translation. This occurs in her preface which is devoted to a discussion of the issues involved in translating from one literature to another, in particular, as relating to intertextual features. Rich states,

> the rendering of penumbral and subliminal connotations is as important in the translation of a work of literature as is the accurate rendering of the basic sense; a good translation should present the readers not only with words corresponding to those of the original but should evoke in them the same emotional and imaginative 'atmosphere' as that experienced by readers of the original (Makavik 2004, 5).

Though relatively free from Rich's favourite means of evoking that 'atmosphere' through footnotes and explanations, some of the verses would have benefitted from them. With the publication available as an e-book, it provides an easy access to anyone interested in reading and accessing Belarusian poetry online.

In the same year, another translator approached the legacy of Rich's favourite author, Maxim Bahdanovich, as several of his poems were translated into English and Russian, appearing in a fictionalised account of his life authored by Leonid Zuborev (Zuborev 2004). It is unlikely that the translator was able to publicise them widely as the book is published in Russian and the few examples of translations are published in the appendix. By contrast, the next translation, published as a richly illustrated hardback in 2005, has been translated into English several times, mostly notably by Vladimir Nabokov (Nabokov 1961). The famous "Слова пра паход Ігаравы" (*The Lay of Igor's Campaign*), a literary manuscript written in Old Slavonic, a language once shared by all three groups of the modern Eastern Slavs was published in 2005. This multilingual edition presents parallel Belarusian (translated by Janka Kupala), Russian and English texts, the latter one by Irina Petrova. The current edition is a reprint of the 1981 translation with a Russian transliteration (Likhachev 1981). Although the translation of the text was done through Russian transliteration, the mere fact of the appearance of this multilingual publication can testify to the changing paradigms of modern Belarusian literary history and its claims to a share of the common Eastern Slavonic literary tradition. While the introduction of the Russian translation alongside the Belarusian one demonstrates claims of an Old Slavonic heritage by Belarusian literature, the inclusion of the English translation, together with illustrations by a Belarusian artist, raises the issue of Belarusian representation to an international dimension.

The international representation of Belarusian literature was the main driving force of another project, implemented in 2005. Since many of the English translations of

Belarusian literature are virtually unavailable to wider Anglophone audiences due to their bibliographical rarity or limited print runs, the idea emerged of creating an electronic resource with the available translations. Thus, a CD entitled *Belarusian Literature in English Translations: 100 authors, 500 works* appeared under the auspices of UNESCO and the Janka Kupala Public Library. Creating this resource was an attempt to produce easy access to 500 translated works of Belarusian literature, from mediaeval Old Belarusian hagiographies to the latest translations of modern poets produced by Vera Rich. Every care was made to find all available translations of Belarusian literature at the time, with the final version representing one hundred authors. In some rare cases of the existence of two translations of the same ST, both were included. Being the author and compiler of the project, I gave an opportunity to Vera Rich to revise her publications in *Like Water, Like Fire* which were obsolete due to linguistic changes (cf., for instance, her initial usage of *gay* as *happy*) and gave her the honour of contributing an introduction, which was a revised and extended version of her original introduction to her anthology of 1971[362]. The final words of her last introduction express the translator's belief in her lifelong mission of bringing Belarusian literature into the international dialogue with others as an equal member:

> Today, as the centenary approaches of the founding of *Nasha Niva*, and the literary upsurge it generated, one may safely say that Belarusian literature, born in adversity and nourished in hardship, has grown to fruition and can well take its stand as a worthy member of the literatures of Europe – and, indeed, the world (Rich, quoted in Skamarokhava 2005).

---

[362] Due to financial limitations and time pressures of the edition, the disc was published as a non-commercial project with a rather small circulation (200 copies) and was distributed to major public libraries. At the time, the agreement with Vera Rich was that the content would be further revised (as she asked for more time for the revision of her translations). However, the untimely death of the translator did not permit this.

The idea of introducing Belarusian literature as an equal member to the world literary community was the inspiration of another project, a parallel Belarusian and English edition of Ryhor Baradulin's *Ksty* (Baradulin 2006). *Ksty* is a voluminous book of 800 pages which was the reason in 2007 for the author receiving a second Nobel Prize nomination. Its title is ambiguous, since "the word "ksty" is polysemantic. It can denote baptizing and crosses, and fingers crossed for crossing oneself. The word comes from the East Slavonic 'hrest' which later changed to 'krest'" (Baradulin 2006, 20), i.e. 'cross'. Printed in Minsk in the Cathedral of St. Symon and Aliona's printing premises, the book's collection of poems is united by one theme – Christianity, which, according to the compilers of the book has universal qualities, as "every man appeals to God" (*ibid.,* 18). The book's main message is evangelistic in nature as "the message of the book is realizing by every person that he carries his cross, that anyone baptized bears on himself the sign of his belonging to Jesus Christ, to the great Christian family and eternal heaven – salvation" (*ibid.,*20). As can be seen from this short citation, the translators were hardly aware of the gendered language they were using,[363] while the book's sole focus on Christianity could have reduced its author's chances of receiving the award. In a rush to get the book to print in time for the nomination, the translation was produced by numerous individuals, students and lecturers at Minsk State Linguistic University, and therefore the poems vary in their artistic value. While in some of them, for example, in M. Savitsky and Alena Tabolich's work, the stylistic difficulties are generally those of frequent inversions, others are full of awkward grammatical errors and "rhymes" which can barely be regarded as assonances. For instance, one of the first poems of the book, *To Holy Mother of Czenstochowo* (*Да Маці Божай Чанстахоўскай*) opens with the following catrene:

---

[363] A fact which may cast doubt on the professionalism of "the editors of the English version", among which there are listed Assistant Professor, Stewart Arthur Rex (USA), Prof. James Thorson (USA); Jim Donovcan (UK)". It has not been possible to receive their comments as an internet search did not come up with any institutional affiliations for the individuals named above.

Маці Божая з Чанстахова!

Б'е чалом Табе вешчае слова.

Ты – нябёсаў душа святая.

Позірк Твой над зямлёй світае[364].

Holy Mother of Czenstochowo

Make obeisance to you the prophetic word.

You are the holy soul of the skies

And Your glance above the Earth is getting light (Baradulin 2006).

The translation is problematic both in terms of sense as well as form. Thus, in the ST the rhyming pattern of these lines is *aabb* with precise feminine rhymes, while the TT's rhyming is hardly precise. The voluminous book gives the impression of being an unfinished production (probably due to the rush to be published) and bears errata as well as obvious slips as all of the translators were non-native speakers. The book was reissued again in 2008 with changes made following feedback from correctors and editors. However, since the circulation of the latter edition was limited, it has not yet been possible to analyse the publication which, unless it undergoes some major revisions, will hardly be able to represent the poet as "a talented versificator" or his poetry as "an enchantress", as the compiler of the book, Ala Sakalowskaya, asserts (Baradulin 2006, 24).

The same year several translations of Belarusian authors (including some of her published translations of Ryhor Baradulin, as well as the previously under-represented Larysa Heniyush, Danuta Bichel, Mikhas Skobla, Siarhei Paniznik) were published in a book of translations *Ліхтарык глогу / The Haw Lantern* by a lecturer at the Minsk

---

[364] Holy Mother of Czenstochowo! / A prophetic word is bowing to you. / You are a holy soul of the heaven. / Your look is dawning above the earth.

State Linguistic University Alena Tabolich (Tabolich 2006). The book contains both her translations from English authors into Belarusian[365] as well as from Belarusian into English. However, typical of most modern Belarusian publications, it had an extremely small circulation (one hundred copies) and is therefore practically unavailable to an Anglophone reader. Also, the fact that there are both translations to and from Belarusian means its target audience, rather than being Anglophone readers abroad, would be the narrow circle of professional linguists and translators. Some of Tabolich's translations from the book however were published in *Annus Albaruthenicus* (2002, no.3) and are also available online (Tabolich 2003).

One of the last translations to be published in English from Belarusian is the latest translation of Bykaŭ. It is his posthumous publication (the writer died in 2003) of his *Parables*, recreated in English by Joseph P. Mozur, a Professor of Slavistics at the University of Southern Alabama, and a Belarusian American, son of a famous Belarusian poet and émigré Ryhor Kryshyna, Ihar Kazak. The book was printed by an independent publisher 'VoliA' in Lviv, Ukraine (Bykaŭ 2007), a fact which is explained both by the strained relationship of the writer with the government due to his oppositional political views as well as by the book's contents. The book reads as an antagonistic polemic against the views of "the mutes" (i.e. Belarusians who forgot their language) in *Three Words of the Mutes* who are hoping that everything will eventually turn out to be all right at the end (*The Kitten and the Little Mouse*) and who have no clue where they are going (*The Wanderers*). Only when they have nothing to lose, as in the case of the tribe opposing the Rhinos (*The Rhinos Are Coming*), will they find courage to withstand their opponents. Thinly veiled mockery is apparent in Bykau's description of a "dictator" whose view of his people as "quite sensible, decent, and

---

[365] These are various verses of American, English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh poets, all of whom are mostly represented by one or two verses. The selected verses mostly comprise of women poets, Anglophone classics and current authors whose translations appeared in Belarusian for the first time.

industrious" is in direct contradiction to his opponents view who "insisted that the people were stupid and blind as moles" (*ibid.*, 12). In this context, even hard work and tolerance (famous characteristics of Belarusians) will not be able to save these people from working in vain, as in *The Tower* or in *The Wall*, the latter inspired by Sartre's famous story of the same name. Understanding that these allusions would be difficult to read for Anglophone audience, Joseph P. Mozur, nevertheless, states: "While Belarusian readers will find in the parables countless allusions to life in Belarus, the stories also have universal appeal, and readers everywhere will easily recognize situations reminiscent of those in their own countries and societies" (*ibid.*, 6). While this may be true, it can be argued that a few footnotes explaining some of these allusions (or a commentary at the end) would have been helpful in understanding the complex layers of Bykaŭ texts' meanings.

The last published translation of Vera Rich is devoted to two nineteenth century classical Belarusian authors, precursors of modern Belarusian literature. The book *Класіка* (*Classics*), published in Minsk in 2008, contains the translations of Dunin-Marcinkevich's *Pinsk Gentry* as well as Kanstantsin Veranitsyn's *Taras on Parnassus* into several European languages. English variants belong to Rich, while *Pinsk Gentry* is co-translated by Vera Rich and Dominic Yanushkevich (Janushkevich 2008)[366]. The edition is unique as it published the original text of Dunin Marcinkevicz's *Pinskaya Shlakhta*, written in the 19th century Palesse dialect, as well as its translation in modern Belarusian, English, German, Polish, and Russian. *Taras na Parnase* is presented in its original Belarusian as well as in English, Bulgarian, Spanish, German, Polish, Russian and Ukrainian. The edition was published in the bicentenary year of Dunin Marcinkevicz's birth, officially celebrated by UNESCO. According to Rich, the translation was carried out from the original 19th century ST. The book states there

---

[366] According to Rich, as stated in her interview in 2008, Janushkevich provided the rough draft of the translation which was later edited by Vera Rich.

were two translators, Rich and Dominik Janushkevich. However, it is obvious from stylistic analysis that the final revision was corrected by Rich herself (she even claimed she re-translated most of Janushkevich's work). She stated that editorial work and checking dialect dictionaries took her six months, after she had received the initial translation. These time-consuming corrections explain some of the successes of the translators' choices, on various language levels, from separate words ("гасцінчык" – "sweetener") and noun combinations ("дзіця горкае" (Janushkevich, 49) – "a green child" (*ibid.*, 17), "удалося атуманіць" (*ibid.*, 50) – "pull the wool over the parents' eyes" (*ibid.*, 68), "дочка захімерычыцца" – "gets some bee in her bonnet"(*ibid.*, 68) to phrases ("даганяючы не нацалавацца" (*ibid.*, 50) – "though you give chase – you won't get an embrace" (*ibid.*, 68) and emotive expressions, as in the case of "our favourite song" (Kruchkov) of Pinsk gentry where the authentic "Ей чух – чумадра! / Чумадрыха вэсэла!" (*ibid.*, 43) is translated into "Heigh-ho! Heel and toe! / Fol-de-rolly jolly-O!" (*ibid.*, 79).

A particular strength of *Pinsk Gentry* is its dialectal language, with a variety of various aphorisms or "прыповэсты" of the Pinsk region. This feature is obviously difficult to recreate in a translation as it may demand the use of a particular dialect in the TL. Rich planned to translate the whole work by writing it in a phonetic transcription of one of the English dialects. She felt that one of the Northern English dialects would not have been appropriate in this case as associations of the TL audience of life in Yorkshire would have been very different from that portrayed in the ST. A more appropriate dialect, she believed, was one of the South Western dialects of England, such as Devonshire. However, Rich was not familiar with them and since phonetic scripts usually produce an extra hindrance for the TL reader, she finally decided to translate it using standard English and if the play was staged, make a note for the actors to read the text with this particular accent. "Прыповэсты" which often rhyme

in the original, are translated accordingly as rhymed in the TT: "як чорта з балота" (*ibid.*, 49) – "like a hog from a bog" (*ibid.*, 68), "не цяпер, то ў чацвер" (*ibid.*, 67) – "If not by Saturday then on some latter day" (*ibid.*, 49), "здаровы, як рыжкі баровы" (*ibid.*, 49) – "Blooming and well. Sound as a bell" (*ibid.*, 67), "чорт бяду перабудзе – адна згіне, дзесяць будзе" (*ibid.*, 53) – "the devil ends your woes – but then: "For one woe gone, you now have ten!" (*ibid.*, 71), "Млын меле – мука будзе, язык меле – бяда будзе" (*ibid.*, 54) – "The mill runs and the flour flows forth; the tongue runs – there comes woe and wrath!" (*ibid.*, 72), "Добрэ прыповэст каже: Пынска шляхта як попьетца, то напэвно подэрецца" (*ibid.*, 44) – "As the proverb rightly says: "When they take a drop too many, the Pinsk gentry fight aplenty!"" (*ibid.*, 81). However, rhymes are not always kept in the translations of songs: sometimes the rhymes of verbal flexions are translated with tautology, as in the case of "meet him – greet him" (*ibid.*, 70). In other cases the rhymes are exchanged for assonances or visual rhymes: "вэдомо, – юрыста, обдэрэ всих до чиста, дый поидэ с Богом до хаты" (*ibid.*, 38) – "he'll fleece everyone and then trot off nicely home" (*ibid.*, 74).

In terms of choices, Rich's strategy to keep to the ST as closely as she could explains some of the translator's choices which could have been more idiomatic in the TT: "Ой, наварылі бацькі сабе кашы, будзе што есці!" (*ibid.*, 47) – "Our fathers have cooked their porridge – so now they must eat it" (*ibid.*, 65), "хрэн табе ў вочы" – "horseradish sting your eyes" (in this case Rich claimed it was the choice of the editors), "Вось як яны людзі судовыя, умеюць: і воўк будзе сыты, і козы цэлы" (*ibid.*, 57) – "When the wolf's belly's filled, the goats need fear no ill!" (*ibid.*, 76), "усе ўказы і законы як рэпу грызе" (*ibid.*, 56) – "as easy as eating a turnip" (*ibid.*, 74), "в пользу временного присутствия"(*ibid.*, 56) – "to temporary presence here" (*ibid.*, 75), "каб я з-за вас не ўлез у нерат" (*ibid.*, 58) – "so that I'm not caught in a net" (*ibid.*, 77).

The text contains some misprints: *am gry* (*ibid.*, 70), *case q 2312* (*ibid.*, 74), and the repetition of *shall **and shall*** (*ibid.*, 75). Uncharacteristic of Rich, a saying "Уехаў твой родны ў нерат – ні ўзад ні ўперад" (*ibid.*, 53) is omitted. A more significant misprint, noticed by the translator herself is the changing of the order of lines (the fourth instead of the first one) in Kutorha's advice to Marysia to break up with Hryshka. As the result of the confusion, Kutorha recommends Marysia flirting with others:

Молоды ж Грыцько нэ щыры,	Then go flirting with another.
Нэ шукай в ным доброй виры.	Young Hryška speaks insincerely,
Ў коханьни тоби клянэтца,	You'll not find good faith there, clearly:
А там – с другою смээтца! (*ibid.*, 34)	He'll vow he is your true lover (*ibid.*, 71)

However, despite these inconsistencies Rich's version of *Pinsk Gentry* may serve as an example of a translation of an archaic, dialectal ST. It is even more significant in the context of the translator's struggle with her terminal illness, making Rich's last work a lasting testimony to her professionalism and devotion to the subject. Indeed, to her last days, Rich continued to fill in the gaps on the Anglophone literary map, striving for excellence in her representation of Belarusian literature to the world. In many ways she still felt like a discoverer, as she shared with me in our last conversation in Minsk in February 2008. She hoped to finish translating *Novaia Zemlia,* the epic poem by Jakub Kolas, often referred to as 'the encyclopaedia of Belarusian peasantry life', by 2011 and have it published by a well-known company, such as *Everyman's Library*. Her battle with cancer from 2006 until her death on 20 December 2009 did not allow these plans to happen. Many of Rich's translations are still unpublished and are preserved as manuscripts in the Francis Skaryna Belarusian Library in London. Some are published online, on Peter Kazaty's website 'Belarus Miscellany'. Among the latter one can find otherwise unpublished translations such as *Chernobyl (Chornobyl)* and *It was not Mother who waved me goodbye...* ("Не маці ў інстытут

праводзіла мяне...") by Volha Ipatava; *Christ is Risen* ("Хрыстос васкрос") by Janka Kupala; new chapters from 'New Land' by Jakub Kolas – *Easter Eve...* ("Вялікдзень") і *The Wolf* ("Воўк")*; Straw Gold* ("Золата саломы") by Ryhor Semashkievich; *A Winter's Tale* ("Зімовая казка") M. Klimkovich, and also the hymn of the Belarusian People's Republic (BNR[367]) "Мы выйдзем шчыльнымі радамі" *(Come, We Shall March in Joint Endeavor).* Besides targetting the adult audiences of *Everyman's Library*, Rich also published a few translations from Belarusian children's literature in Anglophone anthologies. She has published a few translations from Maxim Tank in two poetic family anthologies, for instance *The Hare's House* in *Sheep Don't Go to School – Mad and Magical Children's Poetry of Eastern Europe* (Peters and Prachaticka 1999)*,* which also contains her two translations from Nil Hilevich, *A Wonder Came* and *Three Riddles.* Another translation from Tank, *The Panes of an Old Mansion*, was featured in *Home Anthology* (McPhilemy 2000)*.*

Vera Rich's death signified a new stage for Belarusian literature. After the loss of its "cultural Ambassador" in the English-speaking world[368], the question remains open in terms of the next one. The fact of her passing received wide coverage in the Belarusian press but few were asking what it would mean in terms of future translations of Belarusian literature. Given the example of *Ksty*, when, at the time of printing, the editors looked for a native speaker to act as a translator of Baradulin's work – and were unable to find one – the likelihood of Rich's 'successor' appearing soon is currently minimal. As, at the moment, Anglophone speakers are unable to receive professional training in the Belarusian language, the job, in Cronin's words, could only be picked up by enthusiastic amateurs, such as Rich. Her disregard for the current poetic aesthetics

---

[367] The Republic ceased to exist on Belarusian territory in 1919, but its government continued in exile.

[368] Besides Belarusian translations, Vera also authored three books of translations from Ukrainian poetry, as well as publishing translations from Polish, Old Norse and Old English. She was awarded numerous prizes and awards, including the national order of Olga by the Ukrainian government.

would also probably mean that the currently existing translations will be perceived – if they are not already – as linguistic oddities and 'quaint language' (Dingley 1972). On the other hand, would the global hegemony of English mean that Belarusian authors who know English will be self-translating their work or start writing in English, as in the case of Valzhyna Mort, who now resides in the USA?

Without necessarily providing an answer to these questions, some fairly promising initiatives have been developing over the last year. The first one is the Belarus Free Theatre, a dissident theatre in Belarus started by Mikalai Khalezin and Natallia Koliada in opposition to the current authorities. The mostly Russian-speaking[369] theatre's plea for freedom of speech has received wide press coverage in the USA and especially in the UK, where they have been working under the patronage of Sir Tom Stoppard. They have also benefitted from the support of stage stars, such as Sienna Miller, Jude Law and Kevin Spacey, and received positive reviews of their performances from such established theatre critics as Michael Billingham. After the winter presidential elections in Belarus the founders of the theatre claimed political asylum in the UK and have been rehearsing at the Old Vic by invitation of Kevin Spacey. Their performances are played in Russian accompanied by English subtitles and focus on emotional contrast, employing the combination of simple props (i.e. crushing the orange as a sign of oppression) with physical challenges for their actors (running an open flame above a naked torso or covering a group of actors under a large plastic sheet to describe suffocation and desperation). A recent review notices that "Vladimir Shcherban's fine staging deftly masters the contrasts between the plays, and the shifts in tone within them, using shiny new luggage as the only props and a giant screen from which huge faces, sometimes only the mouths, smile on us or threaten" (Kingston 2011).

---

[369] Although they do perform in Belarusian, as evident from their involvement in the recent cultural Olympiad events at the Globe where they staged *King Lear*.

The group published a collection of plays from their repertoire: *Rock'n'Roll* by Tom Stoppard translated into Belarusian and Russian, as well as *Jeans Generation* by Mikalai Khalezin and *Discover Love* by Natalia Koliada, translated into Belarusian and English (Khalezin and Koliada, 2009). The English version, translated by Andrei Koliada, is written in idiomatic English and was proofread by an unacknowledged native speaker, evidence of which is clear from one such editorial correction being accidentally left in the final text:

> Only some particular people who were part of some particular spheres... The spheres in which foreign made cars and brilliants DO YOU MEAN "DIAMONDS"?, embassies and trade missions, food allowances and special medical stations were close at hand... Our food allowance was a prune cocktail in the Romashka café, our trade mission was the Yubileyka hotel, our ambassadors were Polish visitant construction workers, and our brilliants DIAMONDS? were records of Led Zeppelin and the Rolling Stones (Khalezin and Koliada 2009, 172).

It is ironic that drama, traditionally considered the weakest of all Belarusian literary genres (Laŭshuk 2010), has become its best-known propagator in the Anglophone cultural sphere. With the Belarus Free Theatre being accepted to perform in 'The Globe to the Globe' Festival, the battle between "official" and "alternative" versions of Belarus came to the surface where two theatres – Janka Kupala National Theatre and Free Belarus Theatre – ended up representing the two different sides of current discourses of 'Belarusianness'[370].

---

[370] Interestingly, Janka Kupala's Theatre staged a play by Urshulia Radzivil, highlighting Belarusian traditions of 'Europeanness', while the Belarus Free Theatre included political scenes into the performance, such as policemen going through a long paperwork process and interrogation and later disposing of all evidence when they are ordered to conduct a 'political' assassination. The reversal of

The second promising initiative is that of Glagoslav Publishers, who in less than a year of their existence in the UK have published two books of Belarusian literature in English translation. However, being formed as an initiative to represent three Eastern Slavonic literatures, it is still too early to make conclusions on the balance of power between the three literary flows stemming from this initiative.

Surveying the current perspectives for future literary translations from Belarusian, the final point of this Chapter is dedicated to "extra-linguistic features" which, nevertheless, are an inseparable part of the translation process. A particularly potent example of those factors is the scarceness of resources and funding available for translations from 'minority' languages, particularly from the non-EU parts of Eastern Europe. The 'mixed blessings' of the EU translation policy in terms of some of the 'minority' languages have been discussed (Blanchadell and West 2004; Cronin 2003). However, the situation of non-members of the EU is even less encouraging. As authors of a 'minority' literature which does not have access to generous supranational funding schemes, Belarusian literati find themselves in a rather humble position within the international arena. While some EU-led initiatives are made available to some of its Eastern European members, non-EU cultures remain unfunded:

It is one of the 'sad but true' facts of life that the resources available to threatened languages are often quite meagre and constantly fewer than those available to their Big Brother rivals and competitors. As a result, not only must resources be used sparingly but they must be used tellingly, i.e. in connection with gaining or securing functions that are both crucial and defendable. Threatened languages often have no *outside support of any operational significance* to fall back upon. Even if there are promises of assistance from outside the ranks of their own community of speakers and activists, these promises necessarily come at a price. If they are withdrawn, at the decision of the

roles of political vs aesthetic representation of 'Belarusianness' between the state and the diaspora is evident.

outside supporters, they can leave a void and a sense of defeat and betrayal which is worse than the initial threat that such assistance had initially promised to assuage (Fishman 2001, 13).

By lacking opportunities to offer competitive rates to attract professional translators, 'minority' literatures are left short of capable individuals, who otherwise might have taken the project. This creates a situation where the "tendency in minority languages can be for more unusual language combinations to be handled by more or less gifted, well-meaning amateurs" (Cronin 2003, 153), since there are currently no language courses in Belarusian available at UK Universities. Most of the translators from Belarusian into English collaborate either with a Belarusian editor or another translator who provides them with a word-for-word translation or with native speakers of the language who are often lacking the necessary professional linguistic skills. Belarusian experience thus necessitates questioning the standard requirements for the translator to be a native speaker of the TL (Pokorn 2005) due to time and cost limitations. In challenging the axioms of traditional views on translations, Nike Pokorn confronts the standard requirements of major professional bodies which only allow translation by native speakers into their native language (International Interpreters and Translators' Association, EU, and UN guidelines for interpreters and translators) and argues for the overturn of TL native speaker requirement. However, even the situation with the native speaker of Belarusian does not look promising enough in terms of the availability of specialists able to work within the language pair. Thus, the Faculty of Translation at Minsk State Linguistic University, the oldest and largest body training professional translators and interpreters in the Republic of Belarus, does not provide (and, in fact, has never provided since its foundation in 1948) any practical training in the Belarusian-English language pair.

The absence of proper professional training is exacerbated by the scarcity of resources and funding bodies assisting such translations from either the Belarusian or English side. Literary translation, done with the aim of disseminating the capital of a particular culture, is usually assisted by specialised agencies (the Australia Council for Arts and the Australia-China Council, the Goethe Institute, and the Instytut Polski et al.), which are unfortunately yet to appear in most 'minor' cultures, including Belarus. The absence of funding means that Belarus is currently relying on amateur translators, often non-native speakers, to rewrite its classical texts in English. This may explain why Belarus, similar to some other 'minor' European cultures is still waiting for a new Age of Exploration and placing on the map of 'world literature'. Whether it happens through theatre, new independent publishing initiatives (like that of Glagoslav), international cinema (like the recent international film based on Быкаў's work), online publishing or crowd-sourcing online projects, is presently unknown. However, with increasing options available for communication in the 'global village' its Age of Discovery will hopefully soon be approaching.

Conclusion

> All animals are equal, but some animals are
> more equal than others.
> George Orwell, *Animal Farm* (1945)
>
> Localism [...] offers perhaps the only hope of
> moving beyond gross generalizations toward
> sufficient specificity that can advance either
> translation studies or postcolonial
> studies (Tymoczko 1999, 31).

A newly formed nation coming onto a literary map today faces both acceptance and rejection. On the one hand, its chequered literary past, often bearing the marks of ideological and political oppression or colonial domination, exerts a sympathetic understanding of its desire to "rise from the depths" and be "called human" (Kupala, translated in Rich 1971, 32). On the other hand, the profit-oriented global literary market makes it difficult for this 'minority' literature to find international recognition due to the existing limitations in both human resources and available funding for translations into 'major' languages. Thus, the Belarusian translation experience assigns its literature to the periphery of the world literary system, in practice proving the existence of the hierarchies described by Itamar Even-Zohar, namely that not all literary 'species' are equal (to paraphrase George Orwell's insight).

The inequalities of the global literary space outlined in this research stem from the angle of a 'minority' literature, an approach which highlights these gaps and calls if not for a revision of existing hierarchies, then at least for a reconsideration of them with regards to Eastern European complexities. Whether this might be best done through an application of postcolonial frameworks to explain these hierarchies resulting from historical dominations and imperial oppressions remains an open question for future investigations as it is not, as such, the primary aim of the current research. It does, however, makes use of the heuristic tools of postcolonial theory to explain both the

complexities of Belarusian literary history and its current identity(ies) constructs as it is a relatively familiar research paradigm within Anglophone academia.

The wide definition of 'minority' argued for by this research aims to highlight the dynamic categories of 'minority' in contrast to currently 'dominant' literatures. While Belarusian literature is a national literature and thus in theory should enjoy a privileged status within the country, in practice it faces complex ideological battles within its own borders and loses any trace of privilege upon emergence into the global literary market. If a national literature can be regarded as 'minority' literature in this sense, it may be possible to link some of Belarus' literary translation experience with those of similar literatures of smaller nations or currently lesser-represented nations in the world literature. Since translation studies often operates with unequal pairs of languages, the adoption of the notion of 'minority' which supersedes a narrow linguistic notion may be introduced into wider ideological discussions within the discipline.

In terms of ideology, the Belarusian literary translation experience has illustrated that it is closely linked to the formulation of identity and its subsequent representation for the international community. It is possible to trace two distinct antagonistic discourses of 'Belarusianness' ("Old/European" vs. "New/Soviet" identity constructs) through the whole of the history of Belarusian literary translation into English. With 'minority' literatures undergoing identity reconstruction (normally associated with political change) these ideological processes are more noticeable due to their intensity peaks. The processes of selection and re-writing of material in translation are illustrative of these changes and allow for greater diversification of current discussions of ideologies in translation studies, particularly in the areas of rewriting strategies, indirect translation (normally via a third language), self-censorship and others.

Moreover, some of the postulates derived from the Belarusian literary translation experience call for a rethinking of the current translation axioms as applied to 'minority'

290

literatures in translation. Thus, the distinction between a 'foreignized' and 'domesticated' translation is not necessarily given a clear-cut division by analyzing a text with the noticeable presence of a 'remainder', even though a translator's strategy has not been that of foreignisation. Moreover, while, in principle, recommending foreignisation as a translation strategy to undermine global English hegemony seems a plausible suggestion, in Belarusian literary practice it has not been utilised successfully. Representing a text with a 'high degree of strangeness' using *estrangement* techniques in the case of 'minority' literatures defies the purpose of the introduction of these translations in the first place, as they are meant to be disseminating the knowledge of otherwise unknown literary realities and bridging the gap between TL and SL literary polysystems. Direct combat with the existing hierarchies will hardly result in a literary revolution here: perhaps literary 'Belarusianness' in English *is* partisan after all, as it needs to introduce its story through familiar formats – before the emergence of 'corrective' 'foreignizing' translations which may follow later.

The final reformulation of current translation studies axioms that this study suggests is the readjustment of the currently accepted Western translation tradition of the 'invisible' translator (Venuti 1995/2008) in order to make a special case for a 'pioneer' translator who by 'exploring' a new literary land receives a high degree of visibility, particularly in the country whose literature is being presented into a dominant language. One example of such veneration is the case of Michael Heim, a luminary translator of Eastern European authors, who was consulted by the Czech government at the time of the creation of the Republic with regards to naming the newly emerging country.

These theoretical formulations stem from a large body of historical evidence provided within this research which presents the first large-scale history of translation of Belarusian literature into English. Starting from its humble beginnings in the 1830s, it

291

traces the introduction of Belarusian literature through its folklore in Edwardian Britain, providing new insights into the activities of the Cambridge 'Neo-pagans' and introducing the little known 'Cambridge Set' within English literary studies of the fin-de-siècle. The ideological differences and linguistic choices within the formulation of "Old" vs. "New Belarus" in existing 20th century translations highlight the manipulative processes accompanying the translation of Belarusian literature into English. The research concludes with the current situation of Belarusian-English literary translation where it outlines both its complex situation (little funding, no professional translators' training available) and two recent promising initiatives (The Belarus Free Theatre and Glagoslav Publishers). Being the first exploration of the history of Belarusian literature translation into English, this research provides an introduction to a previously under-researched area as well as makes a contribution to Anglophone Belarusian literary studies, which currently mainly consists of Arnold McMillin's research. It provides a comparative analysis of previously unresearched translations and introduces new figures of translators, including two British poets and translators, Vera Rich and Walter May, whose work is used to highlight the issues of indirect translation through a relay language (May) and female pioneer translator tradition (Rich), with both of these angles being relatively undeveloped areas in translation studies.

As with most large-scale projects, this research has provided a wide panoramic view of the Belarusian literary phenomena and their English representations, raising wider theoretical questions on the basis of a local experience and pointing at possible future research directions in translation studies which have been noticed from a 'minority' literature's perspective. Like most of the translations it discusses, its aim has been to introduce a lesser-explored literary territory into the realm of global translation studies in the twin hopes of benefitting the source literature through the analysis of its representation in the modern *lingua franca* and, at the same time, of wishing to fill the

gaps in the Anglophone literary world maps. As with any introductory map when first

drawn up, it points to the need for subsequent infills of literary landscape details, a task

for future explorations within the European sector of translation studies and beyond.

Bibliography

A.D., M.M., I.K. (2008): А. Д., М. М., И. К. 'От редакции'. *Новое литературное обозрение*, № 92. Available from: http://magazines.russ.ru/nlo/2008/92/ad8-pr.html [Accessed 25 September 2012].

Abrams, M.H., Galt Harpham, G. (2011), *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 10th edition. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Publishing.

ABS (2011a): The Anglo-Belarusian Society: *By-Laws (as amended on 5th February 1965, 3rd May 1967 and 29th January 2003)* http://www.axnh62.dsl.pipex.com/ABS/by-laws.html [Accessed on 24.09.2012]

ABS (2011b): The Anglo-Belarusian Society. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies.* http://www.axnh62.dsl.pipex.com/ABS/journal.htm [Accessed on 24.09.2012]

Adab, B., Valdes, C. (eds.) (2004). *The Translator*. Special Issue: *Key Debates in the Translation of Advertising Material*. Vol. 10, No. 2. Manchester: St. Jerome.

Adamovich, A. (1958), *Opposition to Sovetization in Belorussian Literature (1917–1957)*. Munich: Institut zur Erforschung der UdSSR.

Adamovich, A. (1973), 'Reviewed work: Like Water, Like Fire: An Anthology of Byelorussian Poetry from 1828 to the Present Day', *Slavic Review*, Vol. 32, 4, Dec., 863-864.

Afanasyev (1885/1985): Афанасьев А. Н. (1985) *[Предисловие] к 1-му выпуску первого издания ["Народных русских сказок"]* In: *Народные русские сказки А.Н. Афанасьева*: В 3 т. Т. 3., М.: Наука, 345 – 353.

Ahmadjian, V. and Paracer, S. (2000), *Symbiosis: an Introduction to Biological Associations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Akiner, S. (1976) 'Contemporary Young Byelorussian Poets, 1967-1975'. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies.* Vol. III, No. 4, Year XII, 342-363.

Akiner, S. (1983), 'Contemporary Byelorussian Literature in Poland (1956-81)', *Modern Language Review,* 78/1, 113-29.

Akiner, S. (2009) *Religious Language of a Belarusian Tatar Kitab: A Cultural Monument of Islam in Europe* [with a Latin-script Transliteration of the British Library Tatar Belarusian Kitab (OR 13020) on CD-ROM]. Wiezbazen: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag.

Akintchyts (2002): Акінчыц, С. (2002) *Залаты век Беларусі*. Мн.: Юніпак.

Akudovich (2010): Акудовіч, В. (2010) *Архіпелаг Беларусь: кніга дыялогаў*. Мн.: Галіяфы.

ALA-LC (2011) Library of Congress Romanization Tables. Available from http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/roman.html [Accessed on 20.09.2012].

Aleksandrovich (1968): Александровіч С. *Гісторыя і сучаснасць*. Мн.: Беларусь.

Aleksandrovich (1971): Александровіч С. *Пуцявіны роднага слова*, Мн.: Беларусь.

Aleksiyevich, S. (1997) *The Chornobyl Prayer: The Chronicle of the Future*. Moscow: Ostozhe Publishers.

Alexievich, S. (1999) *Voices from Chernobyl: Chronicle Of The Future*. London: Aurum Press Ltd.

Alvarez, R. and Vidal, M.C.-A. (1996) *Translation, Power, Subversion*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Anderson, B. R. O'G. (1991). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.

Andrayuk (2003): Андраюк, С.А. (2003) 'Проза'. *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры XX ст.: У 4т.* Т.4. Кн.2 :*1986-2000*. Рэд. У.В. Гніламёдаў, С.С.

Лаўшук. Нац. акад. навук Беларусі, Ін-т літаратуры імя Я. Купалы. Мн.,

Беларуская навука, 2003, 8-38.

Antsipenka (2003): Анцiпенка, А. (2003) *Анталёгія сучаснага беларускага мысьленьня*. Санкт-Пецярбург: Невский простор.

Appadurai, A. (1996) *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Apter, E. (2006) *The Translation Zone*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Arnold, M. (1887) *Essays in Criticism,* Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz.

Arochka (1999) Арочка М.М. 'Паэзія 30-х гадоў'. *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры XX ст.: У 4т.* Т.2 Літаратура перыяду 1921-1941 гадоў. Рэд. У.В. Гніламёдаў, В.А. Каваленка. Нац. акад. навук Беларусі, Ін-т літаратуры імя Я. Купалы. Мн., Беларуская навука, 46-61.

Ashcroft, Bill, Griffiths, Gareth, Tiffin, Helen (eds.) (2006) *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*. 2nd ed. London; New York: Routledge.

Astraukh (2001): Астраух А.Э. (2001), *Рыгор Барадулін і сучасная беларуская лірыка: Вучэб.- метад. дапам*. Гродна: ГрДУ.

Auty, R. (1965) 'Introduction', *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol.1, No. 1, Year I, 3.

Babkoŭ (2005): Бабкоў Ігар (2005), *Каралеўства Беларусь. Вытлумачэньні ру[і]наў. Мінск, Логвінаў.*

Baczkowski, W. (1958) 'Russian Colonialism'. In: Robert Strausz-Hupe and Harry W. Hazard (ed.), *The Idea of Colonialism,* New York: Frederick A. Praeger.

Baer, B. J. (2011) (ed) *Contexts, Subtexts and Pretexts: Literary translation in Eastern Europe and Russia.* Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Bahdanovich, M., Harun A., Biadulia, Z. (1982), *The Images Swarm Free: A Bi-Lingual Selection of Poetry by Maksim Bahdanovich, Ales Harun and Zmitrok Biadula.* Translated by Vera Rich. Liverpool: ABS.

Bahdanovich, I. (1999): Багдановіч, І.Э. (1999) 'Паэзія 20-х гадоў'. *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры ХХ ст.: У 4т.* Т.2 Літаратура перыяду 1921-1941 гадоў. Рэд. У.В. Гніламёдаў, В.А. Каваленка. Нац. акад. навук Беларусі, Ін-т літаратуры імя Я. Купалы. Мн., Беларуская навука, 8-45.

Bahdanovich, I. (2001): Багдановіч, І.Э. (2001), *Авангард і традыцыя: Беларуская паэзія на хвалі нацыянальнага адраджэння.* Мн., Бел. навука.

Bahdanovich, M. ([1909-1912] 1968): Багдановіч, Максім (1968), *Летапісец. Збор твораў у двух тамах. Т.1: Вершы, паэмы, пераклады.* Рэд. калегія В. Барысенка і інш. Рэд. тома В.В. Барысенка. Мн.: Навука і тэхніка, 65-66.

Bahdanovich, M. ([1913] 1968): Багдановіч М. ([1913] 1968) 'За тры гады: Агляд беларускай краснай пісьменнасці 1911-1913 гг.' *Збор твораў у 2х тамах.* Т.2: *Проза, літаратурна-крытычныя і публіцыстычныя артыкулы, пісьмы.* Рэд калегія: В.В. Барысенка і інш. Рэд. тома М.Ц. Лынькоў і Ю.С. Пшыркоў. Мн., Навука і тэхніка, 128-133.

Bahdanovich, M. ([1915]1918): Богдановіч, Максім ([1915] 1918), "Забыты шлях", *Вольная Беларусь*, № 15, 28 красавіка, 114-115.

Bahdanovich, M. (1983). *Sonnet.* Translated by P. Tempest. *Soviet Literature,* 7, 52.

Bahdanovich, M. (1991), *The Burning Candle,* translated by Anisia Prokofieva . Minsk: Holas Radzimy.

Baker, M. (1998) (ed), *Encyclopedia of Translation Studies.* Manchester: St Jerome.

Baker, M. (2010), *Critical Readings in Translation Studies.* Manchester: St Jerome. London and New York: Routledge.

Baker, M., Saldanha, G. (2009) (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Translation Studies.* 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge.

Baldick, C. (2008) *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms.* Oxford; New York: OUP.

Baradulin (2006) *Ksty.* Compiled by Rev. Father Dr. Uladzislau Zavalniuk, Assistant Professor, Dr. Ala Sakalouskaya. Minsk: Roman Catholic Parish of St Symon and St Alena.

Barsky, R. (2011) 'Translation Studies in Times of Depression and Geopolitical Crises': Plenary Paper presented at *Research Models in Translation Studies II* Conference co-organised by University of Manchester and University College London, 29.04.2011. http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/ctis/activities/conferences/researchmodels2/plenary/fil euploadmax10mb,179381,en.pdf [Accessed on 27.09.2011]

Barta, P. I. (2002) 'Review of *Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism* by Ewa M. Thompson'. *The Slavic and East European Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (Autumn, 2002), 595-596.

Bassin, M. (2003) 'Classical Eurasianism and the Geopolitics of Russian Identity', *Ab Imperio*, 2, 257-267.

Bassin, M. (2008) *Imperial Visions*. Cambridge: CUP.

Bassnett, S. (2002) *Translation Studies*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge.

Bassnett, S. (2009) E-mail to Svetlana Skomorokhova of 05.04.2009.

Bassnett, S. and Lefevere, A. (1995) (eds.), *Translation, History and Culture*. London: Cassell.

Bassnett, S. and Lefevere, A. (1998) (eds.), *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary translations.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Bassnett, S., Trivedi, H. (1999) (eds.), *Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice.* Routledge, London – New York.

Bateson, G. (1973) *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. London: Paladin.

Bekus, N. (2010) *Struggle Over Identity: The Official and the Alternative "Belarusianness".* Budapest: CEU Press.

Belski (2003): Бельскі А.І. (2003) 'Паэзія'. *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры XX стагоддзя*: У 4 т. Т.4. *1986-2000.* Рэд. У.В. Гніламёдаў, С.С. Лаўшук (навук. рэд.). Нац. Акад. навук Беларусі. Ін-т літаратуры імя Я. Купалы.Мн.: Беларуская навука, 39-87.

Belstat (2009): Белстат: Национальный статистический комитет Республики Беларусь. Перепись населения-2009. Национальный состав населения, гражданство: Выходные регламентные таблицы. Available from http://belstat.gov.by/homep/ru/perepic/2009/razdel5.php [Accessed on 07.05. 2012]

Bende (1935): Бендэ (1935). 'Творчы шлях Янкі Купалы', *Полымя рэвалюцыі*, Minsk, No. 10, 135.

Berend, I.T. (1996), *Central and Eastern Europe, 1944-1993: Detour from the Periphery to the Periphery.* Cambridge Studies in Modern Economic History. Cambridge: CUP.

Bernstein, R. (1992), *The New Constellation: Ethical-Political Horizons of Modernity/Postmodernity,* MIT Press.

BES (2012): *Большой Энциклопедический словарь*, ed. A.M. Prokhorov, http://www.vseslova.ru/index.php?dictionary=bes&word=progress [Accessed on 23.09.2012]

Bez-Kornilovich (1855): Безъ-Корнилович, М.О. (1855), *Историческія*

свѣдѣнія о примѣчательнѣйшихъ мѣстахъ въ Бѣлорусіи съ присовокупленіемъ и другихъ свѣдѣній къ ней же относящихся. Санктпетербургъ: Типографія III Отд. Собст. Е.И.

Bhabha, H.K. (1994), *The Location of Culture.* London, New York: Routledge.

Biadulia (1917): Бядуля-Ясакар, 'Тры сцежкі'. *Вольная Беларусь*. 1917. 31 снежня.

Bird, T.E. (1975), 'Review of *Colours of the Native Country: Stories by Byelorussian Writers.* Minsk: Belarus Publishers', *Zapisy,* vol. 13, 134-136.

Bird, T.E. (1978), 'Review of Ivan Shamyakin, Snowtime [Snežnye zimy]. Translated by Olga Shartse. Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1973', *Zapisy,* vol. 16, 147.

BL (2012): British Library, Russian Collections. Available from: http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelplang/russian/russiancollections/russiancollections.html [Accessed on 23.09.2012]

Bliss Eaton, K. (ed.) (2001) Enemies of the People: the Destruction of Soviet literary, Theater, and Film Arts in the 1930s. *Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.*

Bogomolov, V., Bykov, V., Nekrasov, V. (1963) *The Third Flare: Three War Stories.* Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House.

Boldizsár, I. (1979) *Petits Pays, Grandes Littératures? = Small Countries, Great Literatures? /* [an international inquiry of the Hungarian Book Review]. Introduction by Iván Boldizsár. Budapest: Hungarian Publishers' and Booksellers' Association.

Bourdieu, P. (1986) 'The Forms of Capital'. In J. Richardson (ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. New York: Greenwood, 241-258.

Bourdieu, P. (1999/2008) 'A Conservative Revolution in Publishing'. *Translation*

Branchadell, A. (2005), 'Introduction: Less Translated Languages as a Field of Inquiry', 1-23. In: Branchadell, A. and West, L.M., *Less Translated Languages*, Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Branchadell, A. (2011) 'Minority languages and translation', In: Gambier, Yves and Luc van Doorslaer (eds.), *Handbook of Translation Studies*: Volume 2. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Benjamins, 97–101.

Branchadell, A. and West, L.M. (2005) (eds.), *Less Translated Languages*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Brazhunoŭ, Ales' (2009), *Беларускія Александрыя, Троя, Трышчан…: Перакладная белетрыстыка Беларусі XV–XVII стст*. Укладанне, расчытанне, пераклад з старабеларускай, прадмова, каментар. Бразгунова Алеся. Мн.: Беларуская навука.

Brooke, R. (1915), *Lithuania: a Drama in One Act,* Issue 13. Ed. Frank Shay. Cincinnati: Stewart Kidd Company.

Brooke, R. (2007), *1914 & Other Poems.* Huddersfield: Jeremy Mills Publishing.

Broŭka, P. (1965), *Pledge of the Heart. Беларускі сьвет = Byelorussian World,* no. 4, 8.

Brower, D., Lazzerini, E. (1997), *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700-1917*. Indiana UP.

Bruter, Michael (2005), *Citizens of Europe?: The Emergence of a Mass European Identity.* Basingstoke/ New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bryl, Y. (1955) *Short Stories: Galya. Lazunok. The Girl with Black Eyebrows.* Translated from the Russian by David Skvirsky. Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House.

Bykau, V. (2007) *Parables.* Translated by Ihar Kazak and Joseph P. Mozur. Львів: ВолЯ.

Bykov, V. (1966) *Alpine ballad.* Moscow, Progress Publishers.

Bykov, V. (1972) *The Ordeal*. Translated from the Russian by Gordon Clough. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co.; London: The Bodley Head.

Bykov, V. (1975) Sotnikav. Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Bykov, V. (1981) *His Battalion*, *Live Until Dawn.* Translated by Jennifer and Robert Woodhouse. Contemporary Russian Writing series. New York: University of Queensland Press.

Bykov, V. (1981) *Pack of Wolves.* Translated from the Russian by Lynn Solotaroff. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell.

Bykov, V. (1989) *Alpine ballad; Hold out Till Dawn.* Moscow, Raduga Publishers.

Bykov, V. (1989) *Portent of disaster: Byelorussian story.* Translated by N.T. Coey. Minsk, Mastatskaya Litaratura Publishers.

Bykov, V. (1990) *Sign of Misfortune.* New York, NY: Allerton Press.

Bykov, V. (1990) *Sign of Misfortune*. Translated from the Russian by Alan Myers. New York: Allerton Press.

Calzada Pérez, M. (ed.), (2003), *Apropos of Ideology*: Translation Studies on Ideology. Ideologies in Translation Studies. Manchester: St Jerome.

Casanova, P. (2007), *World Republic of Letters*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Cassedy, S. (2001), 'Review of *Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism* by Ewa M. Thompson'. *Slavic Review*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (Winter, 2001), 880-881.

Čemerickii, V., Golenčenko, G., Šmatov, V. (1980) *Francisk Skorina.* Paris: UNESCO.

Chakrabarty, D. (2008) *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference.*Princeton Uni Press.

Chamiarytski (2000): Чамярыцкі, В.А. (2000), 'Ля вытокаў беларуска-ірландскіх сувязей', *Belarus – Ëire = Belarus – Ireland = Беларусь – Ірландыя = Беларусь – Ирландия: Матэр. Навуковага семінара "Беларуска-ірландскія гістарычна-культурныя сувязі" (Мінск, 1999).* А. Мальдзіс (гал. рэд.) і інш. Беларусіка = Albaruthenica; Кн. 14. Мн., Беларускі кнігазбор, 17-21.

Chamiarytski (2010): Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры XI – XIX стагоддзяў : у 2 т. Т. 1: *Даўняя літаратура: XI —першая палова XVIII стагоддзя.* Навук. рэд. тома В. А. Чамярыцкі. Нац. акад. навук Беларусі, Ін-т мовы і літ. імя Я. Коласа і Я. Купалы. — 3-е выд., выпр. Мн: Беларуская навука.

Chaucer, G. (1924), *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer. The Canterbury Tales: Text,* ed. Walter W. Skeat, vol. IV, OUP.

Cheah, P., Robbins, B. (eds.) (1998), *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Checkel, J.T., Katzenstein, P.J. (2009) (eds.) *European Identity* Contemporary European Politics. Cambridge: CUP.

Cherkasski, Muraviov, Grintser (1985): Черкасский, Л.Е, Муравьев, В.С., Гринцер, П.А. *Восточные мотивы: Стихотворения и поэмы*. М.: Наука, Главная редакция восточной литературы, 1985.

Chernetsky, V., 'Postcolonialism, Russia and Ukraine', *Ulbandus: The Slavic Review of Columbia University*, no. 7 (2003), 32-62.

Chesterton, C. (1931) *My Russian Venture.* London: George G. Harrap Co. Ltd.

Cheyfitz, E. (1991), *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from The Tempest to Tarzan*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Childs, P. and Fowler, R. (2006), *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge.

Choldin, M.T., (1985) A Fence Around the Empire: Russian Censorship of Western Ideas under the Tsars. *Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.*

Choldin, M.T., Friedberg, M. (eds.) (1989) The Red Pencil: Artists, Scholars and Censors in the USSR. *Russian portions translated by Maurice Friedberg and Barbara Dash.*

Prendergast, C. (2004) (ed.) *Debating World Literature*, London: Verso.

Chukovsky (1988): Чуковский, К. (1988) *Высокое искусство*. М., Советский писатель.

Clancy, J.P. (1999) *Other Words: Essays on Poetry and Translation*. University of Wales Press.

Classe, O. (2000), 'Editor's Note', *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English*, ed. Olive Classe. 2 vols. London: Fitzroy Dearborn, vol.1, vii – xiv.

Clifford, J.(1992) 'Traveling Cultures', In: Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson and Paula Treichler (eds.), *Cultural Studies*, New York: Routledge, 96-116.

Clowes, E. W. (2011), *Russia on the Edge: Imagined Geographies and Post-Soviet Identity,* Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London.

Colker, M. L. (1979), 'America rediscovered in the thirteenth century?' *Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies,* Vol. 54, No 4, 712 – 726.

Convent of Our Saviour and Euphrosyne (2012): Полоцкий Спасо-Евфросиниевский монастырь. 'Почитание преподобной Евфросинии Полоцкой', http://spas-monastery.by/st_euphrosyne_of_polotsk/worship.php

Council of Europe ([1992] 2007) 'The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, and Explanatory Report, 1992'. *National Minority Standards: A Compilation of Osce and Council of Europe Texts*. Issue 277. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Cronin, M. (1995) 'Altered States: Translation and Minority Languages', *TTR*, VIII (1), 85-103.

Cronin, M. (1996), *Translating Ireland: Translation, Languages, Cultures*. Cork: Cork University Press.

Cronin, M. (2003), *Translation and Globalization*. London; New York : Routledge.

Cronin, M. (2006), *Translation and Identity*. London; New York: Routledge.

Cronin, M. (2008) 'Minority'. In Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha (eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies,* ed. 2., 169 – 172.

Cronin, M. (2010) 'The Cracked Looking Glass of the Servants: Translation and Minority Languages in a Global Age'. In: Baker, Mona, *Critical Readings in Translation Studies,* 247-262.

Cross, A.G. (1985), *The Russian Theme in English Literature from the Sixteenth Century to 1980: An Introductory Survey and a Bibliography*. Oxford: W.A. Meeuws.

Cuddon, J. A., Preston, C. E. (2000), *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. 4th edition.

D. Brewster, *East-West Passage: A Study in Literary Relationships* (1954). London : Allen & Unwin.

D'haen, T. (2011) *The Routledge Concise History of World Literature.* Abingdon, Oxon, New York: Routledge

D'haen, T., Damrosch, D., Kadir, D. (2011) *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*. Abingdon, Oxon, New York: Routledge.

Dalby, A. (2002), *Language in Danger: the Loss of Linguistic Diversity and the Threat to our Future.* Columbia University Press. Language Arts & Disciplines.

Damrosh, D. (2003), *What Is World Literature?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Davie, D. (1990), *Slavic Excursions: Essays on Russian and Polish literature.* Manchester: Carcanet.

Davie, D. (1965) *Russian Literature and Modern English Fiction:* a Collection of Critical Essays. Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press.

Davies, N. (1997) 'West Best, East Beast?', Oxford Today, vol. 9, no. 2, 1997, 28-31.

Dedić, A. (1997) *Stihovi: Izabrane Pjesme*. Zagreb: Konzor.

Delany, P. (1987) *The Neo-Pagans: Friendship and Love in the Rupert Brooke Circle.* London: Hamish Hamilton.

Deleuze, G., Guattari, F. (1975), *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*. Trans. Dana Polan. Theory and History of Literature 30. Minneapolis and London: U of Minnesota P, 1986. Trans. of Kafka: Pour une litterature mineure. Paris: Les Editions de Minuit.

Dewhirst, M., Farrell, R. (1973) *The Soviet Censorship*. Radio Liberty Committee.; Institut zur Erforschung der UdSSR. Metuchen, N.J : Scarecrow Press.

Dingley, J. (1972) 'Review: Rich, V. *Like Water, like Fire. An Anthology of Byelorussian Poetry from 1828 to the Present Day.* George Allen & Unwin, London, 1971'. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol. II, No. 4, Year VIII, 404-405.

Dingley, J. (1984) 'Little Truth and No Understanding (Review of *The Belarus Secret* by J. Loftus). *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*, Vol. V, No. 3-4, Years XIX-XX, 58-64.

Drazdow, U. (2001) *The Albatrosses: Direct Train To Paris With All Interchanges; Lady Luck.* Minsk: np.

Dubavets, S. (2005) 'Беларуская Вера ў Лёндане – інтэрвію на мове анёлаў'. Available from http://www.svaboda.org/content/transcript/797379.html [Accessed on 01.02.2012]

Dubianetski (1995): Дубянецкі, Э.С. (2005). *Таямніца народнай душы*. Мн.: Народная асвета.

Duboŭka (1923): Дубоўка У. (1923) *Строма.* Вільня, 1923.

Duboŭka (1972): Дубоўка У. Ліст да Уолтэра Мэя ад 02.01.1972. Архіў перакладчыка.

Dzermant (2007): Дзермант, А. (2007) 'Паганскае адраджэньне на Беларусі'. *Дзеяслоў: літаратурна-мастацкі часопіс*. № 1, 270-286.

Erben, Karel Jaromír (1865) *Sto prostonárodních pohádek a pověstí slovanských v nářečích původních*. Praha: I. L. Kober.

Erofeev (2002): Ерофеев, В. 'Ностальгия по Варшаве', *Огонек,* 4750, 22.

Etkind, A. (2011), *Internal Colonization: Russia's Imperial Experience.* Cambridge: Polity.

Etkind, E.G. (1963), *Поэзия и перевод.* М.: Советский писатель.

Even-Zohar, I. (1978), *Papers in Historical Poetics.* Papers on Poetics and Semiotics 8. Tel-Aviv: The Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics, Tel Aviv University.

Even-Zohar, I. (1990) *Polysystem Studies. Poetics Today*, Vol. 11, No. 1.

Fishman, J.A. (2001) 'Why is it so Hard to Save a Threatened Language?' In: Joshua A. Fishman, ed. C*an Threatened Languages Be Saved? Reversing Language Shift, Revisited: A 21st Century Perspective*. Multilingual Matters 116, 1-22.

Folklore 1924, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Mar. 31, 1924), front matter.

Fowler, A. (1979). 'Genre and the Literary Canon'. *New Literary History*, 1: 97-119.

France, P. (2001) (ed) *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation,* OUP.

Francis, L.L. (1999), 'America: Wilfrid W.Gibson. The *New Numbers Poets and The Chicago Little Theatre* (1912-1918)'. Dartmouth College Library Bulletin. Available from http://www.dartmouth.edu/~library/Library_Bulletin/Nov1999/Francis.html [Accessed on 03.07.2012].

Friedberg, M. (1997), *Literary Translation in Russia: A Cultural History*, Penn State Press.

Fromm, G. (1987) 'Saving Rupert Brooke: A Review of The Neo-Pagans: Rupert Brooke & the Ordeal of Youth by Paul Delany'. *New Criterion,* September 1987. Available from http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/Saving-Rupert-Brooke-5889 [Accessed 10.08.2012]

Fyodorov, A. (1958): *Введение в теорию перевода. Лингвистическе проблемы*. Москва. Изд. Литературы на иностранных языках.

Gagechechiladze (1964): Гачечиладзе, Г.Р. (1964) *Вопросы теории художественного перевода.* Пер. с груз. Тбилиси: Литература де Хеловнеба.

Galbreath, R. (2011) 'Onslow, William Hillier – Biography', from the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. Available from http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/2o6/1 [Accessed 08.09.2011]

Gapova, E. (2002) 'On Nation, Gender, and Class Formation in Belarus... and Elsewhere in the Post-Soviet World'. *Nationalities Papers,* 30: 641-644.

Gapova, E. (2004), 'The Nation In Between; or, Why Intellectuals Do Things with Words'. In: Sibelan Elizabeth S. Forrester, Magdalena J. Zaborowska, Elena Gapova (eds.), *Over the Wall/After the Fall: Post-Communist Cultures Through an East-West Gaze*, Indiana University Press, 65 – 87.

Gapova, E. (2005): Гапова, Е. 'О политической экономии ʻнационального языкаʼ в Беларусиʼ. *Ab Imperio*, No. 3: 404-441.

Gapova, E. (2009) 'Review of McMillin, A. *Writing in a Cold Climate: Belarusian Literature from the 1970s to the Present Day*. MHRA, Maney Publishing, 2010'. *New Zealand Slavonic Journal*, vol. 43.

Gentzler, E. (1993), 'Polysystem Theory and Translation Studies', *Contemporary Translation Studies*, London and New York: Routledge, 105-143.

Genzler, E. (1996) 'Translation, Counter-Culture and the *Fifties* in the USA'. In: *Translation, Power, Subversion,* eds. Roman Alvarez and M. Carmen-Africa Vidal, Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.

Gershkovich, A. (1989), 'Soviet Culture of the Mid-1980s: A New Thaw? In: Choldin, M.T., Friedberg, M. (eds.) *The Red Pencil: Artists, Scholars and Censors in the USSR*. Translated by Maurice Friedberg and Barbara Dash. 1-2.

Gifford, H. (1982) 'Review of *Images Swarm Free'. The Journal of Byelorussian Studies.* Vol.5, No.2, Year XVIII, 84-85.

Gigin (2009): Гигин, В. (2009) 'Суворов vs. Костюшко: ˝Забытые факты из истории восстания 1794 года в Беларусиʼ In: *Беларуская думка*, 2009, № 11, С. 86–95.

Gimpelevich, Z. (1999a) "An interview with Vasil Быкаў, 1995." Zapisy, Vol. 23, 66-76.

Gimpelevich, Z. (1999b) "An interview with Vasil Вукай, 1996." *Zapisy*, Vol. 23, 77-93.

Gimpelevich, Z. (2001) 'Review of *Belarusian Literature in the 1950s and 1960s: Release and Renewal* by Arnold McMillin'. *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 96, No. 2 (Apr., 2001), 596-597

Glagoslav (2012) Glagoslav Publications: Catalogue 2012. Available from http://www.glagoslav.com/documents/462/Glagoslav-Catalogue-2012.1.pdf [Accessed 25.09.2012]

Globus, A. (1993) *Death is a Man: A Tale in Short Stories. Index on Censorship.* Special issue: *Belarus And Ukraine: Nation Building In Babel.* Translated by Vera Rich. Vol. 22, Issue 3, 7-15.

Gogwilt, C. *The Invention of the West: Joseph Conrad and the Double Mapping of Europe and Empire* . Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press

Golenischev-Kutuzov (1973): Голенищев-Кутузов, И. Н. *Славянские литературы: статьи и исследования.* М.: Худ. лит.

Goncharova-Grabovskaya, S.Ja. (ed.) (2010): *Русскоязычная литература Беларуси: сборник статей.* Отв. редактор *С. Я. Гончарова-Грабовская.* Мн.: БГУ.

Gorak, Jan (1991). *The Making of the Modern Canon: Genesis and Crisis of a Literary Idea*. London: Athlone.

Górski, K. (1983) 'The Author of the *Descriptiones Terrarum*: A New Source for the History of Eastern Europe'. *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (Apr., 1983), 254-258.

Grimbert, J. T. (2009), *Tristan and Isolde: A Casebook.* London, New York: Routledge.

Grudzińska Gross, I. (1995), 'Adam Mickiewicz: a European from Nowogródek', *East European Politics and Societies* 1995, 9, 295-316.

Grutman, R. (2006). 'Refraction and recognition: Literary multilingualism in translation'. *Target* 18:1, 7–47.

Haarmann, H. (2002), 'Memory, Language and Symbolic Russianness', In: Gubbins, Paul, Holt, Mike (eds.) *Beyond Boundaries: Language and Identity in Contemporary Europe*. Clevedon, Buffalo Multilingual Matters, 59 – 73.

Hanauer, D.I. (2010) *Poetry As Research: Exploring Second Language Poetry Writing.* Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Hardzienka (2010): Гардзіенка Н. (2010) *Беларусы ў Вялікабрытаніі.* Пад рэд. А. Гардзіенкі. Мн.: Медысонт.

Hardzitski (1977): Гардзіцкі А.К. 'Блізкая нам паэзія'. *Вачыма сяброў. Гутаркі пра літаратуру.* Мн.: Маст. літ. , 143–149.

Hayit, B. (1965) *Soviet Russian Colonialism and Imperialism in Turkistan: As an Example of the Soviet Type of Colonialism of an Islamic People in Asia.*

Hechter, M. ([1975] 1999) *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.

Hermans, T. (1985) *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation.* London: Croom Helm.

Herrmann, R. K. and Brewer, M. B. (2004), *Transnational Identities: Becoming European in the EU*, Rowman & Littlefield.

Hnilamiodaŭ, Laŭshuk (2003) *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры XX стагоддзя*: У 4 т. Т.4. *1986-2000.* Рэд. У.В. Гніламёдаў, С.С. Лаўшук (навук. рэд.). Нац. Акад. навук Беларусі. Ін-т літаратуры імя Я. Купалы.Мн.: Беларуская навука.

Hokanson, Katya (2001), 'Book Review: *Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism*. By Ewa M. Thompson. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000'. In: *Comparative Literature Studies,* 38.3, 264-266.

Honigwachs, L.H. (1977) *Edwardian Discovery of Russia, 1900 – 1917*. London : Allen & Unwin.

Hrachanikaŭ, A. (1973a), Letter to Walter May, 07.02.1973.

Hrachanikaŭ, A. (1973b), Letter to Walter May, n/d, shortly after 01.04.1973.

Hrytskevich, A (2007), Грыцкевіч, А. 'Паўстанне 1794', In: *Вялікае княства Літоўскае: Энцыклапедыя*.У 2 тт. – Т. 2: *Кадэцкі корпус – Яцкевіч* / Рэдкал.: Г.П. Пашкоў (гал. рэд.) і інш.; Мінск, 2007. – С. 414–417.

Inter (2010): Канал «Интер». Відеотека: канал "До Дня Незалежності", 19.09.2010, http://inter.ua/uk/video/episode/independence?page=1

Ivanauskas T. 'Memuarai'. Family Archive. Cited in Turonak 2006, 227

Iwanowska, H., Onslow, H. (1914a) 'Some White Ruthenian Folk-Songs'. *Folklore*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Mar. 31, 1914), 91-109.

Iwanowska, H., Onslow, H. (1914b) 'Some White Ruthenian Folk-Songs, II'. *Folklore*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Jun. 30, 1914), 212-226.

Iwanowska, H., Onslow, H. (1924a) 'Some White Ruthenian Folk-Songs, III' . *Folklore*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Mar. 31, 1924), 64-82.

Iwanowska, H., Onslow, H. (1924b) 'Some White Ruthenian Folk-Songs, IV'. *Folklore*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (Jun. 30, 1924), 166-175.

Iwanowski K., Iwanowska-Kornecka A. (2002) 'Skinderova Helena z Iwanowskich', In: *Ziemianie polscy XX wieku, Słownik biograficzny*. Cz. 6. Warszawa, 2002, 170 – 171.

Jadvihin Sh. (1910): Ядвігін Ш. (1910) 'Марцінкевіч у практычным жыцці'. *Наша ніва*, 1910, № 48.

Jaffe, Alexandra (2010) 'Locating Power: Corsican Translators and Their Critics'. In: Baker, Mona, *Critical Readings in Translation Studies,* 263-282.

Jakavenka (1997): *След чорнага ветру: вачыма дзяцей. Рэд.-склад. В.Ц. Якавенка. Мн.: БелСаЭС "Чарнобыль".*

Janovich, Sakrat (1984), *Miniatures*. Edited & Translated by Shirin Akiner. London: The Anglo-Belarusian Society.

Janushkevich, J. (ed.) (2008) *Klasika: Vincent Dunin Marcinkevicz. Pinskaya Shlakhta: authetic text, translation in Belarusian, English, German, Polish, Russian; Kastus Veranitsyn. Taras na Parnase: Belarusian, English, Bulgarian, Spanish, German, Polish, Russian, Ukrainian.* Minsk:Viktar Khursik.

JBS (1965) *The Taking of Polack 1579: an Elizabethan Newssheet, The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol.1, No. 1, Year I, 16-22.

JBS (1974), 'Auberon Herbert (1922-1974)'. Obituary. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol. III, No. 2, Year X, 183.

Jehn, Julia (2009) 'China Abroad: Between Transnation and Translation' In: Ho, E. and Kuehn, J. (eds.). *China Abroad: Travels, Spaces, Subjects.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 23-41.

Jelinskaya, M. (2000), 'The Irish Earls O'Rourkes In Belarus'. Available from http://www.aoh61.com/history/orourke_belarus.htm [Accessed on 14.06.2012].

Jeŭlasheŭski, T. ([1546-1604] 1968) *The Memoirs of Theodore Jeŭlasheŭski, Assessor of Navahrudak*. Translated and annotated by A. Nadson. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol. I, No. 4, Year IV, 269-348.

Jones, W. G (ed.) (1995). *Tolstoi and Britain.* Oxford: Berg.

Jonikaitė, A. *Translations of Lithuanian Literature between 1990 and 2004. http://www.booksfromlithuania.lt/index.php?page_id=70* (accessed on 27.08.2009)

Jover, E. , Mogensen, E. (2002) 'Fifth International Conference on Translation'. *The ATA Chronicle*, February 2002, 43-44. Available from http://www.eriksen.com/Portals/0/News/FifthInternationalConference.pdf [Accessed on 15.08.2012]

Jurevich (2002): Юрэвіч, Л. (2002) 'Пераклады эміграцыі: ідэалёгія культуры'. *Пераклад збліжае народы: Матэрыялы Міжнар. "круглага стала". Мінск, 3-4 верасня 2001 г.* Рэдкал.: Р.Барадулін і інш. – Беларусіка = Albaruthenica.– Кн. 24. – Мн.: Беларускі кнігазбор, 113-123.

Kalesnik (1959): Калеснік, Ул. А. *Паэзія змагання : Максім Танк і заходнебеларуская літаратура*, Мінск : Дзяржаўнае выдавецтва БССР, 1959. — 252 с.

Kalinoŭski ([1862] 1976): Запруднік, Янка. "Мужыцкая праўда – набат паўстання 1863 году. Тэксты й ангельскі пераклад Т.Э. Бэрд і Я. Запруднік. *Zapisy*, Vol. 14. New York, 1976, 93 – 132.

Kalinowska, I. (2004) *Between East and West: Polish and Russian Nineteenth-Century Travel to the Orient*, Rochester, Uni. of Rochester Press.

Karatkevich (1990): Караткевіч, У. (1990) *Дзікае паляванне караля Стаха*. Мн., Мастацкая літаратура.

Karatkevich, U. (1982) *The Land Beneath White Whings*. Translated by A. Weise, poetic translations by W. May. Minsk: Yunatstva.

Karatkevich, U. (1989), *King Stakh's Wild Hunt.* Translated by Maria Minz. Mn.

Karski (1903): Карскій, Е. Ф. (1903) *Белоруссы*. Т.I, Кн. 1. *Введение к изучению языка и народной словесности.* Варшава (1903), Вильня (1904).

Kay D., Miles R.(1992), *Refugees or Migrant Workers? European Volunteer Workers in Britain 1946-1951.* London, NY.

Kay, P. (1999) *Dostoevsky and English Modernism:1900-1930.* Cambridge: CUP.

Kayyal, M. (2011) 'From Left to Right and From Right to Left: Anton Shammas's Translations from Hebrew into Arabic and Vice Versa'. *Babel,* Vol. 57, No. 1, 76-98.

Kazaty, P. (2012) A Belarus Miscellany. Available from http://www.belarus-misc.org/ [Accessed on 12.09.2010]

Kazloŭ, A. (1993) *The Wolf's Banqueting, The Birthday. Index on Censorship.* Special issue: *Belarus And Ukraine: Nation Building In Babel.* Translated by Vera Rich. Vol. 22, Issue 3,16-19.

Keene, W. (1915). 'A Polish People', *Spectator*, May 8, 1915, p. 645 – 646.

Kelertas, V. (2006) (ed.) *Baltic Postcolonialism.* Amsterdam: New York, NY: Rodopi, 2006.

Keynes, G. (1968), *The Letters of Rupert Brooke*. London: Faber and Faber.

Khadkevich, T. (1962) 'Soviet Byelorussia'. Translated by M. Ginsburgas. *Soviet Literature.* Vol. 8, 147-155.

Khalezin and Koliada (2009): *Rock-n-roll* для пакалення *Jeans:* п'есы Тома Стоппарда i Мiкалая Халезiна ў перакладах Андрэя Каляды, Юрыя Каляды i Алега Шафранава. Укл. М. Халезiна i Н. Каляды. Мн., no publ.

Kingston, J. (2011) Free Belarus Theatre Review, *The Times*. 22 July 2011. Available from
http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/stage/theatre/article3101305.ece?lightbox=false. [Accessed on 20.09.2012].

Kipel, V. (1983), 'The Early Byelorussian Presence in America'. *Zapisy.* No.17, 1983, 124-125.

Kipel, V. (2011) *Zapisy.* Available from http://belarus8.tripod.com/ZapisyBINIM/zapisy.htm [Accessed on 13.08.2012].

Kipel, Z. (1996) 'Some Observations on English Translations of [Vasil'] Bykaŭ's Work', *Zapisy.* Vol. 22, 68-72.

Kipel, Z. (2005): Кіпель, Зора. Беларускі друк на Захадзе. Zapisy, BINIM, New York-Miensk, 2005, 29 – 31.

Kipel, Zora (1988) *The Byelorussian Tristan. Garland Library of Medieval Literature*, Ser. B, No. 59. New York; London: Garland Publishing.

Kisyalioŭ, H. (1971): Кісялёў Г. Загадка беларускай «Энеіды». Мн., 1971;

Kliukanov (1999): Клюканов, И.Э. (1999) *Динамика межкультурного общения: к построению нового концептуального аппарата*: Дис. … д-ра филолог. наук: 10.02.20 / Тверь: Тверск. гос. ун-т.

Kolas, Ya. (1946) 'Speech'. *Soviet Literature,* No. 12, 66.

Kolas, Ya. (1949), 'Hail the Sun, Banish the Gloom.' *Soviet Literature,* No.11, 87-89.

Kolas, Ya. (1950) 'Down the Warmongers!' *Soviet Literature*. No.10, 50-51.

Kolas, Ya. (1955) 'Where the Brook Joins the River'. Translated by M. Wettlin. *Soviet Literature*, No. 10, 46 – 54.

Kolas, Ya. (1972) *Do Not Grieve; The Poets of the Soviet Land.* Transl. D. Rottenberg. *Soviet Literature*, 10, 130-131.

Kolas, Ya. (1972), *The Poets of the Soviet Land.* ("Песнярам савецкай зямлі"). Translated by Dorian Rottenberg. *Soviet Literature,* 10, 131.

Kolas, Ya. (1972). *How the Birds Tried to Save the Old Oak-Tree's Life.* (Transl. R. Lipatov). Minsk: Belarus Publishers.

Kolas, Ya. (1979). *Ustye. Poetry of Europe*, Vol. 3, pt. 1. Moscow.

Kolas, Ya. (1982) *Land of the Soviets in Verse and Prose*. Vol. I. Moskva, Progress Publishers, 1982.

Kolas, Ya. (1982) *Selected Poetry*. Translated by W. May. *Soviet Literature,* No.7, 67-68.

Kolas, Ya. (1982a) *On Life's Expenses: Poems and Prose*. Transl. W. May and Y. Butler. Moscow, Progress.

Kolas, Ya. (1982b) *The Voice of the Land*: Selected Poetry. Transl. W. May. Minsk, Yunatstva Publishers.

Kolas, Ya., Kupala, Ya. (1933) To White-Russians, *Who Goes There, Who Goes There?* Translated by M. Korr. *Soviet Culture Review*, No.1: 48.

Koshino, Go (2005), The Representation of the Belarusian Language in Contemporary Belarusian Literature. In: Matsuzato, Kimitaka (ed.) *Emerging Meso-Areas in the Former Socialist Countries: Histories Revived or Improvised?*, *Slavic Eurasian Studies*, No. 7, 177-191. Sapporo: SRC.

Králová, Ja. and Jettmarova, Z. (eds.) (2008) *Tradition versus Modernity: from the Classic Period of the Prague School to Translation Studies at the Beginning of the 21st century*, Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Filozofická fakulta: TOGGA.

Kruger, H. (2011) 'Postcolonial Polysystems: Perceptions of Norms in the Translation of Children's Literature in South Africa'. *The Translator*, No. 17(1), 105-136.

Kupala ([1922] 1953): Купала Я. ([1922] 1953) *Тутэйшыя: трагічна-смяшлівыя сцэны ў 4-х дзеях*. Мюнхен: Бацькаўшчына.

Kupala ([1922] 1953): Купала, Янка (1953). Тутэйшыя: Трагічна-сьмяшлівыя сцэны ў 4-ох дзеях. Мюнхэн, Бацькаўшчына.

Kupala (2002): Купала, Я. (2002) *Санеты: на беларускай, англійскай, іспанскай, нямецкай, польскай, рускай, украінскай, французскай мовах.* Уклад. Ж.Дапкюнас, В.Рагойшы, Л.Казыра. Мн.: Мастацкая літаратура.

Kupala, Ja. (1934) *Who Goes There, Who Goes There?*, *On This Lofty Spot. Literature of the Peoples of the USSR.* No.2, 9.

Kupala, Ja. (1955) In: *Aspects of Contemporary Belorussia*, translated by A. Lipson, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kupala, Ja. (1962) *Who Throngs Ever Upwards.*Translated by Watson Kirkonell. *Светач Хрыстовае навукі,* nd., 5.

Kupala, Ja. (1972). *Who Goes There?, We Are Proud Men and Free*. Translated by Irina Zheleznova. *Soviet Literature.* No. 7, 69.

Kupala, Ja. (1982a) *Only by Song.* Я.Купала. Стихотворения. Translated by Walter May. M.: Progress.

Kupala, Ja. (1982b) *Song to the Sun.* Translated by Walter May. Mn.: Yunatstva.

Kupala, Ja. (1982c) *Songs as Clear as the Sky*. Translated by A. Prokofyeva, edited by K. M. Motskevich. Minsk: Holas Radzimy.

Kupala, Y. (1983) *And, Say, Who Goes There?,* Minsk, Mastatskaya Litaratura.

Kuus, M. (2008) 'Europe's eastern expansion and the reinscription of otherness in East-Central Europe', *Progress in Human Geography,* August 2004, vol. 28, no. 4, pp. 472-489.

Lambert, J. ([1991]/2006) 'In quest of literary world maps'. In: *Functional approaches to culture and translation: Selected Papers by José Lambert*, eds. Delabastita, D'Hulst and Meylaerts, 63 – 74. John Benjamins.

 Lane T. (2004), *Victims of Stalin and Hitler: The Exodus of Poles and Balts to Britain, Basingstoke, Hampshire.*

Laptsyonak (2006): Лапцёнак І. *Паэт-перакладчык Язэп Семяжон: адметнасць творчай індывідуальнасці*. Мн.: Беларуская навука.

Lastoŭski ([1914] 1997): Ластоўскі, В. ([1914], 1997) *Выбраныя творы*. Укладанне, прадмова і каментары Язэпа Янушкевіча. Мн.: Беларускі кнігазбор.

Laŭshuk (2003): Лаўшук С.С. (2003) 'Драматургія'. *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры ХХ стагоддзя*: У 4 т. Т.4. *1986-2000.* Рэд. У.В. Гніламёдаў, С.С. Лаўшук (навук. рэд.). Нац. Акад. навук Беларусі. Ін-т літаратуры імя Я. Купалы.Мн.: Беларуская навука, 88-116.

Laŭshuk (2010): Лаўшук, С.С. (2010) *Гарызонты беларускай драматургіі*. Мінск: Беларуская навука.

Layton, S. (2001), 'Review of *Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism* by Ewa M. Thompson'. *Russian Review*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (Jan., 2001), 115-116

Layton, Susan (1994) *Russian Literature and Empire: Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy*. Cambridge: CUP.

Lazaruk and Semianovich (1998): *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры. Старажытны перыяд*: Вучэбны дапаможнік для філалагічных факультэтаў педагагічных ВНУ / М.М.Грынчык, У.А.Калеснік, У.Г.Кароткі і інш. Пад рэд. М.А.Лазарука, А.А.Семяновіча. 4–е выд. Мн., Вышэйш. шк.

Lazaruk and Semianovich (2000): *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры: ХІХ – пачатак ХХ ст.:* Пад агул. рэд. М. А. Лазарука, А. А. Семяновіча. - 2-е выд., дапрац. Мн.: Вышэйш. шк.

Leatherbarrow, W.J. (ed.) (1995). *Dostoevskii and Britain.* Oxford, Providence, RI.: Berg.

Leeming, H. (1974) 'The language of *the Kucieina New Testament* and *Psalter of 1652'. The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol. III, No. 2, Year X, 123-145

Lefevere, A. (1992). *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame,* London: Routledge.

Lefevere, A. (1998), *The Gates of Analogy: The Kalevala in English*, in *Constructing Cultures*, Clevedon, Multilingual Matters, 76 – 89.

Lenin (1962): Ленин, В.И., «Речь по национальному вопросу (29 апреля (12 мая) 1917 г., т. 31. Полное собрание сочинений, 5-е изд., Москва, 1962, б. 432.

Lermontov, M. (1983). *Major Poetical Works*. Translated by Anatoly Liberman. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Lermontov (1989): Лермонтов М. Ю. (1989), "Опять, народные витии". Полное собрание стихотворений: В 2 т.: Т.1: *Стихотворения и драмы, 1828 – 1836*. Гл. ред. Ю. А. Андреев. Вступ. ст. Д. В. Максимова; Сост., подгот. текста и примеч. Э. Э. Найдича. Л.: Сов. писатель. Ленингр. отд-ние.

Likhachev, D.S. (ed.) (1981). *Slovo o Polku Igoreve = The Lay of the Warfare Waged by Igor.* Translated by Irina Petrova. Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Lis (1999): Ліс, А.С. (1999) 'Літаратура Заходняй Беларусі'. *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры ХХ ст.: У 4т.* Т.2 Літаратура перыяду 1921-1941 гадоў. Рэд. У.В. Гніламёдаў, В.А. Каваленка. Нац. акад. навук Беларусі, Ін-т літаратуры імя Я. Купалы. Мн., Беларуская навука, 210-282.

Lisianski (1951): Лисянский, Марк (1951), *Золотая моя Москва: стихи*. М., Советский писатель.

Llop Jordana, I. (2005), 'Translation from Hebrew into Catalan: A Current Assessment', In: Branchadell, A. and West, W. *Less-Translated Languages*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia, Benjamins, 289 – 311.

Lloyd, D. (1987), *Nationalism and Minor Literature: James Clarence Mangan and the Emergence of Irish Cultural Nationalism*. Berkeley; London: University of California Press.

Loftus, J. (1982) *The Belarus Secret.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Long, G. (1842), 'Polish Language and Literature' *The Penny Cyclopædia of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge,* London, volume 22, 115-127.

Lovell, S. (2001) 'Review of *Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism* by Ewa M. Thompson'. *The Slavonic and East European Review* , Vol. 79, No. 3 (Jul., 2001), 515-517.

Luehrmann, S (2005), *Russian Colonialism and the Asiatic Mode of Production:(Post-) Soviet Ethnography Goes to Alaska, Slavic Review,* 64(4), 851-871.

Lusin, C. (2008), 'Red Flowers and a Shabby Coat: Russian Literature and the Presentation of 'Madness' in Virginia Woolf 's *Mrs Dalloway*', *Comparative Critical Studies*, vol. 5, issue 2-3, 289-300.

Madsen, D. (1999) (ed.) *Post-Colonial Literatures: Expanding the Canon.* London; Sterling, VA: Pluto Press.

Maisenya, A. (1996) 'The Land of Unrealised Hopes: A Portrait of Time and a Portrait of Man'. Trans. From Russian and Belarusian, ed. By L. Maisenya et al. Mn., NCSI, East-West, 1996 – 406.

Makaryk, I. R. (1993) (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms*. Toronto; London: University of Toronto Press.

Makavik, A. (2004) *Poems on Liberty: Reflections for Belarus*. Translated by Vera Rich. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's "Бібліятэка Свабоды. XXI стагодзьдзе" . Library of Liberty, 21st Century.

Maldzis (2000): А. Мальдзіс (гал. рэд.) і інш. *Belarus – Ĕire = Belarus – Ireland = Беларусь – Ірландыя = Беларусь – Ирландия: Матэр. Навуковага семінара "Беларуска-ірландскія гістарычна-культурныя сувязі" (Мінск, 1999).* Беларусіка = Albaruthenica; Кн. 14. Мн.: Беларускі кнігазбор.

Maldzis, A. (1966): Мальдзіс, А. *Творчае пабрацімства: Беларуска-польскія літаратурныя ўзаемасувязі ў XIX стагоддзі.* Мн.: Навука і тэхніка.

Mandolessi, S. (2008), 'Cultural Hierarchies, Secondary Nations: The Tension between Europe and "Minor" Cultures in Witold Gombrowicz and Jorge Luis Borges'. In: (eds.) Nele Bemong, Mirjam Truwant, Pieter Vermeulen, *Re-Thinking Europe: Literature and (Trans)National Identity,* Amsterdam , NY: Rodopi, 151 – 162.

Mann, R. (2005). *The Igor Tales and Their Folkloric Background.* Jupiter, FL: The Birchbark Press of Karacharovo.

Marakoŭ (2007), Маракоў, Л.У. (2007) *Ахвяры і карнікі. Даведнік.* Мн. Available from http://www.marakou.by/pub/file/one_night.pdf [Accessed 15.06.2012].

Margulis, L. (ed.) (1991) *Symbiosis as a Source of Evolutionary Innovation: Speciation and Morphogenesis,* Boston, Ma.: the MIT Press.

Mark, L. (2009) *What's So Eastern about Eastern Europe? Twenty Years After the Fall of The Berlin Wall.* Trowbridge: Oldcastle Books.

Markhel and Chamiyarytski (2010): *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры XI – XIX стагоддзяў*: у 2 т. Т. 2: *Новая літаратура: другая палова XVIII-XIX стагоддзя.* Навук. рэд. тома У. І. Мархель, В. А. Чамярыцкі. Нац. акад. навук Беларусі, Ін-т мовы і літ. імя Я. Коласа і Я. Купалы. 2-е выд. Мн.: Беларуская навука.

Marples, D. R. (1996) *Belarus. From Soviet Rule to Nuclear Catastrophe.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Marples, D. R. (1999)'National Awakening and National Consciousness in Belarus.' *Nationalities Papers* 27, No. 4, 565–78.

Marples, D. R. (2005) 'Europe's Last Dictatorship: The Roots and Perspectives of Authoritarianism in 'White Russia.'' *Europe-Asia Studies* 57, No. 6, 895–908.

Martin, V. (2001) *Law and Custom in the Steppe: the Kazakhs of the Middle Horde and Russian Colonialism in the Nineteenth century.* Richmond, Surrey: Routledge Curzon.

Matokh (2007): Матох, В. М. (2007) 'Цензура в БССР'. *Белгазета*, 23 июля.

May, nd, Biography. Translator's Archive, Moscow.

May, nd. (c.1970-1982) Photoalbum and Scrapbook. Translator's Archive, Moscow.

May, R. (1994) *The Translator in the Text: On Reading Russian Literature in English.* Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.

May, S. (2008), *Language and Minority rights: Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Politics of Language.* 2nd ed. New York, Oxon: Routledge.

May, W. (1972a) 'Gems of Poetry'. *Holas Radzimy,* No. 47, 1.

May, W. (1972b). Уолтэр Мэй. "Скарбніца паэзіі", *ЛіМ.* № 44. 3 ліст., 9.

May, W. (1973a). Letter to Yakov Khelemsky, 08.01.1973.

May, W. (1973b). Letter to Uladzimir Sodal, 19.01.1973.

May, W. (1973c). Letter to Anatol Viartsinski, 29.03.1973.

May, W. (1973d). Letter to Maxim Tank, (not dated, probably March 1973).

May, W. (1975) *The Tom-Cat, the Cock and the Fox: A Byelorussian Folk-Tale.* Mn., Yunatstva.

May, W. (1975). Letter to Lyudmila Davidovich, 06.01.1975.

May, W. (1984). A Guinean Folk-Tale *How the Rabbit Sowed the Millet.* Mn., Yunatstva.

May, W. (1986). *Three Songs:* a Collection of Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian folk songs. Kiev: Dnipro.

May, W. (1996) *The Endless Thread: Selected Verses* / Мэй, У. Бесконечная нить. М.: Арфа, 1996.

May, W. (ed.) *Taras on Parnassus (in Belarusian, Russian, English).* Translated by W. May. Minsk: Yunatstva.

May, W. (ed.) *The Bear Sits on the Log: A Byelorussian Folk Tale.* Translated by W. May. Minsk: Mastatskaya Litaratura.

May, W. and Tank, M. (1976) *Fair Land of Byelorussia. An Anthology of Modern Byelorussian Poetry.* Translated by Walter May, with an Introduction by Maksim Tank. Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Mayo, P.J. (1977), 'The Alphabet and Orthography of Byelorussian in the 20th Century'. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol. IV, No. 1, Year XIII, 28-48.

McCallum, S. A. (1925). *Beyond the Baltic*. London: Thornton Butterworth, Ltd.

McCormick, J. (2010), *Europeanism*, Oxford: OUP.

McLeod, J. (ed.) (2007), *Routledge Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, London & NY, Routledge.

McMillin, A. (1973) *The Vocabulary of the Byelorussian Literary Language in the Nineteenth Century*, The Anglo-Byelorussian Society, London, 1973.

McMillin, A. (1977a), *A History of Byelorussian Literature (Die Literatur der Weissrussen) from its Origins to the Present Day*. Bausteine Zur Geschichte Der Literatur bei den Slawen; Herausgegeben von Hans-Bernd Harder und Hans Rothe, Band 6. Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag; Giessen, W. Germany.

McMillin, A. (1977b). 'Review of *Fair Land of Byelorussia. An Anthology of Modern Byelorussian Poetry.* Translated by Walter May, with an Introduction by Maksim Tank. Moscow: Progress Publishers'. *The Journal of the Byelorussian Studies.* Vol. IV, No.1. Year XIII, 50-51.

McMillin, A. (1982) 'Kupala, Yanka, Kolas, Yakub, Songs as Clear as the Sky: Reviews'. *The Journal of the Byelorussian Studies*, *Kupala-Kolas Issue*. Vol. V/2. Year XVIII,15.

McMillin, A. (1988) 'Review of Janovič, Sakrat. *Miniatures*'. *The Journal of the Byelorussian Studies*. Vol,VI, No.1, Year XXI, 72-73.

McMillin, A. (1999), *Belarusian Literature in the 1950s and 1960s: Release and Renewal.* Bausteine zur Slavischen Philologie und Kulturgeschichte, Reihe A: Slavistische Forschungen, Neue Folge, Gebunden: Böehlau Verlag.

McMillin, A. (2002), *Belarusian Literature of the Diaspora.* Birmingham Slavonic Monographs No. 34; Center for Russian and East European Studies (CREES), Birmingham UP.

McMillin, A. (2005) 'Review of *Poems on Liberty*' . *The Slavonic and East European Review,* 83, 527-528.

McMillin, A. (2006), 'Small is Sometimes Beautiful: Studying 'minor' Languages at University with Particular Reference to Belarus', *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 101, No. 4 (Oct.,), pp. xxxii-xliii.

McMillin, A. (2010), *Writing in a Cold Climate: Belarusian Literature from the 1970s to the Present Day.* MHRA, Maney Publishing.

McMillin, A. (2011) An E-mail to Svetlana Skomorokhova. Subject: *A question regarding some translations of Belarusian literature*, July 8, 2011.

McMillin, A. B. (1969), 'Jan Čačot in Byelorussian and Polish literature, *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol. II, No. 1, Year V, 57-92.

McMillin, A. B. (1971) 'Conspectus and bibliography of Byelorussian literature in the nineteenth century'. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol. II, No.3, Year VII, 271-280.

McMillin, A. B. (1972), 'Review of *Like Water: Like Fire. An Anthology of Byelorussian Poetry from 1828 to the Present Day by Vera Rich'. The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 50, No. 118, Jan., 118-120.

McMillin, A. B. (1973) *The Vocabulary of the Byelorussian Literary Language in the Nineteenth Century.* Anglo-Byelorussian Society. London: SSEES.

McMillin, A. B. (1977), 'Review of *Fair Land of Byelorussia: An Anthology of Modern Byelorussian Poetry.* Translated by Walter May, with an introduction by Maksim Tank. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976', *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies.* Vol. IV, No.1, Year XIII, 50-51.

McMillin, A., Rich, V. (ed.) *Taras na Parnasie* (1977). Annotated and translated by A. McMillin and Vera Rich. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol. IV, No. 1, Year XIII, 9-27.

McPhilemy, K. (2000) *Home: an Anthology.* London: Katabasis.

McRae, J. (1991), Literature with a Small 'l'. London: McMillan.

Mechkovskaya (2003): Мечковская, Нина Б. (2003), Белорусский язык: Социолингвистические очерки. Munchen: Verlag Otto Sagner.

Medvedev, Zh.A. (1971) *The Medvedev Papers*. London: no pub.

Melezh, I. (1979) *People of the Marsh.* Translated by Natalie Ward. M.: Progress.

Mikhalkov and El-Registan (2001), 'Гимн Советского Союза. Слова С. Михалкова, Г. Эль-Регистана, музыка А. Александрова'. *Слово*, вып.1-2. – М.: Госкомитет СССР по делам издательств, полиграфии и книжной торговли, 75.

Mikics, D. (2007) *A New Handbook of Literary Terms.* Yale University Press.

Mikulich (1994): Мікуліч М. (1994) *Максім Танк і сучасная беларуская лірыка*. Мн.: Навука і тэхніка.

Milner, A. (1996) *Literature, Culture and Society*. London: UCL.

Minskevich (2004): Мінскевіч, С. (2004) 'Заўвагі па прынцыпах перакладу'. Міцкевіч, А. Крымскія санеты = Sonety Krymskie. Навук. Рэд. І. Кур'ян. Пер. з пол. С.Мінскевіча; прадм. З. Стэфаноўскай. Камент. І. Кур'ян, С. Мінскевіча. Мн.: Медысонт, 138-154.

Monticelli, D. (2011) '"Totalitarian Translation" as a Means of Forced Cultural Change: The Case of Postwar Soviet Estonia' In: Antoine Chalvin, Anne Lange, Daniele Monticelli (eds.), *Between Cultures and Texts: Itineraries in Translation History. Entre les cultures et les textes: itinéraires en histoire de la traduction*. Peter Lang Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, 187-200.

Moore, D.C. (2006) 'Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet?: Towards a Global Postcolonial Critique'. In: Kelertas, V. (ed.) *Baltic Postcolonialism.* Amsterdam: New York, NY: Rodopi, 11-43.

Morfil, W. R. (1883), *Slavonic Literature.* Oxford: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

Moroz, E. (ed.) (1986), *Home Fires: Stories by Writers from Byelorussia.* Moscow: Raduga Publishers.

Mryi (1993): Мрый, А. *Запіскі* Самсона Самасуя: Раман. *Творы*. Мн.: Маст. літ.

Mujica, B. (1997) 'Teaching Literature: Canon, Controversy, and the Literary Anthology'. *Hispania*, Vol. 80, No. 2, May, 203-215.

Mukerjee, G. (2002) *A Mournful Melody of Violins (Russian and Belarusian Verses in English).* New Delhi: Northern Books Centre.

Myroslav, S. (2001) *Russia and Ukraine: Literature and the Discourse of Empire from Napoleonic to Postcolonial Times.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Nabokov, V.V. (1961) *The Song of Igor's Campaign. An epic of the twelfth century. Translated from Old Russian by Vladimir Nabokov.* Weidenfeld & Nicholson: London.

Nadson, A. (2011) Interview of 20.09.2011. Personal Archive.

Nadson, A. (ed.) (1965) *The Prologue Life of Saint Cyril of Туrай* (1965), translated by A. Nadson. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies.* Vol.1, No. 1, Year I, 14-15.

Nadson, A. (ed.) (1969) *The Life of Saint Euphrosyne of Polack* translated and annotated by Alexander Nadson. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies.* Vol. II, No. 1, Year V, 3-24.

Nafpaktitis, M. (2004) 'A Perfect Translation for a Homesick Pole', *The Slavic Life,* April, 10 – 11.

National Poets of Byelorussia (1973) Minsk: Belarus Publishers.

Naughton, J. (1995) *The Traveller's Literary Companion: Eastern and Central Europe.* Passport Books.

Navina, A. (1933): Навіна А. (1933) *Галоўныя кірункі ў беларускай паэзіі.* Вільня.

Nekrashevich-Karotkaya (2009): Некрашэвіч-Кароткая, Ж. В. (2009) *Беларуская лацінамоўная паэзія: ранні Рэнесанс.* Мн.: БДУ.

Nekrasov, N.A. (1981) Н. А. Некрасов, "Железная дорога" (1864). *Полное собрание сочинений и писем в 15-ти томах.* Том 2. Л.: "Наука", 1981.

Nekrassov, Nicholas (1929). 'The Railway'. In: *Poems by Nicholas Nekrassov.* Translated by Juliet M. Soskice, introduction by Lascelles Abercrombie. The World's Classics Series 340. London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford: OUP.

Nemirovskaya, O. (1966) 'An Admirer of the Russian Muse'. *Moscow News,* Saturday, September 3, 7.

Neumann, I. (1999) *Uses of the Other: "The East" in European Identity Formation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Neumann, I. (2001) 'Regionalism and Democratisation' In Jan Zielonka and Alex Pravda (eds.), *Democratic Consolidation in Eastern Europe, Vol 2 International Dimensions. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 58 – 75.*

Next Page Foundation (2010) *Translations from East European Languages into Arabic, 1989-2010: A Study by the Next Page Foundation*, December 2010. Next Page Foundation series of studies on translation flows in partnership with the "Translating in the Mediterranean" project of Transeuropéennes and the Anna Lindh Foundation. Available from http://www.npage.org/IMG/pdf/CEEintoArabic-corr.pdf (Accessed 25 September 2012).

Ng, Maria N. and Holden, Philip (2006) 'Introduction', In: *Reading Chinese Transnationalisms: Society, Literature, Film.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong UP, 1-13.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1993) *Moving the Centre: The Struggle for Cultural Freedoms*, London: James Currey and Nairobi: EAEP and Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Niafiod (1996): Няфёд У.І. (1996) *Францішак Аляхновіч: Тэатральная і грамадска-палітычная дзейнасць.* Мн., Навука і тэхніка.

Nikalaeй (2009): Нікалаеў М. (2009) *Беларускі Пецярбург.* Санкт-Пецярбург, Агентство «ВиТ-принт».

Nikalayeva (2012): Нікалаева Надзея (2012). 'Родная мова вяртаецца ў беларускія школы'. *Звязда*, 21 сакавіка 2012 года. № 53 (27168) Available from http://zvyazda.minsk.by/ru/archive/article.php?id=94859&idate=2012-03-21 [Accessed 16.05. 2012].

Niranjana, T. (1992) *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context.* Berkeley; Oxford: University of California Press.

Ong, A. (1999) *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Onslow, 'Polish Self-Help under Prussian Rule, 1886-1908', in: *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 10, No. 28 (Jun., 1931),126-137.

Orwell, George (1945) *Animal Farm: A Fairy Story.* London: Secker and Warburg.

Palisander, Heb (1904) 'The White-Russians. A Nation driven back into the Middle Ages under Muscovite rule'. *The Anglo-Russian.* London, December 1904, 875-876.

Panoŭ (2003): Паноў С. В. *Матэрыялы па гісторыі Беларусі*. Мн.: Аверсэв, 2003, 250 – 252.

Pashkevich, N. (1973). 'Inspired by Life'. In: Shamyakin, I. *Snowtime* . Translated by Olga Shartse. M.: Progress, 3-25.

Paulston, C. B. (1992) 'Linguistic Minorities and Language Policies: Four Case Studies', In: *Maintenance and Loss of Minority Languages*, eds. Willem Dase et al. Benjamins, 55-79.

Pavlyshyn, M., (1992) 'Post-Colonial Features in Contemporary Ukrainian Culture', *Australian Slavonic and East European Studies*. Vol.6, No.2, 41-55.

Pavlyshyn, M., Clarke, J.E.M. (eds.) (1992) *Ukraine in the 1990s. Proceedings of the First Conference of the Ukrainian Studies Association of Australia*. Melbourne: Monash University.

Pearl, Deborah L. (1991) 'Political Economy for Workers: A.N. Bakh's *Tsar-Golod', Slavic Review,* Vol. 50, No. 4, Winter, 768-778.

Penguin Classics (2011) Available from http://www.penguinclassics.co.uk/static/penguinclassicspubsets/europeanclassics.html [Accessed on 29.09.2011]

Pershái, A. (2008) 'Localness and Mobility in Belarusian Nationalism: The Tactic of *Tuteishaść*', *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 36, No. 1, 85-103.

Pershái, A. (2010) Minor Nation: The Alternative Modes of Belarusian Nationalism, *East European Politics and Societies,* Vol. 24, 379-398.

Peters, A., Prachaticka, M. T. (1999) *Sheep Don't Go to School: Mad and Magical Children's Poetry*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Bloodaxe.

Petrova, I. (1975/2000), *The Lay of Igor's Campaign.* Minsk, Mastatskaya Litaratura.

Phelps, G. (1956), *The Russian Novel in English Fiction.* London: Hutchinson's University Library.

Phelps, G. (1958). *The Early Phases of British Interest in Russian Literature.* The Slavonic and East European Review, Vol. 36, No. 87 (Jun., 1958), 418-433.

Picarda (2005a): Пікарда, Г. (2005) 'Раньняя англа-беларуская вясна (1915): Гуя Онслаў, Галена Іваноўская і Кэмбрыджская "Хэўра"', *Беларус*, No. 511, жнівень.

Picarda, G. (1968) 'Review of Sciapan Majchrovic, *Georgij Skaryna* (1966), *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*, Vol. I, No.4, Year IV, 246-48.

Picarda, G. (1992) *Francis Skaryna and the Cabala:* Manuscript. London, Anglo-Belarusian Society Archives.

Picarda, G. (2001) 'Diplomatic Missions and The Belarusian National Republic in London (1919 – 1922)'. *Belarusian Chronicle*, no. 15, 9 – 14.

Picarda, G. (2005b) *"Lithuania" [or "Litva-Belarus"]: A One-act Melodrama on a Belarusian theme by Rupert Brooke.* 26.02.2005. Archives of Francis Skaryna Library in London.

Picarda, G. (2009) 'An Early British Collection of Belarusian Folksongs'. In: *Сонца тваё не закоціцца, і месяц твой не схаваецца*: зборнік артыкулаў па

беларусістыцы і багаслоўі ў гонар 80-годзьдзя з дня нараджэньня і 50-годзьдзя сьвятарства айца Аляксандра Надсана. Пад рэд. І. Дубянецкай, А. Макміліна, Г. Сагановіча. Мінск: Тэхналогія, 323-327.

Picarda, G. (1968) 'Review of Stsiapan Majkhrovich, *Georgij Skaryna* (1966)', *Journal of Byelorussian Studies*, 1, 246-48.

Pikhura (1965): Піхура Г. (1965), 'Магдалена Радзівіл', *Божым шляхам*, № 2(89). Лёндан, 1965, 9 – 10.

Pizer, J. (2006), *The Idea of World Literature: History and Pedagogical Practice*, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Poddar, P., Patke, R.S., Jensen, L. (ed.) (2008). *A Historical Companion to Postcolonial Literatures: Continental Europe and Its Empires*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Poetry of Europe (1979). No ed.: in 2 vols. Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Pokorn, N. K. (2005), *Challenging the Traditional Axioms: Translation into a Non-Mother Tongue.* Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Popovič, A. (1975) *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation.* Edmonton, Alta.: Dept. of Comparative Literature, University of Alberta.

Prendergast, C. (2004). *Debating World Literature*. London: Verso.

Presidium (1956): *Сборник законов Белорусской СССР и указов Президиума Верховного Совета Белорусской ССР*, 1938-1955. Мн.: Изд-во Президиума Верховного Совета БССР.

Pryor, W. (2003) 'The Living Memes and Jeans of Bloomsbury and Neo-Paganism' Available from http://williampryor.wordpress.com/some-prose/the-living-memes-and-jeans-of-bloomsbury-and-neo-paganism/ [Accessed on 14.02.2012]

Punnett, R.C. 'Review of *Huia Onslow: Memoir*'. *Nature*, 27.12.1924, no. 2878, vol.114, 926.

Puscha (1927): Пушча, Я. "Рабіндранат Тагору", *Дня вясны*, Мн., Дзярж. выдавецтва, 65-66.

Pushkin, A. (1964) *Eugene Onegin*. Commentary on Chapters Six to Eight, Onegin's Journey, and Chapter Ten. Appendixes. Translated by A. Nabokov. Bollingen Foundation.

Pushkin, A.S. ([1830] 1959): Пушкин, А.С. (1959) Эпиграмма («Не то беда, Авдей Флюгарин…») А.С.Пушкин. Собрание сочинений в 10 т. Том второй: *Стихотворения 1823–1836*. М.-Л.: Изд-во АН СССР.

Pym, A. (2003), 'Alternatives to Borders in Translation Theory'. In: Susan Petrilli, (ed.), *Translation Translation*. Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 451 – 463.

Pynsent, R. B., Kanikova, S.I. (eds.) (1993) *Reader's Encyclopedia of Eastern European Literature*. Harper Collins.

Rafael, V. (1993) *Contracting Colonialism:Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Renza, L. A. (1984), *"White Heron"and the Question of Minor Literature.* Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press.

Revzin and Rozentsveig (1964): Ревзин, И.И., Резенцвейг, В.Ю. (1964) *Основы общего и машинного перевода.* М.: Высш. школа.

Rich (1993): Рыч В. (1993) 'Адносна сараканожак'. *ЛiM*, 24 снеж., 16.

Rich (2003a): Рыч В. (2003) 'У вянок Пiсьменнiку', Arche, 4 (27), 14–16.

Rich, V. (1960), *Outlines,* London: Wiktor Ostrowsky.

Rich, V. (1963) *Portents and Images*. London: the Mitre Press.

Rich, V. (1971) *Like Water, Like Fire. An anthology of Byelorussian poetry from 1828 to the Present Day. Translated by Vera Rich.* London, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.

Rich, V. (1996) ''Słutzkiya Tkachykhi' ('The Weaver-Women of Słucak'): A Translator's View'. *Zapisy* . New York: BINIM, Vol. 22, 45 – 58.

Rich, V. (1996) 'Belarus: A Nation In Search of a History: 1991 and all that'. *'Index on Censorship*, January.

Rich, V. (2003b), 'Belarusian Poetry in Emigration 1945–1990'. In: *The Role of the Belarusian Diaspora in Preserving and Developing Belarusian Culture,* Francis Skaryna Belarusian Library and Museum, London, 29-30 September 2001. London: Skaryna Library, 79-91.

Rich, V. (2004) 'Vera Rich: The most significant event in my life'. Available from: http://belarusians.co.uk/2009/12/29/1-15/ [Accessed on 12.05.2012].

Rich, V. (2005) Interview on 15.05.2005. Private archive.

Rich, V. (2009) Manifold: Magazine of New Poetry. Available from http://www.verarich.clara.net/ [Accessed on 09.12.2009]

Rich, V. (2010): The Obituary. Anon. Available from http://ukrainianinstitute.org.uk/news-uk/314/ [Accessed 02.09.2012]

Righteous Among the Nations (2011) Available from http://www.sprawiedliwi.org.pl/en/family/125,the-iwanowski-family/ 2011 [Accessed on 03.04.2012]

Robinson, D. (1997) *Translation and Empire: Postcolonial Theories Explained.* Manchester: St. Jerome.

Rose, G. M. (ed.) (2000) *Beyond the Western Tradition.* Translation Perspectives, Vol. 11. Center for Research in Translation. New York: State University of New York.

Rudovich (2000): 'Ірландскі рух за незалежнасць і беларускае адраджэнне першай чвэрці XX ст.: Паралелі, кантакты, уплывы' (English translation: 'The Irish Movement for Independence and the Belarusian Revival of the First Quarter of 20th Century: Parallels, Contacts, Influences' (translated by Darja Hardzeeva), 52-65. In: А. Мальдзіс (гал. рэд.) і інш. *Belarus – Ĕire = Belarus – Ireland = Беларусь – Ірландыя = Беларусь – Ирландия: Матэр. Навуковага семінара "Беларуска-ірландскія гістарычна-культурныя сувязі" (Мінск, 1999).* Беларусіка = Albaruthenica; Кн. 14. Мн., Беларускі кнігазбор, 39-51.

Rywkin, M. (ed.) (1988), *Russian Colonial Expansion to 1917*. London and New York: Mansell.

Sahanovich (2001): Сагановіч, Г. (2001) *Нарыс гісторыі Беларусі ад старажытнасці да канца XVIII ст.* Мн.: Навука і тэхніка.

Sapiro, G. (2008) 'Translation and the Field of Publishing'. *Translation Studies,* 1:2, 154-166

Savchenko, A. (2009) Belarus: a Perpetual Borderland. *Leiden; Boston: Brill.*

Saverchanka (1993): Саверчанка, І. В. (1993) *Сымон Будны – гуманіст і рэфарматар*. Мн.: Універсітэцкае.

Schaffer, T. (2007), Literature and Culture at the Fin de Siècle. New York, Longman.

Schäffner, C. (ed.) (2000). *Translation in the Global Village*. Clevedon/Buffalo/Toronto/Sidney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Seccombe, T. (1901), 'Wratislaw, Albert Henry', In: *Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900*, Volume 63: 69.

Selim, S. (2009) (ed.), 'Nation and Translation in the Middle East', Special Issue. Vol. 15, no. 1. *The Translator*.

Serostanova, L. (2005). Interview 20.04.2005. Personal Archive.

Seton-Watson, H. (1945) *Eastern Europe between the wars, 1918-1941.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sgambati, E. (1983), *Il Tristano Biancorusso*, Studia Historica et Philologica XV, Section Slavoromanica 4. Firenze: Casa Editrice Le Letter, Licosa Commisssionaria Sansoni.

Shamyakin, I. (1973) *Snowtime* . Translated by Olga Shartse. M.: Progress.

Shuttleworth, M. and Cowie, M. (1997), *Dictionary of Translation Studies*.

Shved, V. (1990): Віктар Швед. "Мая зялёная Зубровія". Мн., Маст. літ.

Siekierski, M. (1977) *Theodore Jeŭlasheŭski and His Memoirs. The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol. IV, No. 1, Year XIII, 5-8.

Skamarokhava, S. (2005) (ed.) *Belarusian Literature in English Translations: 100 authors, 500 works.* CD-ROM. Minsk: UNESCO, Janka Kupala Public Library.

Skomorokhova (1998): Скамарохава, С.А. (1998) 'Пераклады Якуба Коласа на англійскай мове'. *Каласавіны*. Матэрыялы навуковай канферэнцыі, 3 – 4 ліст.1997 г. / Склад.: З.М.Камароўская, М.Н.Далідовіч. Мн.: Муз. Я.Коласа, 129 – 131.

Skomorokhova (1999): Скамарохава С.А. (1999) 'Якуб Колас на англійскай мове'. *Studia Russica XVII* , отв. ред. А.Золтан. Budapest: Budapest University Press, 397 – 403.

Skomorokhova (2000): Скамарохава С.А. (2000) 'Нацыянальна-культурны кампанент мовы і некаторыя праблемы ягонага перакладу '. *Studia Russica XVIII*, отв. ред. А.Золтан. Budapest: Budapest University Press, 247 -253.

Skomorokhova (2003): Скамарохава, С.А. (2003) 'Я. Купала на англійскай мове'. Рэспубліканскія Купалаўскія чытанні: Матэрыялы навук. канф., 24 кастр. 2003 г., Гродна / Пад рэд. У.І.Каялы. Гродна: ГрДУ, 111 – 116.

Skomorokhova (2004): Скамарохава, С.А. (2004)'М. Багдановіч на англійскай мове'. Зб. дакладаў: Матэрыялы дакл. і паведамл. Міжнар. нав.-практ. канф. 2003 г. "Я не самотны, я кнігу маю"... / Склад. Т.Шубіна, І.Мышкавец. Мн.: Музей М.Багдановіча, 159 – 169.

Skomorokhova (2006): Скамарохава, С.А. (2006) 'Літаратурныя сістэмы і традыцыі ў беларуска-англійскім і англа-беларускім паэтычным перакладзе'. *Сучаснае беларускае літаратуразнаўства: Сістэма каштоўнасцей і прыярытэтаў*. Мн.: Беларус. навука, 269 – 289.

Skomorokhova (2008): Скамарохава, С.А. (2008) 'Рэцэпцыя Адама Міцкевіча ў англамоўным свеце'. Еўрапейскі рамантызм і беларуская літаратура XIX-XX стст.; навук. рэд. У.І. Мархель; НАН Беларусі, Ін-т мовы і літаратуры імя Я. Коласа і Я. Купалы. Мн.: Беларус. навука, 325 – 362.

Smith, P. J. (1988) *Writing in the Margin*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Snell-Hornby, M. (1988/1995) *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach*. Revised edition. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Snell-Hornby, M. (2006) *The Turns of Translation Studies: New Paradigms or Shifting Viewpoints?* Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Spalding, F. (2001), *Gwen Raverat: Friends, Family & Affections*. London: Pimlico.

Spiering, M. (1992), *Englishness: Foreigners and Images of National Identity in Post War Literature*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Stachura, P. (2004), *The Poles in Britain, 1940 – 2000: From Betrayal to Assimilation,* London: Frank Cass Publishers.

Stang, C. S. (1935), *Die Westrussische Kanzleisprache des Großfürstentums Litauen*. Oslo: J. Dybwad.

Steiner, G. (1975) *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translatio*n. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stewart, H. (1913), *Provincial Russia*. London: A. and C. Black.

Synod (2010): The Synod of Belarusian saints (http://nn.by/?c=ar&i=22091; http://churchby.info/bel/news/2010/01/02-4/).

Sys, Anatol' (1993) *Selected Poems. Index on Censorship.* Special issue: *Belarus And Ukraine: Nation Building In Babel.* Translated by Vera Rich. Vol. 22, Issue 3, 13.

Tabolich (2006): Таболіч, А. *Ліхтарык глогу.* Мн.: Кнігазбор.

Tabolich, A. (2003) Select Translations. Available from http://kamunikat.fontel.net/www/czasopisy/annus/03/03_tabolich.htm [Accessed on 02.09.2012]

Talib, I. S. (2002) *The Language* of *Postcolonial* Literatures: An Introduction. London: Routledge.

Tank, M. (1965), *My Daily Bread. Беларускі сьвет = Byelorussian World,* no. 4, 2-3.

Tank, M. (1986a) *A Tale of Cosmic Travels of Ant the Tramp.* Translated by Walter May. Minsk: Yunatstva Publishers.

Tank, M. (1986b) *The Torch of Fire.* Translated by Walter May. Minsk: Mastatskaya Litaratura.

Tank, M. (1986c) *Red lilies of the Valley.* Translated by Anisia Prokofyeva, ed. by Lyudmila Cortés. Minsk, Byelorussian S.S.R., s.n.

Tank, M.(1975) *The Horse and the Lion.* Translated by Walter May. Edited by V. Tikhonovich. Minsk: Mastatskaya Litaratura.

Taras (1998): *Тарас на Парнасе.* На бел., руск., англ. мовах. Мн.: Юнацтва.

Tarnawsky, M. (2004), 'Introduction', *Ukrainian Literature: A Journal of Translations.*, Vol. 4, 5 – 7.

The Fifth Earl of Onslow Archives. History Centre in Surrey. Ref. 5337/10/(59).

The New Encyclopaedia Britannica (1991). Vol. 2: Arizona-Bolivar. 15th edition. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica.

The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: In 30 Volumes (1979). Vol. 2: Arizona-Bolivar. 15th edition. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica.

The Role of the Belarusian Diaspora in Preserving and Developing Belarusian Culture compiled by the Skaryna Belarusian Library in London, following the 2001 conference.

The Russian Collections of the British Library Available from http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelplang/russian/russiancollections/russiancollections.html [Accessed on 02.03.2012]

Thompson, E. (2000) *Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism.* Westport, CT, London: Greenwood Press.

Thompson, E. (2003), 'Discourse, Empire and Memory in Postcommunist Russia', New Zealand Slavonic Journal 37, 155-64;

Thompson, E. (2005a), 'Anton Chekhov and Russian Colonialism: The Denial of Identity in Ostrov Sakhalin', In: Alicja Wolodzko-Butkiewicz and Ludmila Lutevici (eds.), *Dzielo Antoniego Czechowa dzisiaj,* Warsaw: Uni. of Warsaw Press, 75-86.

Thompson, E. (2005b), 'Ways of Remembering: The Case of Poland', *Toronto Slavic Quarterly* 12. Spring.

Thompson, E. (2008), Postcolonial Russia' In: Prem Poddar, Rajeev S. Patke, and Lars Jensen (eds.), *A Historical Companion to Postcolonial Literatures: Continental Europe and its Empires.* Edinburgh UP, 412-7.

Thomson-Wohlgemuth, Gaby (2009) 'On the Other Side of the Wall: Book Production, Censorship and Translation in East Germany', in Billiani, Francesca (ed.) *Modes of Censorship and Translation: National Contexts and Diverse Media.* Manchester: St Jerome, 93-116.

Toury, G. (1985) 'Aspects of Translating into Minority Languages from the Point of View of Translation Studies'. *Multilingua* No. 4.1, 3 – 10.

Toury, G. (1995) *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Treschenok (2003): Трещенок Я. И. (2003) *История Беларуси. Ч.1. Досоветский период*. Могилев, 2003.

Trivedi, Harish (2007)'Translating culture vs. 'cultural translation,' ' In: *Translation: Reflections, Refractions, Transformations*, eds. Paul St-Pierre & Prafulla S. Kar. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 277-287.

Turonak (2006): Туронак, Ю. (2006) 'Вацлаў Іваноўскі і адраджэньне Беларусі'. In: *Мадэрная гісторыя Беларусі*. Вільня, Інстытут беларусістыкі, 140 – 256.

Turton, G. (1992), *Turgenev and the Context of English Literature, 1850-1900*

Tychyna (1999): Тычына, М.А. (1999) 'Проза'. *Гісторыя беларускай літаратуры ХХ ст.: У 4т.* Т.2 Літаратура перыяду 1921-1941 гадоў. Рэд. У.В. Гніламёдаў, В.А. Каваленка. Нац. акад. навук Беларусі, Ін-т літаратуры імя Я. Купалы. Мн., Беларуская навука, 62-133.

Tymoczko, M. (1995) 'The Metonymics of Translating Marginalized Texts'. *Comparative Literature*, Vol. 47, No. 1, *On Translation* (Winter, 1995), 11-24.

Tymoczko, M. (1999) *Translation in a Postcolonial Context: Early Irish Literature in English Translation.* Manchester, UK: St. Jerome.

Tymoczko, M. (2003) 'Ideology and the Position of the Translator: In What Sense is a Translator 'In Between'?' In: María Calzada Pérez (ed.) *Apropos of Ideology: Translation Studies on Ideology - Ideologies in Translation Studies*. Manchester: St. Jerome, 181-201.

Tymoczko, M. (2007) *Enlarging Translation, Empowering Translators.* Manchester, UK; Kinderhook, NY: St. Jerome.

Tymoczko, M., Gentzler, E. (eds.) (2002) *Translation and Power.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002.

UN (1960) *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*, Resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. Available from http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/152/88/ IMG/ NR015288.pdf?OpenElement [Accessed on 01.02.2011].

Uvarov (1875) : Уваров С.С. Отчет по обозрению Московского университета и гимназий (4 декабря 1832 г.), *Сб. постановлений по министерству народного просвещения*, т.II, отделение 1-е, изд. 2-е, СПб., 1875, стлб.511.

Vakar, N. P. (1956) *Belorussia: The Making of a Nation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vanderauwera, R. (1985), *Dutch Novels Translated into English: the Transformation of a "Minority" Literature*. Amsterdam, Rodopi.

Vasiuchenka (2009): Васючэнка, П. В. (2009) *Ад тэксту да хранатопа: артыкулы, эсэ, пятрогліфы*. Мн.: Галіяфы.

Vasyuchenka (2000): Васючэнка, П. В. *Сучасная беларуская драматургія: дапаможнік для настаўнікаў*. Мн.: Маст. літ.

Velychenko, S. (1993) *Shaping Identity in Eastern Europe and Russia. Soviet-Russian and Polish Accounts of Ukrainian History. 1914-1991*. New York, London: St. Martin's Press.

Velychenko, S. (2004) 'Postcolonialism and Ukraine'. *Ab Imperio*, No. 1, 391-403.

Venuti, L. (1998), 'Introduction', In: *The Translator*, Vol. 4, No.2, 135–144.

Venuti, L. (2008), *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation.* 2nd ed. London, Routledge.

Ver Berkmoes, R., (2000), Haywood, A., Kokker, S., Leff, J. 'Belarus'. *Russia, Ukraine & Belarus.* The Lonely Planet Guide. 2nd ed. Lonely Planet Publications, Hawthorn, Victoria, 891-903.

Vesialkoŭski (2007): Весялкоўскі, Ю. (2007) 'Наша арганізацыя не вытрымала разьяднаньня знутры': Адзінец А. *Паваенная эміграцыя: скрыжаванні лёсаў:* зборнік успамінаў, Мн.: Медысонт, 29 – 138.

Vialiuhin, A. (1965), *Forest Lake. Беларускі сьвет = Byelorussian World,* no. 4, 14.

Viartsinski, A. (1973), Letter to Walter May, 20.03.1973.

Vidal-Hall, J. (2009) 'Obituary: Vera Rich'. Available from: http://www.indexoncensorship.org/2010/01/obituary-vera-rich/ [Accessed on 02.03.2012]

Vieira, Else Ribeiro Pires (1994) 'A Postmodern Translational Aesthetics in Brazil'. In: *Translation studies: an Interdiscipline* by Mary Snell-Hornby, Franz Pöchhacker, Klaus Kaindl (eds.). Benjamins, p. 65 – 72.

Vitka, V. (1980) *General Sparrow.* Translated by Walter May. Minsk: Mastatskaya litaratura.

Vitkovski (1998): Витковский, Е. (1988) 'Русское зазеркалье'. *Строфы века– 2. Антология мировой поэзии в русских переводах XX века*. М.; Минск: Полифакт. С. 8-22.

Vodoff, V. (2001), *Chronicles: Eastern Slavs*, in André Vauchez (ed.), in association with R. Barrie Dobson and Michael Lapidge, *Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages*, 2 vols, Cambridge, John Clarke.

Volk-Levanovich, N. (ed.) (1972) *Colours of the Native Country: Stories by Byelorussian Writers.* Minsk: Belarus Publishers.

Volsky, A.A. (1986), *A Visit to the Zoo.* Transl. by W.May. Mn.: Yunatstva.

Waddington, P. (1995), *Ivan Turgenev and Britain.* Oxford: Berg Publishers.

Wandysz, P.S. (2001) *The Price of Freedom: A History of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the Present.* London, New York: Routledge.

Waring, A.G. 'The Influence of Non-Linguistic Factors on the Rise and Fall of the Old Byelorussian Literary Language'. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*. Vol. IV, No. 3-4.

Weaver, M. (2010) 'The Gordon Brown and Gillian Duffy transcript: What was said by the prime minister during and after his confrontation with the 65-year-old woman he called 'bigoted'. *The Guardian*, Wednesday 28 April 2010. Available from http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/apr/28/gordon-brown-gillian-duffy-transcript Accessed 20.07.2012.

Wedel, J. R. (2001). *Collision and Collusion: The Strange Case of Western Aid to Eastern Europe*. Pallgrave Macmillan.

West, Cornel. (1987) 'Minority Discourse and the Pitfalls of Canon Formation', *Yale Journal of Criticism.* No.1, 193-201.

Whelsdale, M. (1924) *Huia Onslow: A Memoir.* London: Edward Arnold & Co.

Wilder, A.E. (2012) 'Imported Publications, Inc. and Progress Publishers'. *The Grenada Revolution Online*. Available from http://www.thegrenadarevolutiononline.com/importedpublications.html [Accessed on 23.09.2012]

Wilson, A.(2012), *Belarus: The Last European Dictatorship*. Yale University Press.

Winder, S. (2011), *Introduction to Central European Classic Series for Penguin Publishers*. Available from: http://www.penguinclassics.co.uk/static/penguinclassicspubsets/downloads/CENTRAL EUROPEANCLASSIC.pdf [Accessed on 29.09.2011]

Wolffe, L. (1996) *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*. Stanford UP.

Woodsworth, J. (1996), 'Language, Translation and the Promotion of National Identity: Two Test Cases', *Target* 8, 2 (1996): 211- 38.

Woolf, V. (1925) 'Modern Fiction'. *Common Reader.* London: Hogarth, 184-195.

Woolf, V. (1928), *Orlando: a Biography.* New York: Harcourt Brace.

Wortman, Richard (2006) *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy from Peter the Great to the Abdication of Nicholas II.* Princeton Uni Press.

Wratislaw, A. H. (1849) *Lyra Czecho Slovanska, or Bohemian poems, ancient and modern, translated from the original Slavonic, with an introductory essay.* London: John W. Parker.

Wratislaw, A. H. (1889) *Sixty Folk-Tales from exclusively Slavonic sources. Translated, with brief introductions and notes, by A. H. W.* London: E. Stock.

Wratislaw, A. H. (1977) *Sixty folk-tales from exclusively Slavonic sources.* New York: Arno Press.

Wratislaw, A. H. (2008) *Sixty Folk-Tales from Exclusively Slavonic Sources,* LLC, BiblioBazaar.

Wratislaw, A.H. (1852) *The Queen's Court Manuscript, with other ancient Bohemian Poems*. Cambridge: John Deighton; London: George Bell.

Wratislaw, A.H. (1862) *Adventures of Baron Wenceslas Wratislaw of Mitrowitz. What he saw in the Turkish Metropolis … experienced in his captivity, and, after his happy return to his country, committed to writing in 1599.* London: Bell and Dalby.

Wratislaw, A.H. (1871) *Diary of an Embassy from King George of Bohemia to King Louis XI of France.* London: Bell and Dalby.

Wratislaw, A.H. (1873) *Life, Legend, and Canonization of St. John Nepomucen, Patron Saint and Protector of the Order of the Jesuits*. London: Chiswick Press.

Yakimovich and May (eds.) (1981) *The Golden Apple-Tree: Byelorussian Folk Tale.* Translated by Walter May. Minsk: Yunatstva.

Yekelchyk, S. (1997) 'The Location of Nation: Postcolonial Perspectives on Ukrainian Historical Debates' *Australian Slavonic and East European Studies*, vol.11, nos. 1-2, 161-84.

Zaika (2010): Зайка, В. (2010) 'Сьв. пам. Вера РЫЧ (24.04.1936 – 20.12.2009)', *The Newsletter of the North American Association for Belarusian Studies (NAABS)*, Winter 2009-2010, Volume 5, Issue 2, 4.

Zapisy (2011): *Zapisy* BINIM: *About this Wesite*. Available from http://belarus8.tripod.com/ZapisyBINIM/zapisy.htm [Accessed on 20.09.2012].

Zaprudnik, Jan (1993) *Belarus: At a Crossroads in History.* Westview Press: Boulder, CO.

Zaprudnik, Jan. (1998) *Historical Dictionary of Belarus*. Lanham, MD and London: Scarecrow Press.

Zlateva, P. (1993) *Translation as Social Action: Russian and Bulgarian Perspectives.* Taylor and Francis.

Zuborev (2004): Зуборев, Л. *Максим Богданович*: Ист.-док. повесть о бел. песняре и его семье. Стихи поэта в оригинале, а также в пер. на рус. и англ. яз. Мн.: Кнігазбор.

Zubrzycki J. (1956), *Polish Immigrants in Britain: a Study of Adjustment*. The Hague: Nijhof F. Zubrzycki.