



# interlitteraria

*history of literature as a factor of a national and supra-national literary canon*

*l'histoire littéraire en tant qu'élément constitutif d'un canon littéraire national et supranational*

*literaturgeschichte als faktor für die herausbildung eines nationalen und supranationalen literaturkanons*

*la historia de la literatura como factor del canon literario nacional y supranacional*

# interlitteraria

*Tartu Ülikooli maailmakirjanduse õppetooli ja Eesti Võrdleva Kirjandusteaduse Assotsiatsiooni rahvusvaheline aastakiri.*

*Annual international refereed edition of the Chair of Comparative Literature of Tartu University and the Estonian Association of Comparative Literature.*

*Edition annuelle internationale de la Chaire de Littérature Comparée de l'Université de Tartu et de l'Association Estonienne de Littérature Comparée.*

*Internationales Jahrbuch des Lehrstuhls für Weltliteratur an der Universität Tartu und der Assoziation der Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft in Estland.*

*Edición anual internacional de la Cátedra de Literatura Comparada de la Universidad de Tartu y de la Asociación Estonia de Literatura Comparada.*

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## Kirjastaja ja levitaja/Publisher and Distributor:

Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus/Tartu University Press, Tiigi 78, Tartu 50410,  
Eesti/Estonia tel.: +372 737 5945, fax: +372 737 5944,  
e-mail: tyk@ut.ee, website: www.tyk.ee

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Printed and bound by Tartu University Press

Order No. 499

# Interlitteraria – 15

## volume 2

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“Interlitteraria” väljaandmist toetab  
Eesti Kultuurkapital

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*Translated Literature  
in Literary History*

The idea of a "world literature" is closely related to literature in translation. When Goethe suggested the term in one of his conversations with Eckermann around 1830 he had translated literature in mind. This literature was expanding in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the great novels by for instance Balzac and Dickens as its basic commodity. It is a troubling thought that literary history was invented at more or less the same time. The thought is troubling because literary history is very much a national concern based on the literature of the mother tongue – in that sense opposed to the idea of translated literature as world literature. In the present article I will dwell on this trouble: the relation between translated literature and literary history. Or perhaps we should call it a lack of relation? Virginia Woolf once suggested that we should regard Constance Garnett – the translator of Russian novels – as one of the most important English writers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Needless to say such an idea would imply a complete rewriting of literary history as we know it. The national perspective still rules, although translated literature has become increasingly important in the new readings of literary history and literary systems that have been presented in recent years by for example Franco Moretti and Pascale Casanova. Perhaps we can expect a new type of literary history as a result of the on-going "globalization", what I would like to call the fifth phase of translated world literature.

The first phase happened in Roman times and consisted simply in the Roman adaption of Greek culture: Zeus became Jupiter (Jove), together with many other central concepts and names and phenomena, including literature. This was also the time of the first great theoretician of translation, St. Jerome (Hieronymus), who translated from Hebrew and Greek into Latin.



The second phase came during the Renaissance: the ancient culture and literature moved into the vernacular of European languages like French, Italian, English. Interestingly, neither the first phase nor the second had any importance for literary history: the idea of history was still to come. For a French Renaissance reader like for instance Montaigne the classics were all contemporary: he quoted and adapted Plato and Cicero for his own use as if they were still around, he conversed with his classics as with friends and peers. This changed during the third phase following Romanticism and during the expansion of the novel that made Goethe talk about world literature. During Romanticism we meet the second great theoretician of translation, Friedrich Schleiermacher, who translated from Greek into German.

Late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century we can discern a fourth phase, this time related to the poetry we call "symbolism": especially the poetry of Baudelaire and Mallarmé was translated all over the world and preparing the way for modernism. The expansion of the novel had political but also commercial reasons: translations were initiated by publishers or printers expecting a profit out of the novelistic expansion. The symbolist phase was different: it was certainly not profitable, it was often performed by fellow poets and diffused at seminars or meetings or published in literary journals. Both versions of a literary culture based on translation have been important for the canons of literary history. Both are still important, the novelistic spread initiated by publishers as well as the poetical spread by fellow poets and enthusiasts. With one important difference, that I will return to: the striking Anglo-Saxon dominance in translated world literature of today, especially when it comes to novels.

I will now try to enter a little deeper into these phases and the problematics of translated literature in relation to literary history following an essay by Susan Sontag, "The World as India", originally a lecture from 2002. She dedicates her essay to W. G. Sebald and although she does not make an explicit use of this writer in her text, the dedication suggests an interesting problematics of translation. Sebald was born in Germany and wrote in German but he lived his grown-up life in England. He had a very complicated relation to everything German: German history as well as the German

language. This is demonstrated in his best known book, the only one to be called a novel: *Austerlitz* (2001) – not only by its research into some dark spots of German history but also by its use of language. Sebald mixes his German with English, French, Czech and Flemish. In that way he illustrates an important strand in the German tradition for the theory of translation that goes back to the Romantic era, a tradition that Sontag adopts: the problematization of the “mother tongue.”

Sontag quotes St. Jerome as being the first to state what seems to be a commonplace in all discussions of translation: that translation is an impossible task. What is the best way to deal with this inherent impossibility of translation? Sontag asks and answers on behalf of St. Jerome:

For Jerome there can be no doubt how to proceed, as he explains over and over in the prefaces he wrote to his various translations. In a letter to Pammachius, written in A.D. 396, he quotes Cicero to affirm that the only proper way to translate is ... keeping the sense but altering the form by adapting both the metaphors and the word to suit our own language. I have not deemed it necessary to render word for word but I have reproduced the general style and emphasis. (161)<sup>1</sup>

Jerome wants, in short, to transform the foreign language into his own language, keeping the foreign sense while making it his own by “adapting” it. Something will obviously be lost in this procedure: “Translation, by definition, always entails some loss of the original substance.” (162)

Against this tradition Sontag puts the very different problematization of translation that was developed during German Romanticism by the philosopher, theologian, hermeneutic and translator Friedrich Schleiermacher. According to Schleiermacher the translator stages an exemplary meeting between one’s native language and a foreign language. This meeting does not make the foreign language less foreign: Schleiermacher cannot accept Jerome’s idea

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<sup>1</sup> Susan Sontag (2008). Will be quoted with page-reference in the text.

of adaption since the foreign language can never be completely transformed or adapted; it will always be alien to your mother tongue. Sontag quotes Schleiermacher's essay from 1813, "On the Different Methods of Translation":

... the aim of translating in a way such as the author would have originally written in the language of translation is not only out of reach, but also null and void in itself, for whoever acknowledges the shaping power of language, as it is one with the peculiar character of a nation, must concede that every most excellent human being has acquired his knowledge, as well as the possibility of expressing it, in and through language, and that no one therefore adheres to his language mechanically ... and that no one could change languages in his thinking as he pleases the way one can easily change a span of horses and replace it with another; rather everyone produces original work in his mother tongue only, so that the question cannot even be raised of how he would have written his works in another language. (170)

For Schleiermacher language is the basis of identity. Translation means a meeting with something foreign that might contribute to your own identity. The translator should of course render the original as faithfully as possible but the translation could nevertheless never be anything but a translation. When Schleiermacher translates Plato into German it is not in order to make Plato into a German but in order to enrich the German language and the German nation with a Greek heritage.

Something politically important has happened during the long time span between Jerome and Schleiermacher. Translation is now regarded as an instrument to develop individual identity as well as national identity. Translation is education. Translation also defines one's own identity in contrast to the foreign and gives a privilege to one's own language, the mother tongue, as the only language that can give an authentic identity to the individual and the nation. Jerome lived in the epoch of *pax romana* and *lingua romana* – but for Schleiermacher a transnational language could only be inauthentic and enforced, perhaps of some practical or commercial use but impossible for literary or psychological purposes.

I hardly need to emphasize that Schleiermacher's position encourages the idea of a privileged language that became the basis for national literary history – combined with a practice of translation that became the basis for world literature. According to your preferences, you could say that Schleiermacher shows the possibility of such a combination – or that he gives foundation for the separation of the national literature from world literature. Sontag follows another trace and goes on to ask if Schleiermacher has any relevance today, in a situation when we again can talk about a transnational language, like in the days of *lingua romana*. Now it is of course English that has so to speak become required or even compulsory for a growing part of humanity. The world has become “as India” as she puts it in the title of her essay: “The World as India.” She has in view the fact that India has 16 “official languages” and many unofficial but only the language of the old colonial power works as an overall language. “Just because it is alien, foreign, it can become the unifying language of a permanently diverse people: the only language that all Indians might have in common not only is, it has to be, English.” (165)

English has become the first language of India by being the *second* language for every Indian.<sup>2</sup> English functions uniting, reconciling, translating. But what about Schleiermacher's notion that only your own language, the mother tongue, can create individual and national identity? Sontag problematizes this with the following example (p. 171ff.):

So called *call centers* have become technologically possible and economically interesting, not least in India. Here you find a lot of young people answering calls from people in the US that have dialled toll-free numbers in order to be informed about for instance flight departures, hotel bookings and weather forecasts. The people

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<sup>2</sup> Sontag's essay was originally published in *Time Literary Supplement* in 2003 and followed by an angry comment from the Indian professor Harish Trivedi, accusing Sontag for patronizing neo-colonialism on behalf of the English language. Trivedi's comment was then criticized by other Indians. Apratim Barna claimed that English “is an Indian language like any other” and Gurchama Das that “English remains the passport for every youngster who dreams of becoming ‘master of the universe’.” See *TLS* 2003 27/6, 1/8, 22/8 and 12/9.

working in call centers have not only learnt perfect American-English, they have taken American names – “Hi, this is Nancy. How may I help you?” – and even minibiographies locating them in relevant American settings. Their second language has provided them with a second identity. This identity we can, in the spirit of Schleiermacher, condemn as inauthentic. But it is nevertheless profitable for themselves and their employers and it may even help them leave India and settle in the States, where a double identity is not unusual – as it is becoming less unusual also in our part of the world.

I could add an example of my own: I work at a Norwegian university where we are very much encouraged to publish in English. Everything we publish must be reported – that is regarded as our “production” – and classified in different categories with different economical results. (The same system is being introduced in Sweden and Denmark). A small article in an English journal with so-called peer review gives more money directly to my university (and indirectly to me) than for instance a book-length monograph written in Swedish or Norwegian on for instance Strindberg or Ibsen. The obvious result is that a few Scandinavian academics make their way into the world but also that far too many articles are written in bad English and published in obscure journals by less successful Scandinavian academics. The result is also that the academic literary criticism becomes more academic and withdraws from the national literary and cultural debate. Instead, this debate becomes dominated by the production of quick – and quickly forgotten – opinion that is dominating the cultural sections of the newspapers as well as the media, including the internet-blogs – together with commercial campaigns for Anglo-American literature and media culture.

Sontag’s example from the Indian call-centers as well as my own seem to say that the world language English unites and reconciles – but that the reconciliation is based on narrow political and economical conditions, and that it takes place at the expense of national and individual interests and differences, as well as at the cost of quality. Something disappears when the second language takes the place of the first. Well, we all know literary examples that seem to say the opposite: that the second language could say *more* than the first. I am thinking of the English of Joseph Conrad and Vladimir

Nabokov, the German of Paul Celan, the French of Jorge Semprún. These examples, however, all belong to the modernist age, when physical and linguistic exile was or could be a productive part of the writer's condition. In our so-called globalized world a new kind of exile, exemplified by the Indian call-center as well as by myself – a Swedish scholar working in Norway and talking to you in English – is becoming the rule. It seems to me that we are entering a fifth phase of world literature, where translation is no longer secondary. Where we all translate and contribute to the world becoming “as India” and where the Romantic notion of authentic identity and nationality and originality becomes less important or even anachronistic.

Sontag is not happy with this vision of a globalized world where the second language becomes the first and translation overrules the original. She prefers to imagine the geography of world literature and world languages as a system of rivers and mountains and valleys and oceans. “To translate is to take the ferry, to bring across.” (175) The ferry connects two shores that must be separate. Translation is for her an important contribution to the traffic of ferries in the global circulation system of literature and culture. In order to support this ferry-metaphor Sontag turns to Walter Benjamin and his famous and cryptical essay “Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers”, originally an introduction to his Baudelaire-translations from 1923. Like Schleiermacher, Benjamin regards translation as a meeting with something foreign. But, unlike Schleiermacher, Benjamin seems to mean that translation shows us that also your own language, the mother tongue, is something foreign; translation is a way of handling what is always foreign in language. Sontag summarizes Benjamin's speculation into the following sentences combining the German philosophy of language and translation with a contemporary globalized vision:

Every language is part of language, which is larger than any single language. Every individual literary work is a part of literature, which is larger than the literature of any single language. (177)

Sontag's vision of translation as ferry-traffic comes close to another current metaphor when it comes to the philosophy of translation: the bridge. It is used for example by the German philosopher Martin

Heidegger when he pondered on the first phase of world literature, and specially the latinization of Greek philosophical terms: translation, according to Heidegger, works as a bridge uniting shores although the shores are still separate and different. And the same metaphor is used by his follower Hans-Georg Gadamer, the grand old man of modern hermeneutics, in an essay from 1989, "Lesen ist wie Übersetzen."<sup>3</sup>

Reading is, according to Gadamer's title, like translating. Especially poetry-reading is like translating from a foreign language. The poetry reader meets an unknown language that he has to transform / adapt / translate into a language that he knows: into his own. Poetry reading takes us from one shore of language to another. "The translator does not hide the distance to the original although he bridges over it." "The translating activity is for all language and understanding a bridge that can be crossed from both sides. The translation is like a bridge between two languages as well as between two shores in one single country."

Gadamer is here, as always, a harmonizing thinker trying in his metaphors to harmonize the different traditions of the philosophy of translation. You can recognize a trace of Jerome: translation is about adapting the foreign as your own, although with losses on the way. And there are distinct traces of Schleiermacher: translation is a "bridge" between the foreign and your own and the traffic on this bridge enriches your own language although the foreign stays foreign. And there is a touch of Benjamin's philosophy of language: the traffic across the bridge of translation takes place "in one single country" and the name of this country is Language (Benjamin) or Literature (Sontag). In Gadamer's world there are bridges connecting languages, literatures, histories. His version of this traffic calls for humility. No reading is final. Every literary work, every translation and every reading is a contribution to what is always bigger: Literature itself. Also when I am working in a foreign language I situate myself in the great homeland called Language.

Gadamer, as well as Sontag and Walter Benjamin, regard translation as a play where originality and authenticity are at stake. They

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<sup>3</sup> Gadamer (1993), [My translation. *A. M.*]

may well be the last of Modernists with romantic inclinations. When the world becomes "as India", according to Sontag's vision of the near future, no such play is necessary or even possible. No bridges or ferries are needed. When the original becomes secondary it is no longer an original. The foreign becomes your own and what was called the mother tongue becomes a phase to pass on your way to the new Babel: *lingua anglo-americana*.

This may sound nostalgic on behalf of Romanticism, pessimistic and even apocalyptic when it comes to today and the future. I want to conclude by modifying this apocalypse by relating to the main theme of this conference: literary history. I have stated that translated literature has a troublesome relation to literary history ever since literary history was invented, i.e. since the Romantic era. Translations have provided literary history with canonical texts but the cult of originality, authenticity and nationality has given translations a second-rate status. This may very well change during the ongoing globalization. When the whole world becomes more and more "as India" it may open some possibilities for a literary history that crosses the national borders and really becomes a history of world literature. St. Jerome's method of translation – "keeping the sense and altering the form" – may well be the method also for this literary history. It will no doubt be dominated by the English language and the commercial interests that we associate with Anglo-American media culture. But even under this domination and even if we have to forget the Romantic cult of originality we may be able to find inspiration in what I earlier called the fourth phase of world literature: the translation of Symbolist and Avant-garde poetry in small settings like seminars and journals. Maybe our academic institution can become such a setting. In my next life I want to contribute to a new literary history of world literature as a member of an editorial staff devoted to the translation of Avant-garde literature, organized as an Indian call center, and receiving toll-free calls from all the literatures of the world.



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## *Testing the Relevance of Translations*

A literary canon need not be a scary word violating true histories which would probably be the current politically correct way of treating a canon. Seeing it still as “the relation of an individual reader and writer to what has been preserved out of what has been written” – not as “a list of books for required study” (Bloom 1994: 17) –, the canon can be included in the realm of aesthetic values and tastes, a realm different from that of politicized curriculums. Even though the formulation is inevitably predestined to exclude literatures written in an unattainable linguistic code, in what follows the canon has been primarily seen as defined by Harold Bloom who, true, excludes from his *Codex Librorum* many a writer preserved in the memories of the readers in Estonia. It cannot be helped. What troubles us more are the equally exclusive Estonian literary canons for in case with them the problem is not just linguistic: the list of translations into Estonian is long, and there is a steady critical tradition stressing the significance of translations for Estonian culture. Without wanting to confuse a national literary history with the history of either world literature or that of a culture, it still strikes as questionable to exclude translations willfully from the latter (e.g. Talve 2004) – that is translations as objects worthy of separate chapters or special study.

There are exceptions. The histories of the Estonian book, i.e. of the books published in the Estonian language (e.g. Lott & Möldre 2000, Möldre 2005) do include translations presenting us this way a literary history that does not segregate its authors on the basis of their linguistic origin. Tiiu Reimo, compiling the chronology of the Estonian book, lists as the events of the year 1972, for example, the following: (1) Paul-Eerik Rummo’s *Saatja aadress* (The Sender’s Address) was officially banned; (2) Egon Rannet published part one of his ambitious panoramic novel *Kivid ja leib* (Stones and Bread);

(3) Eno Raud published for children part one of his *Naksitrallid* (Three Jolly Fellows)<sup>1</sup>; (4) the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party established an additional extra-closed fond for the Estonian books published in exile as especially harmful to the Soviet regime, marked now by the double stamp of the censorial triangle, i.e. by a hexagon; and (5) the publishing-house Eesti Raamat launched its monumental *Varamu*-series issuing within the next 10 years (1972–1983) 40 translations of world literature (Reimo 2000: 95–96).

The short list is enough to juxtapose the conflicting tendencies of the year.<sup>2</sup> As far as original writing is concerned the situation is more or less as Mart Velsker has described it in his chapter on literature and society of the 1970s in the 2001 canon-shaping Estonian literary history (*Eesti kirjanduslugu* 2001): as censorship exercised harder regulations than in the 1960s, the national culture withdrew in self-defense; in public statements the discrepancy between what had been said and what had been meant increased reinforcing the poetics of allusion (536–7). True, however, is also what Epp Annus and Robert Hughes have written bearing in mind primarily the Modernism of 1960s but the observation is valid also for the early seventies: there can be discerned a perceptible effort from the part of the writers “to bring people back into an existence that was both sensually human and socially contextualized” (Annus & Hughes 2004: 57). The social contextualization is present not only in plots set in distant history (Jaan Kross), but also *Õukondlik mäng* (The Courtly Game) by Valton or some stories in Rein Saluri’s *Mälu* (Memory) but also in undeniably present scenes like in the short stories of Vaino Vahing in his collection *Kaemus* (Insight) where references have been made to the bottomless distress a running stitch could cause for a woman, or

<sup>1</sup> In 1974 the story was included in the Honor List of the Hans Christian Andersen Award and translated consequently into Danish, German, Russian, English, Polish, Lithuanian, and other languages.

<sup>2</sup> The full bibliography for 1972, including fiction, travelogues, memoirs, essays, polemical writing, children literature, and reprints, includes 179 titles, 89 of them originals, i.e. 50% of the published texts were translations (Soosaar 1979).

routine Soviet spying or the secrecy of dissidents or the intellectual isolation one felt facing the then possibilities of our public libraries.

The presence of translations, however, prevented the readers from neglecting the reality that human existence is a territory of the unrest anyhow, irrespective of the political realities and the facts of the everyday. This truism, black-and-white visible on and readable from the pages of translations, notably those of Loomingu Raamatukogu, was an assurance of significance in the context of the then propaganda emphasizing the difference of *homo sovieticus*. Comparison is one of the most powerful cognitive tools at the disposal of human beings, and an inquiry into other cultures, involving self-reflexivity, enables flexibility and resistance to hegemonic ideologies. The concerns of Isaac Babel or William Golding or of Albert Schweitzer or Albert Camus could not but affect their readers as antidotes counteracting the moods of national isolation and the public call to stake on over-ambitious social constructions whatever their cost. It was of importance to prevent the public history being performed from turning into nature (to borrow words from Bourdieu 1972), i.e. into a disposition depending on political manipulations with their inauspicious effects. Years later, in 1988, Henno Rajandi has said in an interview (Rajandi 2002 [1988]: 186): *Selleks, et eesti kultuuri-saareke ikka iseendaks jääks, peab ta paljus sarnanema ümbritseva indoeuroopa merega. Ei saa säilitada eripära, kui sa paljus ei sarnane – see on elu tingimus* (the condition for the Estonian isle of culture to preserve its identity is its manifold similarity to the surrounding Indo-European sea. Individuality is possible only where there are similarities – this is a condition of life). In this respect the translations were a condition of life, and as good an indicator of the loyalties of the culture as originals, pointing at them perhaps just better and in clearer terms.

Before going on with a closer examination of a translation published that year – and our primary reason for sampling the year 1972 was that it was in 1972 when Saul Bellow's *Herzog* in the translation of Enn Soosaar came out – let us give a quotation by Theo Hermans who has given us our initial pattern. As Hermans relies on Niklas Luhmann's systems theory, he needs an introduction.

Hermans has picked from Luhmann's analysis of the evolution of communication his key concepts of 'social system' and 'communication'. When Luhmann speaks of social systems (1995) he speaks of self-reproducing systems of communicative acts structured by expectations. That is, the elements of social systems – be them nations or translations – are neither individuals nor groups of people but communications that have to be in a temporal sequence for the system to exist. Society, under these terms, is not a sum of people, but an entity in itself, an environment for people, and vice versa, people are the environment for society. Individual actions are constituted (not defined) by society, and society is constituted (not defined) by the communicative actions of individuals. Communications are momentary, fleeting phenomena. For them to establish systems connectivity is the only possibility to endure over time.

The Estonian prose of the 1970s was predominantly cryptic as has been so aptly summed up by a sentence in Vahing's *Laenatud flööt* (The Borrowed Flute; Vahing 1972: 113): *mis mõte on sõnade järjekorral ja lausejuppidel üldse, kui me mõtleme katkendlikult ja seosetult* (what is the meaning of word order or of the truncated sentences at all if we think in fits and starts our desultory thoughts). This is a statement, not a question, and it is doubtful whether the feel of life and texts of this nature (the censored and self-censored texts prevailing in the original prose) would have been able to preserve the Estonian centuries' long discourse cherishing the cultural code of intellectual advancement, liberalization, integration in the intellectual world culture, etc., etc. Luhmann's particular emphasis on the formative value of communication is what made us favor at this instance his terminology even though we do acknowledge the hazards of dehumanized systems or of intersystemic communications, and highly appreciate what Anthony Pym, Douglas Robinson or Maria Tymoczko (Pym 1998, Robinson 2003, Tymoczko 2007) have done to balance it within translation studies.

But still. For Luhmann communication is not just an objective transmission of a pre-given message. Messages are received, and messages are transmitted always selectively. The selectivity concerns among other things selecting the moment to communicate – when do (when *can* one) communicate what – and this is again of significance

here, in this context, treating translation not just as a piece of new information but primarily as an intentional act.

Thus, Hermans enlarges on the communicative meaning of translations:

Their 'meaning', their 'sense', their 'point' as communications does not reside in 'the words on the page', decipherable by means of linguistic and other codes, in a social or historical vacuum. Nor can it be reduced to some semantic or other relation with a source text. In both cases, what is left out is precisely the aspect of selectivity, of selective difference. It is part of the 'meaning' of a translated text as communication that *this* foreign-language text was selected from among the range of potential candidates, that it was selected for translation and not for some other available form of transmission or importation or recycling, and that a particular 'translation mode' was selected, one particular mode of representing the original *against* the possibility of other available modes, i.e. in relation to the alternatives not chosen from among the array of more or less likely candidates, more or less permissible modes (2002: 184).

Here then is the list of our topics: (1) the meaning of choosing this particular text; (2) the meaning of translating it instead of, say, writing an article on it; (3) the meaning of the mode or style of the translation.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> To recall the year let us list some of its events: ongoing Vietnam War and Israeli-Palestinian conflict; the US broke diplomatic contacts with Sweden after Olof Palme had compared the American bombing of North Vietnam to Nazi massacre; East Germany and West Germany recognized each other; the Winter Olympics in Sapporo, Japan; Okinawa returned to Japan after 27 years of US Military Occupation; the Summer Olympics in Munich with 11 Israeli athletes murdered after 8 members of the Arab terrorist group invaded Olympic Village; the Watergate burglaries; Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev signed the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty in Moscow; the US sold grain to the Soviet Union for \$750 million; in Derry, Northern Ireland, British Army killed unarmed marchers, and anti-British riots took place, burning the British Embassy in Dublin to the ground. The Nobel Prize for literature went to Heinrich Böll; Joseph Brodsky was sent out of the Soviet Union. A chronology for the Estonian history lists as the events of

The meaning of the translation can be guessed while paraphrasing what *Herzog* is about. The protagonist of the novel, published originally in 1964, has got his namesake in *Ulysses* (Cyclops) where there is an episodic character, a merchant trading without license described as “a bit off the top”. The first attribute, trading without license, is apt for the translation not only in its primary referential sense (for translations back then were made without paying royalties to the author) but also, and more significantly, in the sense that Bellow’s *Herzog*, emphasized as an intellectual living in an anti-intellectual age, and living through a major crisis of his life, is a man who himself thinks the reason of his unrest is his wife’s dependence on ideologies (372<sup>4</sup>) while he considers “the explained life unbearable” (322). *Herzog* also pinpoints as a problem his continued faith in God even though never admitting it (231). Having left his unkempt home, his perfidious second wife and his academy, handicapped by “ideas that depopulate the world” (95, *ideed, mis maailma inimestest tühjaks teevad*, 111), he resorts to writing letters he never sends to his dead mother, to God, to both the long dead and living Western intellectuals that balances him at his never intended but still attempted murder of his wife and her lover so that the end is realization: “The life /---/ has been curious, and perhaps the death I must inherit will turn out even more profoundly curious” (326, *Elu*

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the year the 8<sup>th</sup> Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR (with 122 of its 183 delegates being CP members); the 3<sup>rd</sup> Youth Song and Dance festival in Tallinn; the first color program of the Estonian TV; Hotel Viru that was opened in Tallinn; and Jaan Talts and Jüri Tarmak who won Gold Medals at the Summer Olympics (Vahtre 1994). Also, in 1972 the Estonian National Front (*Rahvuskomitee*) published his underground journal *Eesti Demokraat* seeking a referendum on the self-determination of Estonia. At the same time a letter was smuggled out for the publication in Estonian newspapers abroad, protesting against Russification policies, and general lack of freedom and the Russian occupation of the Baltic countries. 1972 was also the year of ESTO, the world-wide cultural festival for expatriate Estonians.

<sup>4</sup> The numbers in brackets here and hereafter refer, depending on the context, to the page numbers of Saul Bellow’s *Herzog* as published by either The Viking Press in 1967 or Eesti Raamat in 1972.

/---/on imeline olnud, aga võib-olla osutub surm, mille ma pärin, veelgi suuremaks imeks, 363).

Summed up like this, or anyhow, Bellow's *Herzog* is a comedy as the vocabulary of the narrator undeniably admits. Its protagonist is "a little soft-headed or impractical but ambitious mentally, somewhat arrogant, too, a pampered, futile fellow whose wife had just been taken away from him under very funny circumstances" (30, *pea laiali otsas ja vähe praktilist meelt, küll aga vaimset auahnust ja omajagu upsakust, saamatu eluhellik, kellelt löödi hiljaaegu üpris põnevalt üle naine*, 39). Herzog describes himself as an earnest, frightful earnest person (21) burdened by self-development (92), "responsible to civilization in his icy outpost [his unheated cottage], lying in bed in an aviator's helmet /---/ fitting together Bacon and Locke from one side and Methodism and William Blake from the other" (127, *Herzog, kes pidi jääkülmas talumajas tsivilisatsiooni saatuse eest vastutama, lebas voodis, peas lendurimüts, kui ahjud ei küdenud, ja püüdis kokku sobitada ühest küljest Baconit ja Locke'i, teisest küljest metodismi ja William Blake'i*, 145). At that, Bellow's focus is not on comedy but on his character for *the* character, obsolete as it may sound, was the concern of Bellow as he so patiently explains in his 1976 Nobel Lecture. Bellow the conservative, a Jew of East-European background, was writing against the tide of the mainstream Western fiction, and against the respectable leaders of intellectual community, the latter emphasizing an individual's dependence on historical and cultural conditions. The dependence is there as Bellow the *cum laude* graduate anthropologist undeniably sees, but this is only a part of the truth, and a part of little importance for him, the writer, who can penetrate "what pride, passion, intelligence and habit erect on all sides – the seeming realities of this world" (Bellow 1976). The writer's task is to struggle with dehumanization any discursive development of whatever an idea inevitably entails; this was Bellow's conviction that kept him writing his divine comedies, and his essays.

Thematically *Herzog* has its counterparts in the Estonian fiction, especially that by Vahing and Saluri. There are letters written and particular philosophers studied in Vahing, there is a "frightful earnest" figure in Saluri's *Krahvi poeg* (The Son of a Count; 98). But



the Count is not much of “a character” for it is impossible to establish one on about 20 pages. He is rather a markedly unreliable figure of a narrator whose everyday context is the Estonia of 1970s, while his mental space is back in a distant and doubtful history. Psychological realism, of course, is a deterritorializing realism but – as humankind cannot bear too much reality so probably it cannot bear too much unreality also (Bellow 1976). At least Rein Saluri, the 1972 author of *Mälu* (Memory), a collection of short stories of allusive power indicating at muffled writing, in 2009 translated, as if to animate the still-life quality of much of his original writing, Vladimir Nabokov’s *Speak, Memory*.

Lawrence Venuti has accustomed us to the idea of treating translations as the minor literature (the latter concept borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari). Translations, of minoritarian position if compared to the original literature, share with originals their major language affected now with a high coefficient of deterritorialization, while the writer, the translator, marginal in his community, can the better reveal another potential community formulating the means of its different consciousness and sensibility. Minor literature is in the language of becoming, not of representing, it is not in the vernacular language spoken here, but in a vehicular language operating everywhere, and in a referential language spoken over there (Deleuze & Guattari 1998).

This is what *Herzog* is: it offers us a vocabulary diverting our determined concentration on “what forms us externally” because “that need not actually govern us internally” (Bellow 1994: 14). *Herzog* formulates the ways of doubting ideas like history as an expression of class struggle, or the need to resent the civilization we live in, or view the present moment always as some crisis, or refuse from any consolation in order to value one’s intellectual honor, or the need to take seriously the Darwinian struggle for existence, etc., etc. It must have been a curious book back then crying for “a vanished Central European epoch” (56), cursing “those Bolsheviks” (143), refusing “the canned goods of the intellectuals” (75, *haritlaste konservtoit*, 88) that preach “Got is no more. But Death is” (271), but stating luckily also “back of it all is bourgeois America” (133, *kõige selle taga seisab kodanlik Ameerika*, 151). That is, it was a book

including both reasons to ban and favor its translation. The intellectual content of the novel made porous the borders of here and there, home and away – even though the translation was not reviewed after its publication and the postword by Enn Soosaar makes no attempt to adjust the message to the target context.

What if the novel had been represented by an article acquainting Estonian readers with an outstanding American novelist? A vague guess of an answer can be seen on the cover of the translation (by Marju Mutsu) presenting motifs of the US flag. An illustration is a paratext like an article in an Estonian literary periodical would have been, and like all paratexts it has to establish the link between the text proper and its receiving context. The latter under the Soviet regime had to be publicly as naïve as the regime, and the cover – especially in comparison with that of the original (presenting the contours of the face of a troubled man, or the burning bush) – reveals the then discursive possibilities without needing much explanation.

The mastery of the poetics of silence is one of the factors that made Enn Soosaar a translator who found fame wearing just a translator's hat. Only years later he became a political figure, a polemicist, an author, but not back then, in the 1970s when he published his translations of Donald Barthelme, Richard Brautigan, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, and Thornton Wilder. It is with the help of his later publications only, noticeably with his autobiographical texts *Isa ja aeg* (My Father and the Time; 2007) and *Nuripidine aastasada* (A Topsy-turvy Century; 2008), that one can guess: translation for Enn Soosaar was just one leg in his intellectual engagement. It could have been first a means of survival in years of both personal and national hardship to become later the foundation of his mental capital he could use in the open society waiting ahead.

Having shifted now the focus from the translation to the translator the meaning of the translation will be highlighted in a new way: it could be an embodiment of ideas that can outlive social circumstances and textual frames. Treating this as the dominant of the translation the models of discussing it in terms of both fidelity-based evaluation and target-based systemic approach become questionable. Moreover, as Anthony Pym has argued (Pym 2009), translators work

in a fairly specific intercultural locale anyhow, which is neither the source nor the target but drawing on them both while being wholly determined by none. Pym calls the locale *interculture*, stressing that it means neither transfer from one culture to the other nor cultural heterogeneity (multiculture) but refers to an overlap, intersection of the source and the target, their common section of vital importance.

How to indicate at it linguistically? This takes us to the style of the translation, its poetics.

Douglas Robinson has included in the anthology of *Western Translation Theory: From Herodotus to Nietzsche* he edited (1997, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2002) the First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians contrasting speaking in a tongue to speaking edification (1 Cor. 14). The traditional dichotomy of describing translations is that of Schleiermacher, or of Venuti, i.e. describing them in terms of foreignization and domestication. The different proposal by Robinson has an advantage not in the sense that it takes translations to elevated realms but it enables us use the discrimination discerned by St. Paul: speaking in a tongue one speaks into the air, staying a foreigner, while speaking with understanding one interprets a tongue.

Interpreting a tongue is what the translation is. The translator's target heritage is by no means invisible in fragments like *Ludeyville 'is läks simmaniks* (216; glamorous life began in Ludeyville, 191), *õhtusöök on tipsen-topsen valmis* (212, dinner is all ready, 186), *ma olevat üks "toru-loru"* (217, she accused me of being a 'meek kick', 192), *anna mulle rüübet* (253, give me a drink, 226), *tudengi pillapalla* (298, graduate-student filth, 267). To use a phrase from *Herzog*, this has been piety that has determined the style of the translation (*pieteet määrab stiili*, 216, piety describes the style, 191) and guided the linguistic choices of Enn Soosaar that aim at an effortless Estonian in the service of the content of the original. In a few cases this has resulted in resorting to what have been called translation universals, i.e. to translating expanding and supplementing the original in order to make it logically clearer and more definite (*tal ei ole õigust seda kõike rääkida*, *teist inimest oma jutuga vaevata*, 178; he had no right to tell, *to inflict it*, 157). But Bellow was an author who drew much from the 19<sup>th</sup> century pre-modernist European novel that had trusted the immediate ability of language to

convey a meaning, i.e. his style is not being lost in an infrequently increased clarity.

The translation acknowledges the different realia of the readers of the original and of the translation. When Herzog the father is looking at his daughter eating in a zoo café, the Estonian reader gets *kotletiga sai* (120) standing for the original “hamburger” (103), an unknown realia in Soviet Estonia. In case with the culinary specifics Herzog enjoys with Ramona, his lover, however, the translation is as refined and culturally distant as it should be: *pärast garneele à la Arnaud ja salatit pakkus ta juustu ja vesikringleid, rummijäätist, georgia ploome* (212). These two examples serve us well to show that the translational choices are seldom made in awareness of the theoretical possibilities of foreignization or domestication but stem, as said, from the intercultural space and the need for a translation to be performative and do things with words that sometimes have to come from the source, sometimes from the target context in order to be effective.

The selective difference on every, textual but also metatextual level, is what defines a relevant translation the ‘meaning’ of which cannot be found in neither the source nor the receiving context but remains oscillating between the two, deferring its fixation. *Herzog* in its Estonian translation impresses as an accomplishment of Derrida’s classical paper (2004) on the possibilities of a translational text to be of relevance by preserving its difference from the originals of the both cultures involved because there is a *via media*, an intercultural in-between that is the territory of a vehicular language, different from the vernacular one.

Another aspect related to the relevance of translations concerns translation *from* a literature. It goes without explanation that translation in itself could be a criterion for considering a text of canonical value. In case with Estonian literature translated into Russian – and in the 1970s for reasons obvious enough Russian was the primary target language – we could still have second thoughts for “the Soviet school of literary translation has left us with not only many a great of its examples but also with a certain amount of anecdotes about the day hands of the capital who, sunbathing on a beach, could turn a national or tribal verse-maker no one had heard of into a celebrity of

all-Union significance. /---/ Or, they could present however botchy translations the author of the original had to accept gratefully because the sole fact of a book published in Moscow included a writer among great authors" (Rastorgujev 2008).

The number of titles of Estonian literature translated into Russian but also into other languages of the Soviet republics in 1972 is considerable. Relying on the bibliographical data as presented by Naftoli Bassel (Bassel 1984), Osvald Kivi (Kivi 1978) and *Knizhnaja letopis*, the state bibliography (Helm 1972) it is as big as 590 titles, including separate books and collections, and individual pieces published either in Russian in the periodicals of Russia, Estonia and other Soviet republics or in other languages of the Soviet Union (in the form, again, of either a book, a collection or a piece in a periodical issue). The bibliography of just one year, of course, is not sufficient for a deeper analysis: the list is static and cannot reveal periodic fluctuations, the probably different quantity of translations of different years that would be evident in, say, 10-year period. Moreover, the process of choosing-translating-editing a text can be of very different length depending on the place and the circumstances. So, bibliographical lists, even if encompassing a longer period, have to be supplemented with background analysis. Without it would be difficult to explain, for example, why, in the period of 1966–1975, the peak of translations from Estonian into Uzbek is in 1968, while for the translations into Ukrainian it is (in the same period) in 1975.

Admitting the limited possibilities of what follows, the full bibliography of the year in its 36 pages is still impressive. Its 590 titles include 26 separate books by individual authors in Russian, 3 in Latvian, Lithuanian, and in Ukrainian, 2 in Armenian, 1 in Azerbaijan, and in Georgian; in addition Estonian authors were included in 69 collections (mostly of poetry) in Russian, but also in Ukrainian, Moldavian, Kazakhstan, Byelorussian, and Georgian. In Estonian periodicals Russian translations were met in 29 cases, for Russia the figure is 61, for the Ukraine 64, for Lithuania 57, Latvia 38, Byelorussia 35, Georgia 22, and Moldova 21. In order not to turn the paper into a list let us focus just on the authors translated, and more particularly those translated in a book form, excluding translations into other languages than Russian that could have been in high

probability indirect translations from Russian. Otherwise it would be difficult to explain why a text, after it had been translated into Russian, was often soon translated also into other languages. This was the case with Paul-Eerik Rummo's "Ballad of the Shell Splinter in My Heart". Its two different Russian translations were published first in the all-Union collections, and then in journals and papers in Russia as well as other Soviet republics, to be followed soon by translations into Moldavian, Lithuanian, and Tadzik languages. There are other similar examples following the same pattern from an all-Union collection to native languages.

The translated authors issued in a book form in Russia were V. Beekman, V. Ilus, R. Kaugver, P. Kuusberg, O. Luts, E. Maasik, I. Maran, H. Mänd, E. Niit, V. Panso, R. Parve, H. Pukk, V. Saar, J. Smuul, and A. Hint. All the authors were represented by just one book.

In Estonia the same list shows a certain incline towards classical texts as it includes alongside with E. Vetemaa, V. Gross, J. Smuul, A. Hanschmidt, M. Traat, A. Liives, E. Raud, and S. Rannamaa, also Eduard Bornhöhe and Fr. R. Kreuzwald. Neither of the lists contained what Rastorguev has called tribal nonentities.

Including also collections, and all titles, we can point at the champions of the translation of the year. These were Debora Vaarandi with her 41 titles, Ralf Parve with his 29, Ellen Niit 28, Juhan Smuul 26, Vladimir Beekman 21, and Lilli Promet 19 titles.

The translators were both, from Estonia – Arvo Mets, Boriss Stein, Svetlan Semenenko, Aleksei Sokolov, Valentin Rushkis, Genadi Muravin, Elvira Mihhailova, and a dozen more translators, but there were also Estonians (or a Finn) living in Russia like Aleksander Tomberg and Robert Vinenen, or half-Estonians likes Vera Ruber or Nora Javorskaja.

What strikes the eye in the bibliography is that these could be the major writers of Russia who were translating Estonian authors – Anna Ahmatova and David Samoilov translating Debora Vaarandi, David Samoilov and Joseph Brodsky Jaan Kross. The visibility of the translators in the literary field of Russia fostered, no doubt, the classical status of Estonian authors and favored their reception.

Another observation of importance in this context is that one of the translated authors was Paul-Eerik Rummo. This must have been a

fact of not only intercultural but also of intrapersonal relevance back then maintaining for the writer his presence in the literary fields whatever the fate of his Selected Poems in Estonia.

To sum up: including translations (from and into a studied canon) in the national corpus as texts of relevance, we can reveal better both the loyalties and possibilities of a culture as well as its means of sustaining viability.

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The article was written with the support of Estonian Science Foundation grant no. ETF8152 “Translators Re(Shaping) Culture Repertoire” and targeted financed research project no. SF0030065s08 “Sources of Cultural History and Contexts of Literature”.



*Canon in Formation: The 1950–60s  
in American Literature*

In this essay, I shall proceed from the etymology of the Greek word 'canon' in its historical formation, i.e. before 900; ME, OE < L < Gk kanōn, a measuring rod or a rule, later extended to designate a list or a catalogue, and then to denote the books of the Bible recognized by Christian church as genuine.

In the later, literary context, the term was applied "to signify the list of secular works accepted by experts as genuinely written by a particular author" (Abrams 1993: 19), as, for example, "the Shakespeare canon", "the Tammsaare canon", to use the Estonian context, or, say, "the Kerouac canon". During the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, the term expanded further, and as a result of widespread discussions and debates, its meaning shifted to designate what are generally viewed as literary works of (supposedly) lasting value, i.e. the so-called major works or classics (v. Abrams 1993: 19–22). This definition, however, entails a number of open questions. Firstly, the 'experts' part of it is highly debatable, for unlike the biblical canon which is established by church authorities according to long-standing rules and procedures, and recognized as such by the particular religious body, the canon of literature emerges freely and unpredictably over the times, formed and formulated by literary critics and professors, and the popular taste of readers and buyers of books, ultimately, the dictate of the book market. Unlike the religious canon which is closed and definite, the literary canon is free and subject to change, as is the degree of its credibility and/or durability. Within the context of national literary canons, Abrams states the following, "These canonical writers are the ones which, at a given time, are most kept in print, most frequently and fully discussed by critics and historians, and most likely to be included in anthologies and taught in college courses, with titles such as "World Masterpieces," "Major

English Authors,” or Great American Writers.” (Ib. 20) The “at the given time” part of the above definition does, in a way, contradict the essence of the statement, emphasizing the transitory rather than the permanent, which, at least implicitly, forms the heart of the matter. Interestingly, Abrams quotes Samuel Johnson who, in his “Preface to Shakespeare” in 1765, delineated a century as “the term commonly fixed as a test of literary merit”, and proceeds to enumerate “some authors who wrote within the present [i.e. the 20<sup>th</sup>] century such as Marcel Proust, Franz Kafka, Thomas Mann, and James Joyce – perhaps even a writer so recent as Vladimir Nabokov”, characterizing them as already having “achieved the prestige, influence, and persistence of reference in literary discourse to establish them in the European canon; others, including Yeats, T. S. Eliot, Virginia Woolf, and Robert Frost seem already secure in their national canons, at least.” (Ib.) In this connection, the question of whether Nabokov belongs to the European or American canon (continent-wise) is of secondary importance, although Nabokov in his various interviews emphasized his allegiance to America rather than Europe (or Russia): e.g. the famous dictum of Nabokov, especially after moving to Switzerland, “I am as American as apple pie” (<http://www.libraries.psu.edu/nabokov/socher.htm>) that (seemingly) contradicts his famous lamentations over the loss of his native tongue. Likewise, the inclusion of T. S. Eliot in his “national canon”, whether American or British, is a moot point. From the perspective of the 1950–60s, however, it is to a certain extent relevant, since the transatlantic movement of authors between the supposedly Old and New World within the context of the two world wars and their aftermath, allow one to draw relevant parallels and, perhaps, even to maintain that in those circumstances the language rather than the citizenship (the latter being more easily changed than the former) matters most.

The literary canon itself (hence simply as ‘canon’) being subject to change, so are the fates and positions of the authors (and often also their individual works) within it, either because of the aesthetic tastes of a period, the efforts of some eminent men of letters (historically, women did not possess the position or prestige in this process until the rise of the feminist criticism in the late 1960s), or the historical moment of their lifetimes or, sometimes, what seems to

be mere chance. However, the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a marked rise of interest in the canon formation both in Europe and the United States, including feminist, Marxist, new-historicist and various other poststructuralist critics and scholars, varying in their focus and specific objectives, yet questioning the standard frozen hierarchal/patriarchal Euro-centered canons and aspiring to either change these (by opening and reshaping them) or, more radically, abolishing them altogether. In practical terms, this process centered on the college curricula, especially in the United States.

The canon being always in the making, and although only half a century or so separates us from the emergence of the Beat movement/phenomenon (not to mention the one hundred years' criterion set by Dr. Johnson), one could still look at it as having stood the test of time, and view it, accordingly. As to the other generally accepted criteria, the works of the Beat authors are certainly kept in print, have been so since the appearance of both "Howl" and *On the Road* in 1956 and 1957, respectively. They might not, as it happens, live up to the requirement of being most frequently and fully discussed by critics, though, yet with the passage of time this situation is improving, and a number of eminent critics, writers and scholars (e.g. Ann Charters, Donald Allen, Lee Bartlett, Michael Davidson, Jason Shinder, Jonah Raskin, James Breslin, to name only a few) should be mentioned in this connection, let alone the writers/poets themselves (Lawrence Ferlinghetti, in particular). As to the inclusion in anthologies (unless specifically of Beat authors), there seems to be room of improvement, certainly, and even more so as to the college courses on American campuses. For instance, it seemed somewhat surprising to find that an outstanding university like the University of California, Berkeley (with its excellent library facilities, among these, the Beat archives in the Bancroft Library) did not offer, specifically, any courses on Beat literature (in 2007–08, for example). This might seem puzzling in view of the fact that Berkeley was at the very centre of the movement, not to mention the proximity to San Francisco, the locus of the San Francisco Renaissance, with its readings (including the first reading of part of "Howl" by Allen Ginsberg at the Six Gallery on October 7, 1955), and the City Lights Bookstore, famous for its wide choice of poetry and various literary

events. One should also mention the more recently established Beat Museum with its permanent exhibition and a lively literary life very near the City Lights in North Beach, San Francisco. In view of the above, it could be of interest in this connection that the Department of English at the University of Tartu, Estonia, does offer an elective course on Beat Literature since 2008, attended by students of different fields and countries. On the other hand, though, as Dana Gioia has observed,

One might easily view the history of recent American poetry as a series of rebellions against and reconciliations to the writer's cultural predicament. Most major innovations have originated in the frustration generated by poetry's sequestration in the academy. Each significant new movement has attempted to form some meaningful coalition outside the university – both to link its poetry to a living cultural tradition and to revitalize it with genuine social purpose. The Beats, for example, linked their literary vision to the nonconformist attitudes of the counterculture Left. (Gioia 2002: 223–224)

The feelings, then, might have been reciprocal, both sides to an extent at odds with one another, the Beats questioning the “conventional American cultural values during the cold war” (Charters 1993: 582), including the ones represented by the academe. In the hindsight, though, there is no doubt that there was a major breakthrough in American literature in the 1950s and the early ‘60s, not a smooth one, to be sure, but one that started “with a bang”, to reverse the famous Eliot quote, as the “Howl” trial with all its consequences could be called, the battle for free expression, the emergence of a new kind of spontaneous, passionate, somewhat freewheeling intimate voice in American writing, both in poetry and prose, in fact, a kind of merging of borders between the two, as “On the Road” clearly testifies, a book of poetry in prose, to put it more precisely, perhaps the highest kind of praise prose could earn, especially in an age when what is considered to be poetry (judged by its typographical layout, mostly) only too often resembles prose, and prosy, flat prose, at that. Without needing to go into the theoretical intricacies at this point, one could remember the way Martin Heidegger

characterized the relationship between prose and poetry, “The opposite of what is purely spoken, the opposite of the poem, is not prose. Pure prose is never “prosaic”. It is as poetic and hence as rare as poetry.” (Heidegger 1975: 194) Or else, the lines of Lawrence Ferlinghetti in his “Poetry as Insurgent Art”, “Prose masquerading in the typography of poetry is not poetry.” (Ferlinghetti 2007: 52) Consider, for example, a random extract from “On the Road”, Part I/3 (not the original scroll) in English and in the Estonian translation (by Peeter Sauter):

And here for the first time in my life I saw my beloved Mississippi River, dry in the summer haze, low water, with its big rank smell that smells like the raw body of America itself because it washes it up. Rock Island – railroad tracks, shacks, small downtown section; and over the bridge to Davenport, same kind of town, all smelling of sawdust in the warm midwest sun. (Kerouac 1999: 12)

Ja siin nägin ma esimest korda armsat, suvises leitsakus madalaks kuivanud Mississippi jõge, mis lõhnas võimsalt nagu Ameerika elus ihu, mida ta pesi ja endaga ühes kandis. Rock Island – raudteevõrgud, putkad, väike äärelinnaosa; ja siis üle silla Davenporti, mis oli samasugune soojas päikeses saepuru järele lõhnav linnake. (Kerouac 2006: 16)

By and large, the English version is highly poetic as to its rhythm, diction, occasional alliteration (e.g. ‘for the first time’, ‘smell that smells’, ‘small downtown section’, ‘smelling of sawdust’), rhyme (‘tracks’ and ‘shacks’, ‘my’ and ‘dry’ ‘), abundance of monosyllabic words (e.g. the first eleven words of the passage) that are emotionally more charged than longer ones, repetition, the euphony and musicality of sounds, the overall endearing tone, fragmentariness, associative transitions, etc. In short, prose with poetic qualities. Taking the liberty, we could easily imagine it in what is generally regarded as free verse form:

And here  
 for the first time in my life  
 I saw my beloved Mississippi River,  
 dry in the summer haze,  
 low water,  
 with its big rank smell  
 that smells like the raw body of America itself  
 because it washes it up.  
 Rock Island –  
 railroad tracks,  
 shacks,  
 small downtown section;  
 and over the bridge to Davenport,  
 same kind of town,  
 all smelling of sawdust  
 in the warm midwest sun.

It is more difficult to ‘reshape’ the Estonian version of the extract for a variety of reasons, touched upon further on.

Ja siin nägin ma esimest korda  
 armsat, suvises leitsakus madalaks kuivanud Mississippi jõge,  
 mis lõhnas võimsalt nagu Ameerika elus ihu,  
 mida ta pesi ja endaga ühes kandis.  
 Rock Island – raudteevõrgud, putkad, väike äärelinnaosa;  
 ja siis üle silla Davenporti,  
 mis oli samasugune soojas päikeses saepuru järele lõhnav linnake.

To begin with, the number of words in both examples varies to a noticeable degree, the original containing 68 words, the Estonian rendering just 47, mostly due to the specific nature of the two languages (Indo European, i.e. West Germanic and Finno-Ugric, respectively, ultimately synthetic and analytic languages). However, the translator has omitted certain words (e.g. “in my life“, thus reducing the degree of personal emphasis in this sentence, “my beloved Mississippi“ has been rendered simply as “the river Mississippi“, to the same effect), rendered “with its big rank smell” as “smelled powerfully”, “the raw body of America itself” as just “American live body”, thus again

flattening its emphasis, has modified the part containing the verb phrase “because it washes it up” as “which it washed and carried with it”, thus implicating a past action, translated “railroad tracks” as “railroad network”, omitted the pronoun “all” in “all smelling of sawdust”, and the important geographical name “midwest’ altogether. Midwest, as it happens, is one of the four geographic regions within the United States, an important part of the country. In addition, the city of Davenport has been rendered as “townlet”, which is especially misleading in the Estonian context. As we know, the various places passed “on the road” are very significant in this book, alongside the rivers, oceans, and landscapes, cities and towns. One could even call this beautiful book a love song to America, no matter how crude the contents at times, a lyric and inspired hymn to this continent. However, the front cover flap of the Estonian translation informs us (anonymously so) that “The narrator of the novel *Sal Paradise* tells his simple and realistic story in a colloquial and relaxed manner – “off-the-cuff” (“Romaani minajutustaja *Sal Paradise* räägib oma lihtsat ja realistlikku lugu kõnekeelsel ja ladnal moel – “nagu torust tuleb“.) One could presume, perhaps, that the “off-the-cuff” method was used while translating the book into the Estonian, but it certainly cannot be applied to the original work. Nor is the story itself simple or realistic, if by ‘realistic’ we mean the attempt to present things as they are, rather than what they seem to the perceiving mind, less so as conforming to the conventions of the so-called realistic novels, or literary realism in general.

Being an inspired and inspiring book that has all the makings for belonging to the American canon of the 20th century, one could well remember Nietzsche’s description of inspiration:

– Does anyone, at the end of the nineteenth century, have a clear idea of what poets in strong ages called *inspiration*? If not, then I’ll describe it. – With the slightest scrap of superstition in you, you would indeed scarcely be able to dismiss the sense of being just an incarnation, just a mouthpiece, just a medium for overpowering forces. The notion of revelation – in the sense that suddenly, with ineffable assuredness and subtlety, something becomes *visible*, audible, something that shakes you to the core and bowls you over – provides a simple description of the facts of the matter. You hear,

you don't search; you take, you don't ask who is giving; like a flash of lightning a thought flares up, with necessity, with no hesitation as to its form – I never had any choice. (Nietzsche 2007: 68)

In view of the above, there is not that great difference between (out-standing) prose and poetry, especially since one of the definitions of the latter is “prose with poetic qualities” (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/poetry>). Bearing that in mind, we would take a glimpse at “Howl” by Allen Ginsberg. According to Lawrence Ferlinghetti, “When poets are treated like dogs, they howl” (Ferlinghetti 2007: 62). The circumstances and consequences of the “Howl” trial being well documented and generally known, let it suffice to quote Lawrence Ferlinghetti at this point,

The “Howl” that was heard around the world wasn't seized in San Francisco in 1956 just because it was judged obscene by cops, but because it attacked the bare roots of our dominant culture, the very Moloch heart of our consumer society. (Ferlinghetti 2006: xi)

The meticulously recorded and documented history of the case includes the full text of the poem, introduced by a quotation from Walt Whitman, “The dirtiest book of all is the expurgated book.” A canonical book by now in not just the Anglophone world, “Howl” was translated into Estonian by Tõnu Õnnepalu, and appeared in a collection entitled *Ameerika (America)* in 2003, containing a fair selection of other poems by Ginsberg, complete with notes and a longer afterword by Hasso Krull, editor of the collection. The Estonian rendering has omitted certain peritextual elements that traditionally belong to the poem, such as the Dedication to Jack Kerouac, William Burroughs and Neal Cassady, and the Introduction by William Carlos Williams,

Dedication To – Jack Kerouac, new Buddha of American prose, who spit forth intelligence into eleven books written in half the number of years (1951–1956) – *On the Road*, *Visions of Neal*, *Dr. Sax*, *Springtime Mary*, *The Subterraneans*, *San Francisco Blues*, *Some of the Dharma*, *Book of Dreams*, *Wake Up*, *Mexico City Blues*, and *Visions of Cody* – creating a spontaneous bop prosody



and original classic literature. Several phrases and the title of *Howl* are taken from him. (...) All these books are published in Heaven. (Ginsberg 2006: 3)

Williams gives a brief summary of the family background of Ginsberg, mentioning his father as a well-known poet in Paterson, New Jersey, praising the spirit of love that

survives to ennoble our lives if we have the wit and the courage and the faith – and the art! to persist. (...) But this is in our own country, our own fondest purlieus. We are blind and live our blind lives out in blindness. Poets are damned but they are not blind, they see with the eyes of the angels. (Williams in Ginsberg 2006: 8)

He then focuses on the familiar theme of the *poète maudit*, transplanted into “our own country”, seeing the poet as possessing the courage to contain it, claiming the horrors around him “as his own” and laughing “at it” and having “the time and affrontery to love a fellow of his choice and record that love in a well-made poem.” (Ib.)

Consider the very expressive opening of the poem:

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by  
 madness, starving hysterical naked,  
 dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn  
 looking for an angry fix,  
 angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly  
 connection to the starry dynamo in the machin-  
 ery of night,...

(Ginsberg 2006: 9)

The Afterword of the Estonian translation quotes another version of the opening as follows, not indicating the source:

I saw the best minds of my generation  
 destroyed by madness  
 starving, mystical, naked,  
 who dragged themselves thru the angry streets at  
 dawn looking for a negro fix...(Ginsberg 2003: 139)

The Estonian rendering of the this passage by Tõnu Õnnepalu reads as follows,

Ma nägin oma põlvkonna parimaid päid hullusest laostumas,  
 hüsteeriliselt alasti, nälgimas,  
 lohistamas end koidu ajal süsti jahtides läbi neegrikvartalite,  
 inglipäised hipid põlemas iidse ühenduse igatsusest tähistaeva  
 dünamoga öö masinavärgis,...

(Ib. 9)

Since the focus of this essay is not the analysis of the technical side of the texts touched upon, or the specific social problems related to these (or the authors), but the canon formation, a long and unpredictable process, let us at this point remember that parts of the poem were first *read* (my emphasis) to the public by its author at Six Gallery in October 7, 1955, which is to say that it was an oral performance, given by the author himself who, by reading it aloud, inevitably gave the first interpretation of it to his listeners. This took place before the book appeared in its entirety on November 1, 1956, published in the City Lights Pocket Poets Series (cf. *Howl* on Trial 2006: 1–3), i.e. the text began its (public) existence in the oral form a year before its printing, resembling in this sense what is generally called the oral tradition, a term usually related to folklore. Since then, it has been printed in different formats as to the number of lines, the so-called stepped triadic lines divided into three segments (inspired by William Carlos Williams). In view of this, the translators of the poem have felt free at handling the formal structure of the poem. Whereas an oral performance of a text is inevitably an interpretation, either by the author him/herself or by another person, so is the translation. According to Heidegger, every translation (*Übersetzen*) is an interpretation (*Auslegen*) and vice versa, a half-measure, really, that should be handled with utmost care, especially in poetry and philosophy (v. Heidegger 1984: 74–76).

In terms of the canon, though, translations are not usually included in national ones, something that might be reconsidered, actually, especially in our globalized/globalizing era, or in the parts of the world where there was/is no freedom of expression. The fact

that the two seminal works, *On the Road* and “Howl”, were published in the Estonian as late as in 1996 and 2003, respectively, nearly half a century later, is clearly associated with this as well. Speaking of Estonia, half a century of censorship is a long time, in terms of human life and otherwise, as is its aftermath. Literary canons are supposed to be forming freely and unpredictably over longer periods of time, unshackled and free from open or covert censorship. They can be forged in more than one meaning of the word, i.e. by being formed by heating and hammering or beat(en) into shape, formed or made by concentrated effort, or by fabricating a forgery (v. <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/forged>). As an example, one could consider the ad hoc rendering by the author of this essay of the last stanza of a poem entitled “Lenin Among Us” (1943) by Jaan Kärner (1891–1958), representing the new kind of literature forged and forced upon Estonian authors in the attempt to create the so-called Estonian Soviet literature after World War II (v. also Sool 2009: 337–347):

Ei ole surnud ta – ta elab geeniuses,  
kes jätkab tema tööd ja kelle võimas vaim  
taas kehastub nõukogulikuis olemuses,  
mis kannab riiki, mis maailmas tugevaim.  
Kes oli Lenin eile, see on Stalin täna:  
Viib rahva võidule ta tahe, tema sõna.  
(Kärner 1951: 103)

He is not dead – he does survive in genius  
who carries on his work, whose mighty mind  
reincarnates in Soviet essence,  
that bears the strongest state of all the world.  
Who Lenin was the day before, is Stalin now:  
His will, his word will lead the people to the victory.

In the light (or should we say, the darkness) of the above, one could contemplate the further development of the Estonian canon, whether it will continue to do so freely, unshackled from the oppressive past, open to the international influences, including the Beat texts that are

well “on the road“ (if not there already) to the American canon, and their present and future translations. Time will tell.

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(<http://www.libraries.psu.edu/nabokov/socher.htm>  
<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/canon>)

*Cherchez la femme or How Gendered Are  
Estonian Literary Histories and Handbooks?*

Estonian literary history is full of women, as every Estonian will tell you. The singers of the folksongs of the past centuries – mostly women (nameless as usual with oral poetry). The national poet, the hero of the romantic poetry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century – a woman whose portrait is on the most common Estonian banknote (Lydia Koidula). The beloved heroine of the emotional and erotic poetry of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century – a woman, who was proposed for the Nobel Prize in Literature eight times (without ever receiving it, but no Estonian has ever received it; Marie Under). The intellectual consciousness of the 1930s – a woman (Betti Alver). The queen of Estonian children's literature – a woman (Ellen Niit). The sober analyst of the suffocating post-war Stalin years – a woman (Viivi Luik). The best-selling poetry writer of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century – a woman (Doris Kareva). So where is the problem?

I cannot and will not deny the fact that women indeed play an important role throughout the entire history of Estonian literature and that this fact is also well documented in the respective literary histories. And I even will not rule out the possibility that the role of Estonian women within their literature is larger than that of other nations' women in the respective literatures – but that is not the point I want to make here.

What I want to know is whether the strong position of women holds true when we look at the whole picture. For if we assume that every literary history is a mirror of its time, then we should also find the main patterns of behaviour, power and hierarchies of a given society in the constructed literary history of this given society. And there is one thing for sure: Estonian society was strongly patriarchal in the past centuries, including the so-called socialist period. Even in the middle of the 1990s an outstanding female politician stated in an

interview that Estonia is not yet ripe for a female president (Lauristin 1995: 23). Therefore one can assume that Estonian literary histories would show traces of the patriarchal society in the sense that the female part of the history has been neglected.

This is the deductive approach triggered by the call for papers for this conference, where the following question was posed: 'Should the existing histories of literature be rewritten on the ground of feminist cultural criticism?'

The inductive approach was triggered by personal experience: when nine years ago a new comprehensive history of Estonian literature appeared (Annus et al. 2001) – written by a group of six outstanding specialists in Estonian literature, 700 pages thick and assumed to be the first ideology-free literary history since 50 years – I was very disappointed to learn that one of my favourite writers was not included. She was by then fifty years old, her *début* dated back to 1983, she had published several books of verse and prose and two novels and received the prestigious Tuglas-prize in 1994 – so why was Eeva Park not included in this new handbook?

That is how the suspicion was born that in some cases non-literal criteria have been used to eliminate certain writers from the canonical books, the most prominent being the sex of the person. Unfortunately this is something very hard to prove, as those mechanisms are never made explicit. The reason for this is that sexism is officially banned, like racism or discrimination on the basis of religion. But the simple hypothesis, based on the above-mentioned analogy, should be clear: if societies are patriarchal, so will be their literary histories.

How can we find evidence for this hypothesis?

The problem is that it is always easy to find exceptions and counter-examples, and it is generally hard to argue against the one or in favour of the other. If you want to find arguments you have to develop a certain framework which enables one to measure the differences applied in the treatment of either men or women. We have to find parameters which are neutral enough to be measurable at all. They need not be purely quantitative, though one thing is sure: size matters, and it is certainly a difference whether you get four or fourteen or forty lines in a literary handbook, and whether there is a picture added or not. But there are other aspects, too. Generally

speaking there are four methods to eliminate the female part of our world. These are:

ignoring them, i.e. just forgetting to mention them at all;  
marginalizing them, i.e. putting them in a marginal position, making them passive instead of active and the like;  
appending them to a male part, i.e. describing them as part of something, not as something *an sich*; and  
diminishing or trivializing them, i.e. making them smaller than they really are, making them ridiculous or not to be taken seriously.

I will now have a closer look at the first three of these four parameters and try to find some evidence or counterevidence for it in the field of Estonian literature, more exactly: in the literary field of Estonia.

The first solution – *ignoring* – is the simplest one. I would call this the Stalinist version: no people, no problems. If men simply deny the existence of women and do not mention them at all, then no-one will bother about them and leave the literary field to men. Of course it is difficult to show something that is not present, but we have some possibilities.

Each compilation of a literary canon – such as it is presented to us in literary histories – is a selection from a larger corpus of writers and texts, based on bibliographies and handbooks and the like. It is, roughly speaking, a three level procedure. First, to get into a bibliography is not too difficult; this is mostly a purely formal step. If you have an ISBN number and a physical book most bibliographers will list you in their records. But to achieve the next step to the handbooks is something else. This depends on many factors which characterize the literary field. And one of these factors is gender. The third step, finally, is to find a place in the canonized literary histories. This is the next and ultimate challenge. Again, one of the many criteria to be applied will be the sex of the person.

I cannot give a quantitative in-depth-analysis of the complete history of Estonian letters as this is still work in progress, but I might

have some evidence for certain procedures of selection, and I will give a number of examples of the same mechanism.

The first and maybe best example is the aforementioned case of Eeva Park. She was born in 1950 and her first book was published in 1983. In order to get a representative group we need a reference sample and have to look at the surroundings: who else was born at roughly the same time and became a writer later? And what happened to them in the literary handbooks and histories of literature? According to my rather complete records of Estonian literature I came to 36 authors born between 1948 and 1952. Among them were 12 women (Karm, Kudu, Õim, Park, Rebane, Reemet, Reinla, Sool, Tael, Talviste, Tamman, Vallisoo) and 24 men (Arder, Enniko, Helme, Ilmet, Ilus, Kändler, Käsper, Koržets, Langemets, Lõhmus, Maripuu, Merenäkk, Mesilane, Novod, Ööbik, Puu, Relve, Sang, Sarv, Urm, Varblane, Vene, Viiding, Volkov), i.e. the relation was exactly one to two. They all had their *début* between 1976 and 1996. Eight of them (Arder, Ilmet, Langemets, Lõhmus, Maripuu, Sang, Vallisoo, Viiding) made it into the aforementioned latest literary history (Annus et al. 2001). Of these eight, only one is a woman (Vallisoo). So the percentage of women declined from 33 in real life to 12.5 in the canonized literary history. To me this seems significant.

But Eeva Park is not the only omission in this book. Another name missing was that of Ilmi Kolla (1933–1954) – a poet who died of tuberculosis when she was 21 and who left only one collection of poems, published posthumously. Nevertheless, her verses were something special in the stifling early 1950s, and at least one of her poems became very popular and widely known. Ilmi Kolla could be called a rather canonized author; she is included in all the three biographical handbooks of Estonian literature (EKBL, EKRL, EKL), and always with a photograph. She also received a small chapter in the monumental seven-volume literary history (EKA II: 239–240), again with a portrait, and her autograph was included in the representative collection of Estonian autographs which comprises 75 authors (Noorhane 2003: 162–163). You might think, a consolidated author. But not a trace of her in the current leading monograph on the history of Estonian literature.



And what to think about Aita Kivi: born in 1954, début with poetry in 1986, followed by half a dozen other books of both verse and short prose until the end of the century, all of them reviewed in leading journals. No traces of her in the aforementioned monograph, but we do come across her male colleagues Aado Lintrop – born in 1956, first book in 1985, second fifteen years later –, and Villu Kangur – born in 1957, first and only book in 1979. It is, of course, always easy to point to some forgotten name in a book you have not written yourself, and comparisons to other writers have always the taste of being completely arbitrary. But one should consider that all the named omissions concerned women, and somehow I doubt whether this is purely accidental. I cannot prove it, but I need not either. One can only, strictly Popperian, prove the opposite. So you have to give me the names of three or four male writers with whom happened exactly the same and then I might reconsider my point.

One level down we find the literary handbooks and biographical authors' manuals. Receiving an entry in a handbook is an achievement, but no guarantee. Canonization is accomplished only if one is accepted into the new edition of the handbook as well. If you are not good enough you might be dropped. Or if you have the wrong sex.

Estonia has a strong tradition in biographical handbooks and, generally speaking, provides good material for those interested in Estonian letters. In the last 35 years three comprehensive biographical handbooks on Estonian literature have come on the market, appearing respectively in 1975 (EKBL), 1995 (EKRL), and 2000 (EKL). The first had around 600 entries, the next one doubled this to 1,260 entries, and the latest version has 1,400 articles. Roughly speaking, one could say that once included in such a handbook you are home free, for Estonians love biographical handbooks; the larger the better. Therefore one printed book of verse is often enough for a person to be included in a handbook of Estonian writers. And with the above-mentioned tendency of ever-increasing girth, the chance is good that the future editors will not remove your name.

Nevertheless, it can turn out the other way. The last extension from 1,260 to 1,400 entries did not just add the respective number of persons, but also expunged a number of names. If you have still only one collection of verse then your position is jeopardized. That is

what obviously happened to Merike Õim, who was born in 1951 and had her first book of verse published in 1985. She was included in the 1995 lexicon (EKRL 686). But no books followed, and so she was dropped from the following edition (EKL). That is understandable and defensible; it seems logical. Not everyone can be included. But when we, then, have a look at some of her comparable male colleagues, problems arise. Consider the following lesser-known Estonian male writers:

- Kalju Enniko – born in 1952 with one book from 1980 (EKRL 81, EKL 80);
- Villu Kangur (the respective years are 1957 and 1979; EKRL 180; EKL 178);
- Harri Kingo (1955/1986; EKRL 202, EKL 200);
- Mati Kuntro (1955/1989; EKRL 243; EKL 242);
- Tiit Kändler (1948/1986; EKRL 254; EKL 255).

They all made it to the 2000 edition, and this is not defensible any more, it is suspicious. Again, it is hard to prove that it was only the sex of the author that caused the selection, but the impression remains. From the 23 persons that were omitted during the editorial work at the transition from the 1995 edition to the 2000 edition, 14 were women. Although there have certainly been plausible reasons for all of them – one being the fact that folklore singers were not included any more in the new edition, and the vast majority of them were women – , the result is unmistakable, a reduction of the female part of the entire phenomenon called literature.

The second mechanism is *marginalizing* women. This means that women shift from the focus to the periphery. Instead of calling them innovators or leaders of a certain movement, they will be put into the margin, the real innovators always being male. This is a tricky thing to find any evidence for, but I might be able to produce some examples.

First of all we have the general problem – known from other languages too – that we have writers and female or woman writers. In Estonian: *kirjanikud* and *naiskirjanikud*. As Estonian has no

grammatical gender the word *kirjanik* 'author, writer' may denote either a woman or a man. The same holds for the word for poet, *luuletaja*, which can be a man or a woman. Consequently many female Estonian writers are simply called *kirjanik* or *luuletaja*. But some of them are called *naiskirjanik* – and one never finds a *meeskirjanik*, the respective male form. Using the prefix *nais-* suggests that the default notion, the word without the prefix, would be male. The impression remains that we have the real writers, the *kirjanikud*, they form the core literature, and then we have a subgroup, especially marked, which forms a less important part of the literature. Markedness and unmarkedness are crucial concepts in this context. By marking the female part we make the first step towards marginalizing them.

The second possibility is to simply give women less space than men. Again, size matters. Literature is not only quality, it is also very much quantity. Let us take, as an example, the poet Marie Heiberg. She lived from 1890 until 1942 and was in the years preceding the First World War a kind of wunderkind of Estonian poetry whose first volume of verse was published when she was sixteen. But later her life was overshadowed by mental illness and her literary production remained rather small. Nevertheless, she forms an important link between the poetry of the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and that of the 1920s and 1930s. Yet Endel Nirk in his 400-page monograph on Estonian literature confines himself to one single sentence about her: "Amongst the members and satellites of this literary generation we also find the name of the poetess Marie Heiberg, whose tragic life and desperate struggle to exceed her creative potentiality cut short her career and left her a mental wreck." (Nirk 1987: 136) No years, no title of any book, not even an attempt to describe her poetry. We have to put up with the mere mention of her name. And note, by the way, the use of the word 'poetess' here, whereas Marie Under is simply a poet. (Ib. 192)

But nevertheless, Marie Heiberg could certainly be labelled canonized. The academic literary history devotes seven pages to her (EKA III: 505–512), there we even find several examples of her poetry, a reproduction of her handwriting, a portrait and the frontispiece of her second volume of verse. An example of her

handwriting is also included in the above-mentioned representative book on Estonian autographs. (Noorhane 2003: 86–87). In 1988 a collection of her verses was reissued, i.e. the author is accessible and present. But in spite of these data, her position in the literary histories is unstable and fluid. While Nirk only drops her name, Arvo Mägi does not mention her at all (1968: 22 – this is the English version; Heiberg does occur in the Estonian version, Mägi 1965: 34, 55, but not in the Finnish version, 1965a), nor does Karl Ristikivi in his short account on Estonian literature (1954) or Friedebert Tuglas in his booklet about Estonian literature (1936). This need not be a problem. It is inevitable to omit some names if one writes a short account of a literature. The question becomes interesting when we compare the fate of Marie Heiberg with the treatment of one of her fellow male writers. This person is Jaan Lõo who is, interesting enough, included in the last two histories above, the ones by Ristikivi (1954: 90–91) and Tuglas (1936: 95).

Let us, therefore, have a closer look on the pair Heiberg/Lõo. Jaan Lõo, a solicitor and lawyer, lived from 1872 to 1939. He was a contemporary of Marie Heiberg, though not exactly the same generation as he was born 18 years earlier. But he is often mentioned together with Heiberg as a poetic link between the generation of Young Estonia (*Noor Eesti*) and the early 1920s. The thing with Jaan Lõo is that he published – in 1916 – only one single volume of verse, something which is always stressed. He is the ‘one-volume-poet’ of Estonian literary history.

This fact wanders from one literary history to another and the reader is never given a chance to see why this is so. For it is almost impossible to get hold of Lõo’s poems. While we have several volumes of Heiberg and even a newish edition from 1988, nothing of Lõo’s work has ever been reissued. The only samples we have are a few poems in anthologies of poetry (e.g. ELA 1955: 351–354; Rummo 1967: 275–277; *Sõnarine* 1: 481–486, mostly the same) which give an impression of the author. But nevertheless the author is called “no doubt canonized” by Toomas Haug in a recent article. (Haug 1999: 325) Haug’s classification of Lõo is, according to the footnote, obviously based on the fact that the academic literary history devotes three pages to him. (EKA III: 512–515) But Haug

withholds judgement on Lõo which is not only positive in this account; we can read here that the author's "achievements belong to the more mediocre ones" and that Tuglas did not like the "glorification of the ancient militarism". (EKA III: 515)

But anyway, let us deem Jaan Lõo "canonized" and compare him to Marie Heiberg and her canonization. In the above-mentioned comprehensive seven-volume academic literary history Marie Heiberg receives more than twice as much space (EKA III: 505–512), and that is what she obviously deserved: she wrote much more than Lõo, and she had an individual talent, while Lõo was rather conventional and conservative, certainly not innovative. On the basis of this thorough account in the most comprehensive treatment of Estonian literature Heiberg's position would be stronger than the position of Lõo. Also regarding the later editions of their poetry and the number of articles devoted to her, Heiberg would be in the leading position. But is this true for the whole picture? I compared the position of Heiberg and Lõo in twenty one monographs, handbooks and anthologies according to the size of the entry, the number of poems or the bare fact of mentioning and obtained the following picture:

	<b>Marie Heiberg</b> 1890–1942	<b>Jaan Lõo</b> 1872–1939	<b>"winner"</b>
Kampmann 1923	No	Yes	<b>L</b>
Tuglas 1936	No	Yes	<b>L</b>
Ristikivi 1954	No	Yes	<b>L</b>
ELA 1955	5 poems	5 poems	–
Mägi 1965	yes (2x)	Yes	<b>H</b>
Jänes 1965	9 lines	13 lines	<b>L</b>
Mägi 1965a, 1968	No	No	–
EKA III (1969)	7 pages, photo, autograph, frontispiece, examples	3 pages, photo, autograph, examples	<b>H</b>
Rummo 1967	6 poems	3 poems	<b>H</b>
Nirk 1970, 1983, 1987	Yes	no	<b>H</b>
EKBL 1975	56 lines, photo	31 lines	<b>H</b>
Sõnarine 1989	10 poems	6 poems	<b>H</b>

	<b>Marie Heiberg</b> 1890–1942	<b>Jaan Lõo</b> 1872–1939	“winner”
EKRL 1995	47 lines, photo	23 lines, photo	<b>H</b>
EKL 2000	41 lines, photo	20 lines, photo	<b>H</b>
Annus et al. 2001	19 lines, photo	39 lines, photo, example	<b>L</b>
Muru 2002	Yes	no	<b>H</b>
Riismaa et al. 2002, 2006	No	no	–
Noorhani 2003	Yes	no	<b>H</b>
Talve 2004	yes (3x)	mentioned (2x)	<b>H</b>
Hasselblatt 2006	yes (4x), 31 lines	no	<b>H</b>
Hetzer 2006	No	yes	<b>L</b>
Result	12	5	

Twelve times Heiberg was leading, six times Lõo, in two cases neither was mentioned at all, and in one case they were equally represented with five poems each. This means that Heiberg is indeed the somewhat more canonized author, but nevertheless her position seems not to be secure or guaranteed. The result also shows some examples of important handbooks where Heiberg is surpassed by her male colleague who wrote much less and is generally considered less important. The suspicion arises that this is due to his sex and that a female author of the same calibre would have been removed long ago.

The third method is *appending* women to a male part, i.e. describing them as part of something, not as something *an sich*. The most common method is to attach the woman to a man – as it has been the practice for many centuries. When we take a look at the biographical handbooks, we will see that this mechanism still works.

As we have a lot of partnerships within Estonian letters, I took a sample of 63 couples and asked how the fact that the two persons were married to each other has been mentioned (explicitly or not) in the respective entries of the three biographical handbooks mentioned earlier. I also included translators and other persons considered to be taken into the handbooks for whatever reason, but I might have

overlooked some persons when I have not been aware of the fact that they were married. On the other hand I included persons of whom I knew they have been married, although this might not have been mentioned in the respective handbooks. I did not, of course, take into account unregistered partnerships and all other kinds of 'living together' because there would be no border from where to begin to regard something as a partnership and because most of them simply never reach the literary handbooks.

The following chart displays the couples in alphabetical order and their representation in the handbooks. The first column gives the names of the couple arranged by alphabetical order on the basis of the person coming first in the alphabet. I stuck to the names used in the handbooks and did not take maiden names, pseudonyms or the like into account.

In the three central columns the data on both persons is analyzed or shortly quoted according to the three handbooks. This has been done in a standardized order to avoid confusion: starting with the male ('he') followed by the female ('she'). A hyphen (-) indicates that the person is not included in the handbook. 'Nihil' means that nothing is said about marriage with respect to the person in question.

In the last column a conclusion and possibly a comment are given. There are three possible judgements: 'traditional' means that the treatment follows the conservative pattern according to which the woman is attached to the man without any traces of a wife in the respective entry of the man; 'neutral' means that the treatment is gender neutral, the marriage has been mentioned in both entries or in none of them; 'inverted' means that it has been the other way round: With the man's entry we find information about his wife where no traces of a husband can be found with the woman's entry.

## Partnerships in Estonian letters and their treatment in the handbooks

	EKBL	EKRL	EKL	comment
Adson, Artur & Under, Marie	he: nihil she: "married AA in 1924"	he: "was married to MU" she: "wife of AA"	he: "married MU" she: "wife of AA"	EKBL traditional, later neutral
Alver, Betti & Talvik, Heiti	he: nihil she: nihil, only "from 1937 E. Talvik"	he: "married to BA" she: "married to HT"	he: "married to BA" she: "married to HT"	neutral
Alver, Betti & Lepik, Mart	he: nihil she: nihil, only "from 1956 E. Lepik"	he: "married to BA" she: "married to ML"	he: "married to BA" she: "married to ML"	neutral
Beekman, Aimée & Beekman, Vladimir	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: "married to VB"	he: "married to AB" she: "married to VB"	traditional in EKRL
Berg, Maimu & Vahing, Vaino	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: "from 1969 to 1979 Vahing"	he: "was married to MB" she: "from 1969 to 1979 Vahing"	EKRL traditional, EKL neutral
Ederberg, Friedrich Wilhelm & Ederberg, Julie Wilhelmine	he: nihil she: "married WE in 1886"	he: nihil she: "married WE in 1886"	he: "married to JWE" she: "married WE in 1886"	traditional, only EKL neutral
Ehin, Andres & Seppel, Ly	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: "married to AE"	he: "married to LS" she: "married to AE"	EKRL traditional, earlier and later neutral
Hanko, August & Kurfeldt, Aita	he: – she: nihil	he: nihil she: nihil	he: "married AK in 1936" she: "From 1936 on married to AH"	neutral



	EKBL	EKRL	EKL	comment
Hasselblatt, Cornelius & Vogel, Marianne	–	he: nihil she: –	he: “together with his wife MV” she: “married to CH”	traditional
Haug, Toomas & Saluäär, Anu	–	he: nihil she: nihil	he: “married to AS from 1987 on” she: “married to TH”	neutral
Hiedel, Edvin & Hiedel, Lembe	–	he: nihil she: “married to EH 1953–1986”	he: “was married to LH” she: “married to EH 1953–1986”	EKRL traditional
Hint, Aadu & Nurme, Minni	he: nihil she: nihil, only “1941–1958 Hint”	he: nihil she: “was married to AH”	he: “was married to MN” she: “was married to AH”	EKRL traditional, change in EKL
Hint, Aadu & Vaarandi, Debora	he: nihil she: nihil, only [about the 1930s] “then D. Hint”	he: nihil she: nihil, only “from 1937 on Hint...”	he: “was married to DV” she: “was married to AH”	EKRL traditional, change in EKL
Härm, Viuu & Rummo, Paul-Eerik	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: “married to PER”	he: “married to VH” she: “married to PER”	EKRL traditional, change in EKL
Ilmet, Peep & Kaer, Krista	he: – she: –	he: nihil she: “married to PI”	he: “married to KK” she: “married to PI”	EKRL traditional, change in EKL
Jõerütüt, Jaak & Luik, Viivi	he: – she: nihil	he: nihil she: “married to JJ”	he: “married to VL” she: “married to JJ and [therefore] living in Helsinki and Rome”	traditional

	EKBL	EKRL	EKL	comment
Kabur, Boris & Reinla, Astrid	he: nihil she: –	he: “married to AR” she: nihil, only “from 1971 on Kabur”	he: “was married to AR” she: “was married to BK”	inverted, only EKL neutral
Kabur, Boris & Kõiv, Salme	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: nihil, only “1937–40 Kabur”	he: nihil she: “was 1937–40 married to BK”	traditional
Kallas, Aino & Kallas, Oskar	he: nihil she: “married from 1900 to OK”	he: nihil she: “married from 1900 to OK”	he: “was married to AK” she: “married in 1900 OK”	traditional, even still in EKL: With Aino the marriage is an act, with Oskar it is something mentioned casually.
Kallas, Alla & Kallas, Teet	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: “married to TK”	traditional
Kaplinski, Jaan & Toomet, Tiia	he: nihil she: –	he: “married to TT” she: “married to JK”	he: “married to TT” she: “married to JK”	neutral
Kross, Helga & Kross, Jaan	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: nihil	he: “was married to HK” she: “was married to JK”	neutral
Kross, Jaan & Viira, Helga	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: nihil	neutral
Kross, Jaan & Niit, Ellen	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: “married to JK”	he: “married EN” she: “married to JK”	EKRL traditional, earlier and later neutral
Krusten, Reet & Tonts, Ülo	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: “married to ÜT”	he: nihil she: “married to ÜT”	traditional
Kudu, Reet & Remsu, Olev	–	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: “was married to OR”	traditional
Kuus, Elar & Tigane, Aino	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: “was married to EK”	he: married to AT she: “was married to EK”	EKRL traditional, earlier and later neutral

	EKBL	EKRL	EKL	comment
Ligi, Katre & Runnel, Hando	he: nihil she: –	he: “married to KL” she: “married to HR”	he: “married to KL” she: “married to HR”	neutral
Luik, Viivi & Paavle, Jaan	he: – she: nihil	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: nihil	neutral
Lumet, Huko & Talvest, Mai	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: “was married to HL”	he: “was married to MT” she: “was married to HL”	EKRL traditional, later neutral
Merilaas, Kersti & Sang, August	he: nihil she: nihil	he: “married to KM” she: “married in 1936 AS”	he: “married to KM” she: “married in 1936 AS”	neutral (but with her mentioned as an act, with him only as a fact!)
Morell, Madli & Undusk, Jaan	–	he: “married from 1987 on to MM” she: “married to JU”	he: “married to MU” she: “married to JU”	neutral
Nagelmaa, Abel & Nagelmaa, Silvia	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: nihil	he: “married to SN” she: “married to AN”	neutral
Neithal, Martin & Neithal, Reet	–	he: nihil she: nihil	he: “from 1977 on married to RN” she: “from 1977 on married to MN”	neutral
Niit, Ellen & Niit, Heldur	he: – she: nihil	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: nihil	neutral
Nurkse, Lea (Leonida Jürisson) & Raud, Mart	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: “married MR in 1925”	he: “was married to LJ” she: “married MR in 1925”	EKRL traditional, EKL neutral

	EKBL	EKRL	EKL	comment
Nõu, Enn & Nõu, Helga	–	he: “married to HN” she: “married to EN”	he: “married to HN” she: “married EN in 1958”	EKRL neutral, EKL less neutral: marriage as an act with the woman, casually noted with the man.
Olesk, Peeter & Olesk, Sirje	–	he: nihil she: “married to PO”	he: nihil she: “married to PO”	traditional
Parve, Ralf & Promet, Lilli	he: nihil she: nihil	he: “married to LP” she: “married to RP”	he: “married to LP” she: “married to RP”	neutral
Pedajas, Marje & Vallak, Peet	he: nihil she: –	he: “from 1927 on married to MP” she: “wife of PV”	he: “from 1927 on married to MP” she: “wife of PV”	almost neutral, but appended status with the woman
Pervik, Aino & Raud, Eno	he: nihil she: nihil	he: “married to AP” she: “married to ER”	he: “married to AP” she: “married to ER”	neutral
Puhvel, Jaan & Puhvel, Sirje Madli	–	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: “married to JP”	traditional
Rajandi, Henno & Rajandi, Lia	he: nihil she: –	he: “married to LR” she: “married to HR”	he: “married to LR” she: “married to HR”	neutral
Rammo, Adolf & Rammo, Helju	he: nihil she: nihil	he: “married to HR” she: “married to AR”	he: “married to HR” she: “married to AR”	neutral
Rannet, Egon & Rannet, Vaike	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil, only “wife Vaike Rannet” mentioned she: –	he: “married to VR” she: “1945–83 married to ER”	EKRL traditional (no entry for the woman at all), EKL more neutral
Raud, Mart & Raud, Valda	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil, only “wife Valda R” mentioned she: “married to MR”	he: “was married to VR” she: “married to MR”	EKRL traditional, EKL neutral

	EKBL	EKRL	EKL	comment
Reijonen, Tuuli & Uibopuu, Valev	er:: nihil she: –	he: “was married to TR” she: “was married to VU”	he: “was married to TR” she: “was married to VU”	neutral
Saar, Juhan & Saar, Olivia	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: “was married to JS”	he: nihil she: “was married to JS”	traditional
Saks, Ita & Smuul, Juhan	he: nihil she: –	he: “was married to IS” she: nihil	he: “was married to IS” she: nihil	inverted, no mention at the woman
Salokannel, Anja & Salokannel, Juhani	–	he: nihil she: nihil	he: “married to AS” she: “married to JS”	neutral
Saluri, Piret & Saluri, Rein	–	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: nihil	neutral
Samma, Olga & Samma, Otto	he: nihil she: –	he: “married to OS” she: “married to OS”	he: “married to OS” she: “married to OS”	neutral
Smuul, Juhan & Vaarandi, Debora	he: nihil she: nihil	he: “was married to DV” she: nihil”	he: “was married to DV” she: “was married to JS”	EKRL inverted, change in EKL
Suits, Aino & Suits, Gustav	he: nihil she: –	he: “married in 1911 AS” she: “married to GS from 1911”	he: “married in 1911 AS” she: “married to GS from 1911”	neutral
Säärits, Aadu & Säärits, Ello	he: nihil she: nihil	he: “married to ES” she: “married to AS”	he: “married to ES” she: “married to AS”	neutral
Tamm, Aksel & Vellerand, Lilian	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: “married to AT”	he: nihil she: “married to AT”	Traditional

	EKBL	EKRL	EKL	comment
Toomus, Friido & Tõeveer, Terje	–	he: “was married to TT” she: “was married to FR 1933–40”	he: “was married to TT” she: “was married to FR 1933–40”	Neutral
Traat, Mats & Traat, Victoria	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: “married to MT”	Traditional
Unt, Lii & Unt, Mati	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: “married to MU”	Traditional
Vaarandi, Anton & Vaarandi, Debora	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: nihil	he: nihil she: “was married to AV”	Traditional
Viiding, Bernhard & Viiding, Ine	he: – she: nihil	he: – she: nihil	he: “was married with IV” she: nihil	Inverted
Viiding, Linda & Viiding, Paul	he: nihil she: –	he: “married to LV” she: “married to PV”	he: “married to LV” she: “married to PV”	Neutral
Väli, Heino & Väli, Silvi	he: nihil she: –	he: nihil she: “was married to HV”	he: nihil she: “was married to HV”	Traditional

There were only 27 cases, i.e. slightly more than two fifths (43 %), where we had no problem at all. The formulation was completely neutral in all editions, both persons were connected to their partner, or the marriage was not mentioned at all. With 32 couples, i.e. more than the half (51 %) we faced the classical problem that the woman was in one way or another attached to the man (although maybe not in all three editions). This could happen very directly – A is married to B, but in the article on B we don't find anything about A, and A is, then, the woman – or more indirectly: for instance, in the case of the man it is only mentioned among other things that he did something together with his wife, where in the entry of this very wife we find explicitly that she got married to a certain person. Generally, in the new edition of the bio-bibliographical handbook from 2000 (EKL), the editorial team obviously tried to neutralize all those cases, but there are still some problems left. An interesting result of the chart is, by the way, that the 1975 edition (EKBL) – the only 'socialist' one – is also really socialist in the sense that even the gender differences are minimized, as partnership remained very often unmentioned.

Only in four cases (6 %) the appending worked the other way round, i.e. that the man was the one to be explicitly married, not the woman.

Finally we have the mechanism of *diminishing* or *trivializing*. This means that you make women smaller and less important than they really are, you make them ridiculous so that they do not have to be taken too seriously. This is actually something that happens in everyday journalism and continues in the criticism from where it reaches the handbooks. The mere comparison, e.g., between the adjectives attached to male writers and those attached to female writers would probably yield interesting results. But a detailed analysis cannot be given here for reasons of space, suffice it to say that research of this kind has been conducted on other literatures (cf. e.g. Vogel 2001 for Dutch literature) – though not very exhaustively – and will obviously furnish the same results when applied to Estonian literature. Additionally, in Estonia this kind of research would be rather easy as the number of relevant journals is not too big.

To conclude I return to my initial questions: how gendered are Estonian literary histories and handbooks? Should the existing histo-

ries of literature be rewritten on the ground of feminist cultural criticism? Obviously 'rewriting' is too a strong word; many things are, in my opinion, well done. But nevertheless, there are enough shortcomings and doubtful decisions and suspicious tendencies; too many, in my opinion to ascribe them only to pure accident. They are significant. Therefore some parts of the literary field have to be reconsidered and a sober, gender-neutral view on Estonian letters would be more than welcome.

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*Defining the Field: Irish Women Poets Within and Without the Literary Tradition*

The creation of an anthology of literature inevitably involves a process of selection and rejection of texts which is always open to questioning and criticism. The three-volume *Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing* (published in Derry, Northern Ireland in 1991) is a conspicuous example. In his introduction the general editor Seamus Deane claims that it is both a “meta-narrative” of Irish writings over 1,500 years and an “act of definition” of Irish identity/identities (Deane 1991: xix). The scale of the enterprise was unprecedented: it spans a wider time period than any previous anthology of Irish literature and aims to cover writing in a broad sense that extends to political speeches, pamphlets and analyses. All the more surprising then that it should contain so few women writers – only 39 in 4,000 pages – that its publication was greeted with as much outrage as admiration. The outcry at this glaring omission threatened to overshadow its rich and eclectic array of writers and writings. In order to redress the balance a new Field Day project was launched to compile a volume devoted solely to women’s writing. At Deane’s invitation a team of women editors undertook the task, which resulted in the publication, eleven years later, of not one but two volumes under the title *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing: Irish Women’s Writing and Traditions* (published in Cork, Ireland, in 2002). This is a lengthy title and a hefty work, running to 3,200 pages of writing by over 900 women and a smattering of men. What I examine here is how these two “works” (volumes I–III and volumes IV–V respectively) can be viewed as engaging one another in a debate on conceptions of Ireland and Irish writing, and how this is reflected in the representation of contemporary women poets in the anthology and their place in the Irish poetic tradition. This involves a close reading

of editorial comment and poets' words with a view to understanding the nature and the focus of the debate.

## Defining Opening Statements

First, a look at how the two works define themselves. The subtitle of the second work is already telling: "Irish Women's Writing and Traditions". If the first three volumes had been subtitled "Irish Men's Writing and Traditions", it would almost certainly have been deemed controversial. However, controversy there was as the contents of volumes I–III were criticised for their depiction of Irish writing as a predominantly male preserve. The subtitle of the second work in effect retroactively subtitles the first, underscoring its bias and the limits of its scope.

In his General Introduction, Deane registers his awareness of the limits and the place of this, or indeed any, anthology, saying that the "selection is not made from a preordained 'tradition'; it is selection which ordains the tradition(s)" (ib. xx). He recognises that this work is "one further act of cultural creation" (ib.), and that his subject – Irish writing – is a human construct that has been created, dismantled and recreated repeatedly over the centuries. Clearly, he and his fellow editors do not see themselves as entering uncharted territory. In contrast, the women editors of volumes IV and V emphasize the fact that this is the first such attempt to put together a comprehensive body of texts by and about the women of Ireland. Not only that, they also suggest that "the underlying assumption of much of [the previous] scholarship has been that both reader and writer are male" (Bourke et al 2002: xxxii). Indeed, there is a striking difference in the editorial structure of the two works: volumes I–III are compiled by an all-male team under a general editor while volumes IV and V are the work of an all-female team of eight, over 50 contributing editors and no general editor. Furthermore, the General Introduction to the first three volumes is written by Seamus Deane, a prominent

Northern Irish writer, critic, professor and member of the Field Day<sup>1</sup> board of directors, someone who needs no introduction in the field of Irish letters. Accordingly, when Deane uses the personal pronoun “we”, it comes across a voice of authority speaking for an established body. The Preface to volumes IV and V bears no authorial name(s) and it insists on the collaborative and interdisciplinary nature of the editorial work. Here, “we” speaks of and for an assembled group of individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds: scholars from different disciplines, historians, political activists, journalists, theologians, writers and an expert on oral traditions. What unites them is “a shared commitment to feminist work” (ib. xxxii). Thus we have something akin to a committee, appointed for and defined by the task in hand, and a hierarchical team continuing a scholarly tradition.

The very choice of the words “introduction” and “preface” give momentary pause for thought. “Introduction” carries the idea of “leading *in*”, of the editor knowing and showing the way, accompanying the reader and presenting the texts. With “preface” the accent is on “speaking beforehand”, the editorial voice falling silent *before* the reader encounters the texts on his or her own.

A close reading of the General Introduction and the Preface shows that the women editors respond to Deane’s words in a way that is indicative of how they view their task. I give a few of the most revealing examples. Deane envisages the anthology as a meta-narrative that is “hospitable to all the micro-narratives that, from time to time, have achieved prominence as the official version of the true history, political and literary, of the island’s past and present” (Deane 1991: xix). His focus is on the competing and converging (his)stories of Ireland, on continuities and discontinuities; this is a

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<sup>1</sup> Field Day started as a theatre company founded in Derry in 1980, a time when this border city was one of the parts of Northern Ireland most marked by the sectarian violence of “the Troubles”. The aim was to establish the divided city as a theatrical centre which would bring theatre to a popular audience. Prominent N. Irish writers soon joined as they saw the significance of and need for such a space, in which prejudices and oppositions might be questioned and identities explored. It quickly gained momentum and grew into a much broader literary and cultural enterprise.

distinctly temporal bias. The women editors offer “a many-voiced narrative of place and environment for women in Ireland” (Bourke et al 2002: xxxvi). Their attention is directed to the (his)story-tellers and their accounts, and how they give voice to women’s experiences of the place that is Ireland. Their focus is on voice and experience, with a spatial dimension. Then, although Deane claims that “there is no attempt here to establish a canon” (Deane 1991: xix), the women’s volumes “set out to challenge the existing canons of Irish writing” and their first act in this direction is the “supplementing and interrogating the 1991 Field Day Anthology” (Bourke et al 2002: xxii–xxxiii). Once again, they have in a sense “rebranded” the earlier volumes.

Terms and titles are recurrent points of contention in what clearly becomes a process of definition. Although the women editors give Deane due credit for recruiting experts from diverse disciplines in his attempt to move beyond the narrowness of “literature” to the more comprehensive “writing” (Deane 1991: xix), they insist that most of the first anthology can still be classified as “literature” since “literary studies have redefined themselves as cultural studies in the past thirty years” (Bourke et al. 2002: xxxiii). They proceed to offer their own redefinition of writing as “the ways people use words” and propose to look at words produced in Ireland and words used by the Irish abroad (*ib.*). Judging by the Preface it would appear that their business is indeed with words. The dialogue that develops between the Preface and the Introduction at times resembles a “you-said-that-but-we-say-this” kind of argument.

Overall, the Introduction offers a clear statement of intention, of what is included, what is knowingly excluded, and finally a sense of rounding off, of a task completed and the work is ready for the reader. In contrast, the Preface gives an account of what was sought and found, what was attempted and what failed, the gaps that were filled and those that remain, culminating in a sense of an opening up of the field, of a work in progress, and now it is the turn of both the reader and the researcher. In short, and in the editors’ own words, we have two distinct end products: “an act of cultural creation” (Deane 1991: xx) and a “sampler” (Bourke et al 2002: xxxvi); the former

with its abstract, academic and theoretical overtones, the latter suggestive of something more readily accessible, tangible and empirical.

### Editing contemporary women poets into the anthology

The editors of the three sections on contemporary poetry continue the dialogue. The contents pages of volume III offer an initially confusing division of 20th century Irish literature (or writing?) into: "Irish Writing: Prose Fiction and Poetry 1900–1988", "Irish Fiction 1965–1990", "Contemporary Drama 1953–1986" and "Contemporary Irish Poetry". A glance at the texts included reveals that the first of these sections – "Irish Writing: Prose Fiction and Poetry 1900–1988" – contains prose and poetry in the Irish language only, while the following three sections cover fiction, drama and poetry in the English language. The haphazard use of the words "writing", "Irish" and even "contemporary" is hardly illuminating. Abundantly clear, however, is the striking imbalance in the number of contemporary men and women poets included. Eoghan Ó hAnluain, editor of the Irish-language section, selects texts from 23 men (all except one are poets) and 2 women; Declan Kiberd's English-language poetry selection includes texts by 35 men and 3 women. Women poets are outnumbered 57 to 5. In volume V, the divisions are simpler and more consistent: "Contemporary Writing 1960–2001" is sub-divided into "Contemporary Fiction", "Contemporary Women Playwrights" and "Contemporary Poetry". The poetry section, edited by the Irish-language poet Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, groups together 59 women poets, irrespective of language. The net result is that the anthology as a whole offers us a total of 57 men and 59 women poets (The five women poets in volume III all reappear in volume V). The question is what does this numerical redressing of the balance say about the place of contemporary Irish women poets in this anthology and in the Irish poetic tradition as a whole?

All three editors outline the overarching concerns and principles that guided their selection. Both Ó hAnluain and Kiberd, in keeping

with the overall tenor of the 1991 anthology, speak primarily of the political and cultural backdrop and how it impacted on the poetry produced in 20<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland. There is frequent mention of identity, language and traditions (Gaelic, Irish, Anglo-Irish and English), of loss and revival, of traditional and modern. Poets are singled out for mention who illustrate the making or breaking of a trend, or who characterize a current. They make only two comments on women poets, but both are highly revealing.

First, Ó hAnluain says of Máire Mhac an tSaoi (b. 1922) "one wishes that [she] had written more" (Ó hAnluain 1991: 817). This comment is surprising, given that a glance at Mhac an tSaoi's list of publications alone shows that she had four collections of poetry by 1987<sup>2</sup> and she continues to write today. Furthermore, she is a groundbreaking poet who wrote of women's intimate and sexual experiences at a time (the 1950s and '60s) when this represented a distinct challenge to prevailing church and state views on morality. In view of this, Ó hAnluain's comment appears rather inconsequential.

Kiberd does acknowledge the social and economic limitations imposed on women in post-World War II Ireland. However, he expresses regret that these "struggles of women against a patriarchal church and an archaic legal code are [...] *under-represented* in contemporary poetry" (ib. 1316 – my italics). He seems to suggest that women's experiences (specified as their "struggles" in society) should feature more prominently in their poetry. Surely, this would be to make poetry a vehicle for propaganda. He points to Eavan Boland, who has "in lines of cool elegance, captured for Irish poetry the experience of women in middle-class suburbia." (Ib.) He appears almost to cast Boland in the role of a "desperate-housewife" poet, whose function it is to write *about* the experiences of women in or representative of a particular role or status. Together these comments communicate a view of women's poetry as rather thin in quantity and/or in substance, of women poets as required, and at times failing, to document women's social experiences. This hints at some form of unspoken

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<sup>2</sup> Mhac an tSaoi published collections in 1956, 1973, 1980, 1987 and 1999.

agreement or agenda concerning what the woman poet should be and should write about.

Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill's introduction to the "Contemporary Poetry" section (volume V, 2002) was written in 1994 in direct response to the original anthology. She claims that not only the *Field Day Anthology* but also earlier anthologies have consistently and persistently failed to represent women's achievements in Irish poetry and "Since anthologies of poetry are one of the most powerful means of shaping a tradition, the fact that so many recent anthologies by male poets have marginalized or excluded women is proof, at the very least, of a tone-deafness to, if not a vested interest in, suppressing the voices of women." (Ní Dhomhnaill 2002: 1291). In her capacity as editor, she eschews any editorial practice that might be exclusive or intrusive. She favours alphabetic ordering over chronological or thematic on the grounds that: "[...] description tends to veer towards prescription and therefore eventually towards proscription" (ib. 1294). Like Kiberd, she points out under-representation, but in this case it concerns the general lack of Irish-language writing (by men or women) in the first three volumes. She maintains that this constitutes a double marginalization of women poets on account of both gender and minority language. Ní Dhomhnaill strives towards equal representation of men and women poets and of poetry in both languages. Her only constraint is space, thus her attempt to accommodate the abundance and diversity of women's poetry results in a certain "smorgasbord effect" (ib. 1297) This is intended to allow the reader to "sample" at will, as advocated in the Preface. Clearly, being equal does not mean sounding the same (Rich 1979 [1971]: 39).

## Women poets within and without the Irish poetic tradition

So far we have heard only the editorial voices that emerged in the making of the *Field Day Anthology*. In order to understand what constitutes a poetic tradition it is essential to have a clear concept of what poetry is and to listen to the voices of the poets themselves. My



notion of poetry owes much to the work of Paul Zumthor and Maurice Blanchot. In his extensive research in oral poetics and voice, Zumthor has ably defended the view that poetry is voice. Poetry calls into being: thus it acts, it does not describe (Zumthor 1990 [1983]: 40). Also, the poem is what is received, and each hearing (for we still hear the rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, etc. of a poem even when reading it in print) is a unique, irreversible and complete event (ib.183). This concurs with Blanchot's theory of the poem as experience in that it speaks "anew" every time it is heard, read or uttered. As for the poet, she only exists once the poem stands before her, only *after* the poem, as it were. And yet, paradoxically, the poem requires there to be a poet in order to make it (Blanchot 1982 [1955]: 93). As I see it then, the poem is lived and experienced by both poet and audience. This is a dynamic notion of poetry and does not allow for the view of a poem as static or able to be immobilised into fixed meanings or a single interpretation. The poem is and remains a point of departure.

The application of this notion of poetry implies an aesthetic judgement. While I believe that the editors of volume III also employed aesthetic criteria in their selection procedure, it is evident that their evaluation of the poems was also historically conditioned. This is in keeping with their declared intention of giving space to narratives that have achieved "prominence" in Ireland's political and literary history.

I have selected to listen to the voices of the five women poets included in both volumes III and V: Máire Mhac an tSaoi (1922), Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin (1942), Eavan Boland (1944), Medbh McGuckian (1950) and Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill (1952). Their poetry and their experiences as women and poets in Ireland of the second half of the 20th century reveal that the question of their place within or without the poetic tradition affected them profoundly. They come from vastly different backgrounds but what unites them is their belief in their poetic voice, even in the absence of role models or in the face of opposition. Although Ireland does have a strong poetic tradition, it is well documented that from earliest times the tradition was male-dominated. Male poets have long enjoyed power and prestige, from the early Irish *fili* (a member of an elite professional class of poets,

second only to the king or chieftain in the male hierarchy) to the bards, with their wealthy patrons and bardic schools (seats of learning from which women were barred). Women were pushed more towards the oral tradition – laments, songs, and popular or political ballads – forms held in lower esteem. After the flight of their patrons, the subsequent collapse of the Gaelic tradition in the 17th century and the steady devaluation of Irish culture up to the 19th century, male poets too started to fall back on the oral tradition and to produce more political and nationalistic verse. As a result women found themselves being written into poetry rather than makers of poetry. The most persistent example of this feminization of the national is the *aisling*, e.g.<sup>3</sup>:

**Mise Éire**<sup>4</sup> (I am Ireland)  
 I am Ireland:  
 I am older than the Old Woman of Beare.  
 Great my glory:  
 I that bore Cuchulainn the valiant.  
 Great my shame:  
 My own children that sold their mother.  
 I am Ireland:  
 I am lonelier than the Old Woman of Beare.

In the newly independent Irish Free State, which for much of the 20th century was conceived of as a Gaelic Catholic Irish nation, women in poetry and song were further identified with the sovereignty of Ireland, the Blessed Virgin, and the Mother of Sorrows. In short, women in poetry had become muses and icons, motifs and emblems, captured within the lines of poems.

<sup>3</sup> In the *aisling*, or dream poem, a woman (young and beautiful or an elderly mother) comes to the poet in a vision. She represents Ireland, once great but now abandoned, and speaks longingly of a time when she will be rescued from her distress. Originally a poetry of the 19th century, based on the hope of a return of the Stuart line of English kings.

<sup>4</sup> “Mise Éire” (1912) by Patrick Pearse (1879–1916) writer and revolutionary. FDA vol. II, 558.

How then did women who thought of themselves as poets find an outlet for their poetic voice? The most penetrating and coherent exploration of this dilemma is to be found in Eavan Boland's prose memoir/meditations *Object Lessons: The Life of the Woman and the Poet in Our Time* (1995). As an aspiring poet and student of literature in Dublin in the 1960s, she scoured the pages of her national literature only to feel increasingly alienated by its "rhetoric of imagery" (Boland 1995: 128). As she contemplated again and again the same passive and decorative images of women, she began to see through them to two harsh truths. First, that male poets were taking the "soft option" (ib. 136) of using and reusing these ready-made symbols when they were no longer politically necessary. In this way they promoted a culture of nationalism that simplified both Irish womanhood and the Irish nation to the detriment of both. For Boland this represented a failure of the collective and the poetic imaginations, as well as a breach of poetic ethics. It gave her to understand that she was "a woman and a poet in a culture which had the greatest difficulty associating the two ideas" (ib.133). The second truth she perceived was that these simplified and serviceable images were actually rooted in real complexities of human experience – the past struggles, losses and defeats of Irish women. She saw too that to remove the symbol from the poetry would be to erase the woman and leave a void. Instead, she disrupts the male poet-muse relationship in order to give voice to the doubly dispossessed women of Ireland's past.

### Mise Éire<sup>5</sup>

I won't go back to it –  
 my nation displaced  
 into old dactyls,  
 oaths made  
 by the animal tallows  
 of the candle –

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<sup>5</sup> In *The Journey and Other Poems*. 1987. Manchester: Carcanet. FDA vol. III, 1301.

land of the Gulf Stream,  
the small farm,  
the scalded memory,  
the songs that bandage up  
the history, the words  
that make a rhythm of the crime

where time is time past.  
A palsy of regrets.  
No. I won't go back.  
My roots are brutal.

I am the woman -  
a sloven's mix  
of silk at the wrists,  
a sort of dove-strut

in the precincts of the garrison -  
who practises  
the quick frissons,  
the rictus of delight  
and gets cambric for it,  
rice-coloured silks

I am the woman  
in the gansy coat  
on board the 'Mary Belle',  
in the huddling cold,  
holding her half-dead baby to her  
as the wind shifts East  
and North over the dirty  
water of the wharf

mingling the immigrant  
guttural with the vowels  
of homesickness who neither  
knows nor cares that  
a new language  
is a kind of scar

and heals after a while  
 into a passable imitation  
 of what went before.

In Boland's "Mise Éire" the traditional opening formula ("I am Ireland") gives way to the defiant voice of a woman who speaks for herself and repossesses her nation: "I won't go back to it / *my* nation displaced / into old dactyls" (my italics). She continues in defining mode: "I am the woman who [...]", "My roots are brutal.", revealing her identity as the prostitute who hangs around the garrison, the emigrant woman clutching her half-dead baby on a coffin ship to America. What Boland has done is to humanize – not immortalize – the feminine in the Irish poem.

This poem is political insofar as the poet engages the idea of the nation, but it is not propagandist. Poetry written with propagandist aims such as persuading others of an injustice or advocating a cause come closer to rhetoric than revelation. This poem is rather the product of what Adrienne Rich terms "re-vision" – the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction (Rich 1979 [1971]: 35). Boland repossesses her national tradition by refusing to perpetuate the "crime", the corruption of the feminine.

Being outside the tradition had afforded her an unblinkered view, and she saw that Irish poetry did not entertain the idea of the ordinary life as visionary. She believed in the life she lived and that it had to be part of the poetry that she wrote. To do otherwise would be to write a poetry that was not hers. It is this struggle to identify that relationship between being a woman and a poet that gives rise to her poetry. However, it is not poetry *about* that experience, rather how she lives with it and makes sense of it. Thus, Boland introduces a strain of self-conscious reflection into Irish women's poetry. She finds her voice where she finds her vision (Boland 1995: 254) and in revealing the lives of Irish women past and present, she writes a political poetry that is also personal.

This approach of looking hard at the tradition and finding a place within it is also reflected in the poetry of Máire Mhac an tSaoi. She displays a rare command of the Irish language, underpinned by her

extensive knowledge of and respect for classical Irish poetic forms. What marked her as a new poetic voice though was her expression of an alternative female morality in lines of technical rigour and lyrical beauty. For example, “Mary Hogan’s Quatrains” (“Ceathrúintí Mháire Ní Ógáin”<sup>6</sup>): “I care little for people’s suspicions / I care little for priests’ prohibitions / For anything save to lie stretched / Between you and the wall”. The poetic persona (another outspoken “I”) is heedless of and unintimidated by any religious or social censure that might ensue from her obvious delight in prohibited desires and behaviour. This shows unusual defiance for the 1950s, when the models of female behaviour promoted by both church and state were the chaste country maiden, the modest home-making wife, and the desexualized mother. It is a singular feat of the creative imagination that this poet saw no incompatibility or dissonance in combining inherited poetic forms with unconventional content. This is both subtle subversion and expansion of the poetic tradition – from within.

Later Mhac an tSaoi articulates this more overtly in “The Housewife’s Credo” (“Cré na Mna Tí”<sup>7</sup>) which is more than a parody of the typical prayer that graced the walls of many a devout Irish home: “Keep the dwelling bright and clean / and the children in order, / wash and scour and clean, / prepare meal and beverage, / turn mattress – spread cloth / but, like Scheherazade, / you will need to write poetry also.” Here the dilemma of the Irish woman poet of the time (balancing domestic demands and literary vocation) is not expressed as a choice. The poem insists that being a wife and a poet are not mutually exclusive lives. Moreover, to deny the poetic calling is artistic death and a missed opportunity for an enrichment of the tradition. Mhac an tSaoi’s opening up of a poetic space within which to explore the domestic and the feminine signals that the tradition is flexible and dynamic. Both Boland and Mhac an tSaoi know Irish poetry inside and out but they know it differently – as women poets –

<sup>6</sup> Published in 1956 in *Margadh na Saoire* (Market of Freedom). Translation by the poet. FDA vol. III, 906–7.

<sup>7</sup> Published in 1987 in *An Cion go dtí Seo* (The Amount to Now). Translation by the poet. FDA vol. III, 906.

and they have chosen not to let it have a hold over them, not to be vehicles for passing it on but to make it their own.

A curious twist in Mhac an tSaoi's artistic trajectory is that she is almost invariably hailed as one of a trio of Irish-language poets<sup>8</sup> who together established the modern voice of Irish poetry (Ní Dhomhnaill 2005: 56; Ó hAnluain 1991: 817). Thus her inclusion in the canon in the company of two equally, but differently, innovative male poets has somewhat eclipsed the cutting-edge feminine aspect of her poetry.

Even so, Ní Dhomhnaill recognises her good fortune as a budding poet in the 1960s in encountering Mhac an tSaoi and Caitlín Maude<sup>9</sup> on the school curriculum and in person. This led her to assume that women poets were a natural part of the poetic and scholarly tradition (Ní Dhomhnaill 2005: 44) and that the poetry she was writing (however different) could be part of it. Before publication, however, her poems were regularly subjected to unauthorised editing or rejected as non-standard. Clearly, here were two opposing notions of poetry and the tradition. The male poets' stance was largely conservative and protectionist, concerned with maintaining canonical standards of expression and preserving the language (the vessel of the national soul). Women poets inclined towards a view of poetry as cumulative and proactive, and of the tradition as containing a memory of what it was in all that it becomes. The latter concurs with what Zumthor terms the "deep-rooted dynamism" of poetry (Zumthor 1990 [1983]: 207).

Informed by her vision of Irish poetry, Ní Dhomhnaill felt free to explore and exploit her language and literary inheritance. Her poetry is peopled by a profusion of women: female divinities and otherworldly creatures mined from Irish myths and folklore. They are dropped into the thick of the contemporary social and political issues tackled in her poems (nation and gender amongst them), where they speak and behave in unpredictable and unsettling ways. One of her most overtly subversive tactics is to "incorporate" men into her poems as objects of admiration and desire: "You're the one

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<sup>8</sup> Along with Máirtín Ó Direáin and Seán Ó Riordáin.

<sup>9</sup> Irish-language poet, singer and actress (1941–82)

they should praise / In public spaces [...] You're the model / For the artist's hand" ("Looking at a Man"<sup>10</sup>), or objectified as the land: "Your nude body is an island [...] you lie back, / wistful, emerald, / islanded" ("Island"<sup>11</sup>). Her women, like the poet herself, take the initiative and disturb the status quo.

Ní Dhomhnaill's language is rich, resourceful and at times racy, to keep pace with her expression of a very contemporary imagination. She knows and shows that language can liberate as well as trap. It is telling that by the end of the 1980s a considerable number of male poets were keen to render her work into English, resulting in a convergence of imaginations and sensibilities as they put their own poetic voices at the service of her work. Disappointingly, she was briefly hailed by some critics as the male poets' muse – a relationship never suggested when they translated male Irish-language poets (Ní Dhomhnaill 2005: 55). Apparently, male poets were beginning to recognise Ní Dhomhnaill as an authentic new voice which far from damaging the tradition was a rich elaboration of it.

However, even as she pushes the Irish language to new heights, Ní Dhomhnaill knows just how uncertain the whole enterprise of writing in a minority language is. In "The Language Issue"<sup>12</sup> she reflects on the fate of her poetry:

I place my hope on the water  
 in this little boat  
 of the language, the way a body might put  
 an infant  
 in a basket  
 [...]  
 only to have it borne hither and thither,  
 not knowing where it might end up;  
 in the lap, perhaps,  
 of some Pharaoh's daughter.

<sup>10</sup> In *Pharaoh's Daughter*. 1990. Oldcastle: Gallery Press, 140–143 (trans. Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin).

<sup>11</sup> *ib.* 90–93 (trans. John Montague)

<sup>12</sup> *ib.* 154–155 (trans. Paul Muldoon); FDA vol.V, 1368.



Clearly, she sees poetry as lived experience, hers will have to fend for itself (in translation, in the tradition), speak anew to its new audience – and this is out of her hands.

Language is also an issue for Medbh McGuckian, who in 1970s Belfast inhabited a divided and inward-looking community where language carried a heavy political and religious load and people often feared to speak their minds. The poetry scene was predominantly male (her mentors and contemporaries were all men) but there was a shared feeling that poetry was a way of dealing with life and that it was political. McGuckian asserted herself by developing a way with words that seems at times to amount to a private language. While polarization and stalemate surrounded her, her language remained fluid and borderless. Her poems take on ideas that resist definition and articulation, linkages made tend to turn in on themselves or garner others. For example, in “The Dream-Language of Fergus”<sup>13</sup>:

[...]  
 So Latin sleeps, they say, in Russian speech,  
 So one river inserted into another  
 Becomes a leaping, glistening, splashed  
 And scattered alphabet  
 Jutting out from the voice,  
 Till what began as a dog’s bark  
 Ends with bronze, what begins  
 With honey ends with ice;  
 As if an aeroplane in full flight  
 Launched a second plane,  
 The sky is stabbed by their exits  
 And the mistaken meaning of each.  
 [...]

She further gravitates away from her male counterparts in her exploration of the body and the house (or the body compared to a house) as spaces that are both private and public, that can contain and fragment, in language that is pregnant with meaning, that is

<sup>13</sup> In *On Ballycastle Beach*. 1988. Oldcastle: Gallery Press. FDA vol. V, 1349.

sensuous and tactile, and yet ungraspable. There is nothing simple or simplified here, this is language that both defines and leaves open.

The most graphic image of women's transition from being subjects of poems to makers of poems is perhaps Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin's "Pygmalion's Image"<sup>14</sup>:

Not only her stone face, laid back staring in the ferns,  
But everything the scoop of the valley contains begins to move  
(And beyond the horizon the trucks beat the highway.)

A tree inflates gently on the curve of the hill;  
An insect crashes on the carved eyelid;  
Grass blows westward from the roots,  
As the wind knifes under her skin and ruffles it like a book.

The crisp hair is real, wriggling like snakes;  
A rustle of veins, tick of blood in the throat;  
The lines of the face tangle and catch, and  
A green leaf of language comes twisting out of her mouth.

There is a hint of danger here as the statue (man-made, inanimate, adored) takes on a life of her own with her Medusa-like hair. And, indeed, as women poets projected their voices in the literary arena, they were often perceived as a threat to the tradition. In reality, they breathed new life into the language and reinvigorated the tradition.

Part of the pleasure of reading an anthology lies in the encounter with the particular perspective of the editor, but the only way to judge an anthology is in terms of the editor's aims. Given Deane's aims, those women poets included in volume III of the *Field Day Anthology* must have been considered representative of a "prominent" or "official" literary and political history of Ireland. However, they did not recognise themselves within this exclusively defined frame (in effect a canon) which confined and compromised their literary and personal identities. They knew that only part of their poetry was acceptable within it. Since a canon is defined and

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<sup>14</sup> In *The Magdalene Sermon*. 1989. Oldcastle: Gallery Press. FDA vol. V, 1366.

defining, it does not raise questions of identity, as such it cannot accommodate the experience of striving to find one's voice and place within a poetic tradition. The subsequent supplementing of the anthology was carried out on the basis of more inclusive criteria (e.g. artistic achievement, aesthetic attitudes, social and political issues raised) and was therefore able to cater for the richness and diversity of poetry produced by women (poetry is the fastest growing area of women's writing in Ireland). This redressing of the balance is not purely reactive (rereading and filling in gaps), it is radical in that it questions the very notion of literary canons.

The publication of the *Field Day Anthology* was a defining event. The intense criticism and debate that it generated in literary and feminist circles (and in general) is an indication of the vitality of Irish writing, and women's poetry in particular. The most fruitful outcome is that issues of contention were recognised as legitimate and led to productive debate and collaborative action. It is a testament to Seamus Deane's vision for the anthology that he was able and willing to envisage a sequel; it speaks of openness and space and in this sense remains true to the original principles of the Field Day project.

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*Frauen im literarischen Kanonisierungsprozess  
und in der (nationalen)  
Literaturgeschichte*

*Der ‚postulierte‘ literarisch-ästhetische Kanon [...] zeigt das kulturelle Gedächtnis, die Identitätssicherung durch Identifikation mit vergangenen Kulturleistungen und die Kommunikation über sie als partikular, an Geschlechterkonzepte und gesellschaftliche Gruppen gebunden.*

(Renate von Heydebrand)<sup>1</sup>

*Und während das variantenreiche Schreiben der einen, der Männer, als das gilt, was in seiner Summe Literaturgeschichte heißt, firmiert das andere, das der Frauen, lediglich als Sonderfall.*

(Silvia Bovenschen)<sup>2</sup>

Immer wieder hört man Stimmen, die behaupten, dass die feministische Kulturkritik das Fundament der tradierten Geschichtsschreibung so stark *unterhöhlt* habe, dass die herkömmlichen Literaturgeschichten umgeschrieben werden müssten, denn die Frauen seien aus ihnen weitgehend ausgeschlossen. Aber die forsche Formulierung, dass das Fundament bereits „unterhöhlt“, also ins Wanken gekommen sei, scheint mir durchaus übertrieben. So weit ist es noch lange nicht. Wohl hat die feministische Kulturkritik die traditionelle, männlich dominierte Geschichtsschreibung, in der Frauen marginali-

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<sup>1</sup> Siehe v. Heydebrand 1998a: 623.

<sup>2</sup> Bovenschen 1979: 12.

siert und unsichtbar gemacht worden sind, *angegriffen*, auch gegen sie *angekämpft* und an ihren Grundlagen *gerüttelt*. Angegriffen hat sie damit zugleich die geschlechterspezifische Kanonisierung von Literatur, d.h. die Benachteiligung von Frauen im materialen wie im Kriterien- und Deutungskanon. Angegriffen hat sie auch – im Verbund mit dekonstruktivistischen und diskursanalytischen Ansätzen (vgl. Keck, Günter 2001: 222) – die männlich orientierte Literaturgeschichtsschreibung, in der weibliche Traditionslinien übersehen worden sind. Aber vielleicht ist nicht so sehr die Verleugnung der weiblichen Traditionslinien in der großen Literatur ihr Angriffsobjekt, sondern vielmehr „die kategorische Abtrennung der weiblichen Schreibproduktion von ‚der‘ Literatur, der selbstverständlich männlichen Tradition“; diese bringe „die Autorinnen ins Abseits“<sup>3</sup> (Renate von Heydebrand). Denn trotz aller (doch auch sehr zögerlichen) Zugeständnisse werden die Frauen in entscheidenden Situationen weiterhin beiseite geschoben.

Dass die männlichen Autoren die weiblichen *Günstlinge der Muses* nicht wahrgenommen hätten, kann ihnen indes nicht zum Vorwurf gemacht werden. Dies bezeugen beispielsweise schon Goethe und Schiller sowie die 1895 von Karl Wilhelm Bindewald herausgegebene Anthologie der Dichterinnen „Deutschlands Dichterinnen. Blüten deutscher Frauenpoesie aus den Werken deutscher Dichterinnen der Vergangenheit und Gegenwart ausgewählt und mit einem biographischen Dichterinnenverzeichnis versehen“. Vorhalten kann man ihnen aber wohl die Janusköpfigkeit, die sie bei der Wahrnehmung der schreibenden Frauen aufzeigten: Einerseits versuchten Goethe und Schiller jene aufzumuntern, andererseits hingegen warfen sie ihnen Dilettantismus<sup>4</sup> vor, trachteten ihnen gegenüber ästhetische Normkontrolle auszuüben und bezogen sich

<sup>3</sup> Zit. n. v. Heydebrand, Winko 1994: 103.

<sup>4</sup> Friedrich Schiller schrieb am 30.06.1797 an Johann Wolfgang Goethe: „Für die Horen hat mir unsere Dichterin Mereau jetzt ein sehr angenehmes Geschenk gemacht, das mich wirklich überraschte. Es ist der Anfang eines Romans in Briefen [...]. Ich muß mich doch wirklich darüber wundern, wie unsere Weiber jetzt, auf bloß dilettantischem Wege, eine gewisse Schreibgeschicklichkeit sich zu verschaffen wissen, die der Kunst nahe kommt.“ (Schillers Werke. Bd. 29. 1977: 93)

in ihrer Suche nach einem Prinzip, das zwischen Kunst und Nicht-Kunst unterscheidet, auf die sozialen Zuschreibungen der Geschlechtscharaktere (vgl. Becker-Cantarino 2000: 57). Gerade durch den bio-psychologisch argumentierenden Geschlechterdualismus<sup>5</sup>, durch die Polarisierung von Geschlechtscharakteren<sup>6</sup> um 1800, welche zur Etablierung von komplementären Verhaltens- und Zuständigkeitsmustern, von geschlechtsspezifischen Eigenschafts- und Verhaltenszuweisungen führte, wurden die Kanonchancen der Autorinnen erschwert.

Mit den „Geschlechtscharakteren“, die als eine Kombination von Biologie und Bestimmung aus der Natur abgeleitet und auch als Wesensmerkmal in das Innere des Menschen verlegt werden, gewinnt die Kontrastierung von Mann und Frau im letzten Drittel des 18. Jahrhunderts, wie Karin Hausen in der „Polarisierung der ‚Geschlechtscharaktere‘“ zeigt, eine spezifisch neue Qualität (vgl. Bovenschen 1979: 141). Damit vollzieht sich eine striktere Unterscheidung der Rollen von Mann und Frau, etabliert sich theoretisch die neue Organisation des Zusammenlebens, die nun an die Stelle der Stände tritt und schließlich zur Absicherung der bürgerlich-(liberalen) Herrschaft dient. Die Frau wird mit der Polarisierung von Erwerbs- und Familienleben zunehmend an den Rand des gesellschaftlich-politischen Geschehens gerückt und ausschließlich als

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<sup>5</sup> Der Geschlechterdualismus äußert sich in Geschlechterrollen und Geschlechterstereotypen.

<sup>6</sup> Die Polarisierung von Geschlechtscharakteren lässt sich einerseits auf die „Dissoziation von Erwerbs- und Familienleben“ (Karin Hausen; zit. n. Mesmer 1988: 39) zurückführen, auf der anderen Seite fungieren solche Argumentationen und Verhaltensweisen sicherlich zugleich als das Selbstgefühl und das Gewissen der Männer beschwichtigende Rechtfertigungen ihres Vormachtanspruches. Das Konstrukt der weiblichen und der männlichen Natur wurde auch mit der zunehmenden Berufstätigkeit der Frauen nicht verworfen. Es wurde bloß, wie Isabel Morf (1997: 13) meint, insofern erweitert, als den Frauen zugestanden wurde, ihre weiblichen Qualitäten in die Berufssphäre einzubringen.

Gattin und Mutter, durch ihre Familienarbeit aber auch als Garant des außerhäuslichen Erfolgs des Mannes definiert.<sup>7</sup>

Die Kanonchancen der Autorinnen wurden auch dadurch verringert, dass die Frauen, die im Zeitalter der Aufklärung in Frankreich, England und Deutschland „Romane zu verfassen begannen und die Muster für eine große Zahl von Nachfolgerinnen abgaben, noch im unterhaltsam-didaktischen Genre schrieben, also der heteronomen Ästhetik des *prodesse et delectare* folgten; das war geradezu die Voraussetzung dafür, daß ihnen Autorschaft zugestanden wurde. [...] aber [...] Frauen müssen fast notwendig in der Literaturkommunikation, die sich an dem einen Kanon der Kunst-Literatur orientiert, zu kurz kommen“ (v. Heydebrand, Winko 1994: 140)<sup>8</sup>. Also eine aktive, produktiv wirkende Frau und eine weibliche Autorschaft<sup>9</sup> schienen mithin mit den gesellschaftlichen und ästhetischen Erwartungen, mit dem Alleinanspruch der Männer auf Kunst, auf

<sup>7</sup> Genau in diesem Prozess kommt es zur Konstituierung eines Begriffs von Weiblichkeit, „der die Identität von Natur, Menschlichkeit und Frau zum Prinzip erklärte“ (Dornhof 1991: 103). Auffallend ist dabei, dass die Lehre von den unterschiedlichen Geschlechtscharakteren sich an der Wende zum 19. Jahrhundert herausbildet, zur gleichen Zeit also, in der die neue naturrechtliche Gleichheitsforderung sich durchsetzt (vgl. Mesmer 1988: 39). S. dazu auch v. Heydebrand, Winko 1994: 139f. und Pormeister 2003: 72–75, 56.

<sup>8</sup> *prodesse et delectare* = zu nutzen und zu erfreuen S. dazu auch v. Heydebrand, Winko 1994: 141–145. Renate von Heydebrand stellt hier zur Begründung der Benachteiligung von Frauen im materialen wie im Kriterien- und Deutungskanon zehn vorläufige Thesen auf, in Bezug auf den Kanon der Autoren und Kritiker, aber auch auf den Kanon in den pädagogischen Institutionen, in Schule und Universität. Alle diese Thesen könnten auf einen gemeinsamen rhetorischen Nenner gebracht werden: aus der Perspektive und Position des Mannes.

<sup>9</sup> Zu der weiblichen Autorschaft und Literaturgeschichte siehe Keck, Günter 2001: 201–233.

Und vielleicht liegt heute die Unmöglichkeit der weiblichen Autorschaft mitunter tatsächlich „nicht in der realen gesellschaftlichen Benachteiligung der Frau statt, durch die sie daran gehindert wird, sich künstlerisch zu betätigen, sondern in der Rezeption, die die Anerkennung ihres kreativen Tuns verhindert“ (Nestvold 2009).



Vollkommenheit, auf das Ewige, auf das Geistige unvereinbar zu sein:

Eine Normästhetik im Sinne einer klassischen (oder romantischen) Universalpoesie und die Kontrolle der Kunstproduktion aufgrund des Geschlechts war und blieb problematisch. Weder war totale Kontrolle möglich, noch waren die Autoren bereit, dem anderen Geschlecht völlige Freiheit – „Mündigkeit“ – in der Kunstproduktion zu gestatten. *Das eigene, männliche Geschlecht wurde konstitutiv für Kunstproduktion gedacht. „Geschlechtsvormundschaft“ und autonome Kunst waren unvereinbar*; die Vorstellung einer Berufsschriftstellerin wurde als gesellschaftlich nicht akzeptabel abgelehnt und ästhetisch entwertet. (Becker-Cantarino 2000: 58)<sup>10</sup>

Die Verwehrung einer „authentischen Arbeit“, die den Frauen „eine wirkliche Autonomie“ (Simone de Beauvoir)<sup>11</sup> gesichert hätte, ihre Verdrängung aus den Überlieferungen und die Abdrängung in die Randszonen unserer (Kultur)Geschichte sind allerdings keine Neuererscheinungen der so genannten fortschrittlichen Neuzeit. Deren archetypisches Vorbild ist spätestens im 4. Jahrhundert n.Chr. zu suchen, im Jahr 325, als das Erste Konzil von Nicäa abgehalten wurde, oder im Jahr 367, als man mit der strategischen Zusammenstellung des Neuen Testaments begann. Nach manchen Stimmen reichen die Wurzeln des Ausschlusses der Frauen sogar bis in die Antike, wo sie durch die griechische Philosophie minderbewertet worden sei.<sup>12</sup> Aber auch durch die und in der Kirche begann die Unterdrückung der Frauen eigentlich viel früher. So hatte Clemens von Alexandrien

<sup>10</sup> Meine Hervorhebung.

<sup>11</sup> Zit. n. Ritter 1991: 169.

<sup>12</sup> „Es stellt sich zunächst natürlich die Frage, warum Frauen vom Weihepriestertum in unserer Kirche ausgeschlossen sind. Sind Mann und Frau vor Gott nicht gleich? (Siehe Gal 3, 28) Die Gründe für den Ausschluss der Frauen liegen nicht in der Heiligen Schrift, sondern in der Minderbewertung der Frau durch die griechische Philosophie, teilweise die Irrlehren der Gnosis und unausgereifte theologische Spekulationen.“ (KAMPF GEGEN FRAUENPRIESTER 2009).

um das Jahr 195 aus dem Markus-Evangelium die Geschichte von Lazarus entfernt und etwa um die gleiche Zeit unternahm der Kirchenvater Tertullian von Kartago (um 150–um 230) Schritte, um die Frauen im Kirchenleben zu unterdrücken, indem er auf die „Regeln der kirchlichen Disziplin“ verwies (vgl. Gardner 2006: 119). Tertullian schrieb von der Praxis:

Non permittitur mulieri in ecclesia loqui, sed nec docere, nec tingere, nec offerre, nec ullius virilis muneris, necdum [nedum] sacerdotalis officii sortem sibi vindicare (De virg. vel. 9) [Es ist der Frau nicht erlaubt, in der Kirche zu reden, aber auch nicht zu lehren, noch zu taufen, noch das Meßopfer darzubringen, noch Anteil an irgendeinem männlichen Dienst, geschweige denn am priesterlichen Amt für sich zu beanspruchen]. (Zit. n. *KIRCHE ZUM MITREDEN* 2009)

Es dürfte allerdings nicht zu bestreiten sein, dass die Evangelien nach Geschlechterkriterien gewählt wurden. Hatte die frühere bzw. mystische christliche Tradition den Frauen alle Rechte zugesprochen und über Christus eine andere Geschichte erzählt, so wurden bei der Zusammenstellung des Neuen Testaments Maria Magdalena und andere Frauen durch die Bischöfe der sich etablierenden Kirche aus dem Bild der Evangelien ausgesperrt. Die Texte, wo Maria Magdalena als Symbol der göttlichen Weisheit erscheint, oder wo darüber berichtet wird, dass Jesus zuerst Maria erschien (im Maria Magdalena Evangelium), sollten beseitigt werden:

(114) Simon Petrus sprach zu ihnen: Maria soll aus unserer Mitte fortgehen, denn die Frauen sind des Lebens nicht würdig. Jesus sprach: Seht, ich werde sie ziehen, um sie männlich zu machen, damit auch sie ein lebendiger Geist wird, vergleichbar mit euch Männern. Denn jede Frau, die sich männlich macht, wird in das Himmelreich gelangen. (*DAS THOMAS EVANGELIUM* 2009)

Ein Weib hat, wie es in den Briefen von Paulus steht, in der Stille, in aller Unterwürfigkeit zu lernen: „Ich erlaube aber einem Weibe nicht, zu lehren, noch über den Mann zu herrschen, sondern still zu

sein (1 Tm 2: 11–12).<sup>13</sup> In einem koptischen Traktat, in der *Pistis Sophia*, bittet Petrus Jesus sogar darum, dass dieser es Maria nicht erlauben solle, seine Macht zu untergraben. Es galt, die Übermacht der Priester, die nur den Männern zustünde, das männliche Vorrecht in der Glaubensbewegung, die patriarchalischen Herrschafts- und Machtverhältnisse in und außerhalb der Kirche abzusichern. Aus diesem Grund wurden wohl das Thomas-Evangelium, das Philippus-Evangelium und das Petrus-Evangelium nicht in den biblischen Kanon aufgenommen, sondern vernichtet.<sup>14</sup>

Im Jahre 494 verfügte der Papst Gelasius (492–496), dass Frauen nicht zu Priestern geweiht und in Führungspositionen der Kirche berufen werden dürfen, da Christus das Priesteramt nur seinen Aposteln anvertraut habe. Zu jenen habe er aber lediglich Männer gewählt. Allmählich wurden die Frauen aus allen offiziellen Positionen der Kirche entfernt.<sup>15</sup> Als ein weiteres Zeichen der Diskriminierung von Frauen und der Angst vor ihnen kann der 1138 eingeführte Zölibatszwang für Priester gesehen werden.<sup>16</sup> Dieser sollte verhindern, dass die von Priestern verwalteten kirchlichen Pfründen durch die Familien verheirateter Priester und durch Erbschaft dezimiert

<sup>13</sup> S. dazu *DER ERSTE BRIEF AN TIMOTHEUS* 2009.

<sup>14</sup> Die Völker des Mittelmeerraumes hatten sie zusammen mit dem *Evangelium der Maria* (gehört zu den Apokryphen des Neuen Testaments) und vielen anderen Texten, die als häretisch galten, vergraben oder versteckt.

Zwischen 1947 und 1956 wurden am Toten Meer in Israel die Schriftrollen von Qumran gefunden und zwischen 1945 und 1947 die Papyrustexte unter einem Felsbrocken in der Nähe eines Klosters bei Nag Hammadi in Ägypten. „Die Qumranfunde gestatten wichtige Einblicke in die Geschichte des frühen Judentums, die Funde von Nag Hammadi in eine Nische des frühen Christentums.“ (Vgl. *SCHRIFTFUNDE...* 2009)

Unter den koptischen *Schriftrollen bzw. Papyrusbüchern von Nag Hammadi befindet sich u.a. das Thomas-Evangelium und das Philippus-Evangelium*, die alle auf 350 n.Chr. datiert werden (vgl. *DIE BIBLIOTHEK...* 2009). Nach anderen Angaben wird die Handschrift des koptischen Textes des Thomas-Evangeliums um 400 datiert (vgl. *DAS THOMAS EVANGELIUM*. 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Nur in Irland habe es bis in das 7. Jahrhundert Frauenpriester und auch Bischöfinnen gegeben (vgl. *KAMPF GEGEN FRAUENPRIESTER* 2009).

<sup>16</sup> S. dazu auch Gardner 2006: 122.

werden. Außerdem ermöglichte die Festschreibung des verpflichtenden Zölibatzwanges im Gesetz, über den möglichen Ehestatus von Jesus hinwegzusehen.

Der Bedarf an einer verbindlichen, maßgeblichen Textliste war offensichtlich. 367 n.Chr. erklärt der alexandrinische Bischof Athanasius in seinem 39. Osterbrief die 27 Bücher des Neuen Testaments als kanonisch und führt damit zugleich den Begriff „Kanon“ in der Institution Kirche ein.<sup>17</sup> Im Gegensatz zu den Apogryphen bezieht dieser sich auf maßgebliche Schriften, darunter auf das Matthäus-, das Markus-, das Lukas- und das Johannes-Evangelium<sup>18</sup>. Im Hinblick auf den Begriff selbst kommt es zu einem Bedeutungswandel. Fortan gilt dieser Textkanon als *heilig*, d.h. verbindlich, unantastbar, autoritativ. In seinem 39. Osterbrief schreibt Athanasius: „Das sind die Quellen des Heils ... Niemand füge (etwas) dazu hinzu, noch nehme er (etwas) davon weg.“<sup>19</sup> Danach also gilt es sich zu richten, daran ist alles wie mit einem „Lineal“ zu messen – die ursprüngliche Bedeutung des Begriffs „Kanon“ geht auf die (griechische) Baukunst<sup>20</sup> zurück und bezeichnet die *gerade Stange*, den *Stab*, die *Richtschnur*, das *Lineal* (mit Messskala). Auf dem instrumentellen, maßgeblichen tektonischen Kanon gründen sich auch alle metaphorischen Verwendungen des Wortes (vgl. J. Assmann 2007: 112).

<sup>17</sup> Bis dahin hatte die Kirche, also über gut zwei Jahrhunderte, zwar ihre Debatte „um den als verbindlich anerkannten Bestand an heiliger Literatur“ (J. Assmann 2007: 114) geführt, ohne jedoch das Wort „Kanon“ zu verwenden. S. dazu auch Ackermann 2001: 1346.

<sup>18</sup> Diese Texte wurden auf der Synode von Hippo 393 n.Chr. und auf der dritten Synode von Karthago 397 n.Chr. ratifiziert und zum Kanon gehörig eingestuft. Danach wurden eine ganze Reihe von Änderungen und Korrekturen angebracht, bis erst im Jahre 1546 die Synode von Trento die Fassung guthieß, die wir kennen.

<sup>19</sup> Zit. n. J. Assmann 2007: 103.

<sup>20</sup> Der griechische Bildhauer Polyklet (um 480 v.Chr. – gegen Ende des 5. Jahrhunderts v.Chr.) hat in seiner um die Mitte des 5. Jh. v.Chr. verfassten Lehrschrift „Kanon“ die Maßstäbe für die ideale Proportionierung des menschlichen Körpers dargelegt (vgl. ib. 107f.).

Der geschlossene, paradigmatische, zeitresistente und universalistische Kanon Heiliger Schriften ist auch von vielen Literaturwissenschaftlern als Modell literarischer und ästhetischer Kanones verstanden worden.<sup>21</sup> Hinzu kommt noch „der antike Kanonbegriff im Sinne von Wertmaßstab, Kriterium sowohl für die Herstellung als vor allem auch für die Beurteilung von Kunst als Antwort auf die Frage: ‚Wonach sollen wir uns richten?‘“ (J. Assmann 2007: 119)

Ausgehend von unterschiedlichen Perspektiven und teils auch von den gegebenen sozialen und/oder kulturellen Konstellationen sowie der Trägergruppe, die zu jedem Kanon gehört und „auf die seine Geltung zu beziehen ist“ (Renate von Heydebrand),<sup>22</sup> kann ein (literarischer) Kanon außer der Wertorientierung noch andere Funktionen ausüben, wie die soziale Integration,<sup>23</sup> Identitätssicherung und -stabilisierung einer Nation oder/und einer Gruppe (von Gruppen)<sup>24</sup> bzw. Identitätsstiftung in Abgrenzung gegen andere Gesellschaften oder gesellschaftliche Gruppierungen in der Gleichzeitigkeit (Renate von Heydebrand), Symbolisierung fiktiver Identität (A. Hahn),<sup>25</sup> Sicherung gesellschaftlicher Einheit sowie Ideologien (z.B. der sozialistisch-realistische Kanon in der sowjetischen Literatur, der nationalsozialistische Literaturkanon), Legitimation der gegenwärtig geltenden Werte (Renate von Heydebrand), eine Überlebensstrategie kultureller Identität,<sup>26</sup> eine neue Form kultureller Kohärenz,<sup>27</sup>

<sup>21</sup> S. dazu auch v. Heydebrand 1998a: 622.

<sup>22</sup> S. dazu v. Heydebrand, Winko 1994: 131.

<sup>23</sup> S. dazu A. Assmann, J. Assmann 1987: 21.

<sup>24</sup> S. dazu Brinkler-Gabler 1998: 80ff.

Gedacht sei beispielsweise an die Bildung der Nationalstaaten nach dem Zusammenbruch der Sowjetunion.

<sup>25</sup> Vgl. v. Heydebrand 1998a: 623.

<sup>26</sup> Jan Assmann (2007: 127) kommentiert: „Wir bestimmen Kanon daher als das Prinzip einer kollektiven Identitätsstiftung und -stabilisierung, die zugleich Basis individueller Identität ist, als Medium einer Individuation durch Vergesellschaftung, Selbstverwirklichung durch Einfügung in ‚das normative Bewußtsein einer ganzen Bevölkerung‘ (Habermas). Kanon stiftet einen Nexus zwischen Ich-Identität und kollektiver Identität. Er repräsentiert das Ganze einer Gesellschaft und zugleich ein Deutungs- und

Handlungsorientierung im Blick auf die Zukunft (Renate von Heydebrand), Innovationsorientierung und Sicherung des kulturellen Gedächtnisses<sup>28</sup>.

Der literarische Kanon ist allerdings, wie die Kanonisierungsgeschichte gezeigt hat, im Gegensatz zu den kanonisierten Heiligen Schriften der Geschichtlichkeit und der Veränderbarkeit unterworfen, obgleich ein bestimmter Teil von Kanones über mehrere Generationen Bestand, also einen invarianten Textbestand hat:

Die Persistenz des Kanons ist vielleicht sein wichtiges Merkmal; man baut ihn nicht von Generation zu Generation nach herrschenden Geschmackskriterien auf, sondern findet ihn immer schon vor und übernimmt ihn – oder übernimmt ihn eben nicht und beendet ihn damit. Solange es einen Kanon und damit eine Vorauswahl verbindlicher Texte gibt, gibt es auch deren Normativität, die eine besondere Art der Lektüre erfordert; kanonische Texte werden, ob freiwillig gewählt oder in Bildungsinstitutionen gequält, ins Gedächtnis und in die Körper geschrieben.

Der Kanon ist ein Prägwerk der Identität, ob man dies will oder nicht, ob man dies anerkennt oder nicht. (A. Assmann 1998: 59)

Die sozialen und kulturellen Ursachen, welche zum Kanonisierungsbedarf führen, sind vor allem radikale Traditionsbrüche und revolutionäre Innovationsschübe,<sup>29</sup> politische, soziale und kulturelle Umbruchssituationen. Also Situationen, in denen die kulturelle Identität sich erst etabliert oder sich bedroht fühlt, wie z.B. heute, wo die Literatur und Kunst der Gefahr ausgesetzt werden, durch die kulturelle Globalisierung und Kommerzialisierung uniformiert und zu einem bloßen Konsumgut degradiert zu werden. Oder in Zeiten

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Wertsystem, im Bekenntnis zu dem sich der Einzelne der Gesellschaft eingliedert und als deren Mitglied seine Identität aufbaut.”

<sup>27</sup> S. dazu ib.

<sup>28</sup> Vgl. dazu Aleida Assmann (1998: 59), die in Anlehnung an Harold Bloom den Kanon „ein Gedächtnis-System“ nennt.

S. dazu auch v. Heydebrand 1998a: 622.

<sup>29</sup> S. dazu J. Assmann 2007: 125.

der Politisierung der Kultur, etwa als in der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft zwischen 1968 und 1975 die Auflösung des literarischen Kanons<sup>30</sup> und der Paradigmenwechsel vom werkimmanenten zum sozialgeschichtlichen Verfahren<sup>31</sup> gefordert oder auch nach Gegenkanones im Gefolge des Auf- und Durchbruchs der Literatur der schreibenden Frauen und verschiedener sozialer Bewegungen gerufen wurde. Um die Jahrtausendwende ist in der neueren deutschen Literaturwissenschaft ein Methoden-Pluralismus und eine dadurch provozierte neue Kanon-Hegemonie zu beobachten. Dies scheint auch heute noch zu gelten.

Mit einer „Lesebrille“ (Friederike Worthmann) kann man den Kanon vergleichen, der „die Wahrnehmung von ‚Kultur‘ jenseits der von ihm repräsentierten“ (v. Heydebrand 1998a: 624) Kultur verhindert und Hegemonie ausübt über die abgestoßenen Randzonen einer Kultur, über die anderen Kulturen gleicher Sprache (vgl. *ib.*), über die anderen Gruppierungen. Aber auch über die Literatur der schreibenden Frauen übt der Kanon Hegemonie aus und stellt somit einen Bestandteil des Machtinstruments dar, das die Frauen in die vorästhetischen Räume,<sup>32</sup> in die vom Zentrum abgestoßenen Randzonen unserer Kulturgeschichte<sup>33</sup> abdrängt und zu geschlechtlich marginalisierten Gruppen macht.

Als 1997 in Deutschland nach Autoren gefragt wird, welche tradiert bzw. kanonisiert werden könnten, werden lediglich drei Frauen für kanonwürdig erachtet: Else Lasker-Schüler, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff und Ingeborg Bachmann<sup>34</sup>. In seinem persönlichen

<sup>30</sup> „Statt Kanon-Erweiterung stand die Kanon-Zertrümmerung, allenfalls die ‚separatistische‘ Forderung nach Gegen-Kanones, im Zentrum [...]“ (Erhart 1998: 108), eine Aufarbeitung verschiedener Epochen und Genres.

<sup>31</sup> Dabei sei auffallend, wie Walter Erhart (*ib.* 110) vermerkt, dass „gerade die institutionelle Festigung der Neueren Deutschen Literaturwissenschaft im Zeichen der ‚Sozialgeschichte‘ der Auflösung des Kanons Einhalt bieten konnte“.

Der germanistische Kanon literarischer Werke und Autoren um 1980 zeige Erhart (*ib.* 118) zufolge ein unübersichtliches Bild.

<sup>32</sup> S. dazu auch Bovenschen 1976: 72f.

<sup>33</sup> S. dazu auch Lersch 1988: 488.

<sup>34</sup> S. dazu Osinski 1998: 181.

Kanon deutscher Literatur – vom Mittelalter bis in die Gegenwart –, den der deutsche Literaturpapst Marcel Reich-Ranicki im „Spiegel“ vom 18.06.2001 präsentiert (vgl. *MARCEL...* 2006), finden sich unter den 73 Schriftstellern lediglich fünf Autorinnen: Annette von Droste-Hülshoff (Die Judenbuche; Gedichte), Else Lasker-Schüler (Gedichte), Anna Seghers (Das siebte Kreuz; Der Ausflug der toten Mädchen), Ingeborg Bachmann (Gedichte), Sarah Kirsch (Gedichte).<sup>35</sup> Seine geschlechterspezifische Sicht kann mithin nicht unauffällig bleiben, auch nicht seine geschlechterspezifischen Gattungsvorstellungen: die Lyrik als die „weiblichste“ aller Gattungen. „Aber was haben die Autorinnen der letzten 200 Jahre denn an wirklich Lesbarem hervorgebracht? Gut, da haben wir ein paar folkloristisch anmutende Balladen von Droste-Hülshoff, aber das ist doch keine ...“ (zit. n. Bosse, Messner 2005) – pariert Reich-Ranicki recht zynisch und hochmütig Sigrid Löfflers Frage nach den fehlenden Autorinnen.

Der „Nachweis eines ‚gepflegten‘ Kernkanons ist unter anderem möglich über seine Repräsentation in Literaturgeschichten (Winko)“ (v. Heydebrand 1998a: 621). Wenden wir uns kurz der letzten estnischen Literaturgeschichte „Eesti kirjanduslugu“ (Estnische Literaturgeschichte; 2001) von Epp Annus, Luule Epner, Ants Järv, Sirje Olesk, Ele Süvalep, Mart Velsker zu. Auch aus dieser Literaturgeschichte lassen sich Schlüsse über den estnischen

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<sup>35</sup> Vgl. auch Marcel Reich-Ranickis von 2002 bis 2006 erschienenen Kanon deutschsprachiger Literatur „Der Kanon. Die deutsche Literatur“ (Romane, Erzählungen, Dramen, Gedichte, Essays). Z.B. enthält seine erste 2002 erschienene Buchkassette 20 Romane von 17 Schriftstellern, unter denen er nur eine einzige Autorin nennt – Anna Seghers mit ihrem Roman „Das siebte Kreuz“ (1942). Die zweite, im Jahr 2003 veröffentlichte Buchkassette mit 180 Erzählungen von 90 Autoren enthält lediglich neun Autorinnen mit vierzehn Erzählungen: Annette von Droste-Hülshoff (Die Judenbuche), Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach (Krambambuli), Elisabeth Langgässer (Saisonbeginn), Anna Seghers (Der Ausflug der toten Mädchen, Post ins Gelobte Land, Bauern von Hruschowo), Marie Luise Kaschnitz (Lange Schatten, Der Strohalm. April), Marieluise Fleißer (Avantgarde), Ilse Aichinger (Spiegelgeschichte), Christa Wolf (Kein Ort. Nirgends), Gabriele Wohmann (Wiedersehen in Venedig, Sonntag bei den Kreisands).



Literaturkanon ziehen, auch da gelangt man im Hinblick auf die Präsenz weiblicher und männlicher Autoren zu einem ähnlichen Ergebnis wie oben. Unter den ungefähr 233 literarisch Schreibenden finden sich ca 165 männliche<sup>36</sup> und ca 68 weibliche Autoren, von denen 32 fett hervorgehoben und 36 einfach erwähnt worden sind. Lediglich drei Schriftstellerinnen – drei Klassikerinnen –, die in erster Linie Dichterinnen sind, wird mehr Platz eingeräumt: Lydia Koidula knapp über fünf, Marie Under sieben und Betti Alver vierundhalb Seiten. Von den lebenden Autorinnen bekommen vier Frauen etwas mehr Aufmerksamkeit: Viivi Luik und Ene Mihkelson mit je zweiundhalb Seiten, Doris Kareva mit zwei und Ellen Niit mit anderthalb Seiten. Unter diesen vier Lyrikerinnen gibt es, da staune man, zwei (große) Romanschreiberinnen. Auf der etwas konfusen Liste der estnischsprachigen Schriftsteller in der Wikipedia<sup>37</sup> finden sich unter 471 Autoren lediglich 127 Frauen; etwa dreißig Frauen, wenn nicht mehr, werden völlig übersehen. Für die Frauen scheint das resignierende Fazit der estnischen Schriftstellerin Kärt Hellerma zuzutreffen, das sie in ihrem Buch „Die blaue Missa“ (Sinine missa, 2008) zieht:

Es macht keinen Unterschied, ob ich die intellektuelle oder die emotionale Kraft anwende, ob ich Esseistik oder Belletristik schreibe – der Kanon nimmt mich dennoch nicht an, der Kanon schüttelt seine Schultern, der Kanon ist ratlos. Oi, der Kanon ist geradezu boshaft. (Hellerma 2008: 150)<sup>38</sup>

Also wie man es auch dreht und wendet, alle Mühe ist vergeblich. Hellerma selber ist von der Literaturgeschichte und dem elektronischen Verzeichnis sogar ausgeschlossen geblieben. Für eine Frau zieme es sich nicht, sich da hineinzudrängeln, lediglich das Dichten

<sup>36</sup> Berücksichtigt werden hierbei lediglich die fett hervorgehobenen Autoren, die jeweils auf von drei Zeilen bis sechzehn Seiten abgehandelt sind.

<sup>37</sup> Bei der Kanonisierung und Repräsentation von Autoren und ihren Werken sind heute somit auch andere Medien zu berücksichtigen, die elektronischen (Speicher)Träger, die technischen Mittel insgesamt, die seit dem 20. Jahrhundert auch Stimmen und Töne konservieren.

<sup>38</sup> Meine Übersetzung.

sei den Frauen noch gestattet, denn singen und dichten konnte man ja auch, wie dies die Urmütter getan hatten, beim Umrühren der Suppe und beim Weben des Stoffes (vgl. *ib.* 31f.). Tatsächlich scheint die Literatur nach wie vor eine Männerdomäne zu sein, auch die großzügige Vergabe des Nobelpreises an drei Frauen<sup>39</sup> binnen relativ kurzer Zeit sollte uns darüber nicht hinwegtäuschen.

Welche von den in der Literaturgeschichte behandelten oder erwähnten Autorinnen gehören eigentlich zum estnischen (National) Kanon? Etwa Lydia Koidula, Marie Under und Betti Alver, Viivi Luik und Ene Mihkelson, Doris Kareva und Ellen Niit? Aber wo bleiben z.B. Mari Saat, Viiu Härm, Minni Nurme, Elo Vee u.a. Nach welchen Prinzipien, Selektionsprinzipien sollte nun unsere Literaturwissenschaft einen Kanon erstellen? Nach dem Prinzip der Innovation oder der Repräsentativität, nach *gender*-spezifischen Bedürfnissen oder doch in männlicher Genealogie oder...? Denn wenn auch im Prozess der Kanonisierung verschiedene Instanzen und Institutionen (Verleger, Vertriebsinstanzen, Literaturkritik und Medien, Herausgeber von Anthologien und Lesebüchern, Bibliotheken, Schulbehörden und Lehrer, kulturpolitische Instanzen) „zusammen oder gegeneinander“ (Ackermann 2001: 1348) wirken, entscheidet schließlich doch die *Literaturwissenschaft* „durch das Erstellen kritischer Ausgaben sowie die literaturgeschichtliche Zuordnung, Wertung und Hierarchisierung über die Aufnahme in Literaturgeschichten und Nachschlagewerke“ (*ib.*), durch das Mitwirken an der Weitergabe in Lehrveranstaltungen und Prüfungsanforderungen in Schulen. Andererseits hat sich da hingegen längst die Frage erhoben, ob der materiale nationale Kanon als Repräsentation einer Nation, als ein „Narrative“, eine große Erzählung nationaler Kultur, „die durch Gemeinschaft und Konsensus reguliert wird“ (Brinker-Gabler 1998: 79), überhaupt noch funktionieren kann? Kann man von einem richtigen Kanon einer Nation sprechen wie beispielsweise in Estland, vom Kanon einer Nation, die eine symbolische Gemeinschaft, eine Gemeinschaft der Gleichen darstellen sollte, den Frauen aber, obgleich sie mehr als die Hälfte *der Bevölkerung*

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<sup>39</sup> 2009: Herta Müller, Deutschland; 2007: Doris Lessing, Großbritannien; 2004: Elfriede Jelinek, Österreich.

bilden, nicht den gebührenden Platz zuweist oder sie gar verdrängt? Oder brauchen die schreibenden Frauen unter den jetzigen sozialen, politischen und kulturellen Verhältnissen doch noch ihren eigenen Kanon bzw. zumindest ihre eigene Literaturgeschichte?

Die eingeschränkte Geltung eines einzigen, „noch dazu immer instabilen Kanons der Welt- und Nationalliteratur“, sei, wie Renate von Heydebrand bereits 1994 feststellt, trotz seines universellen Geltungsanspruchs, „auch unabhängig von der Geschlechterdifferenz längst gesehen worden. Aber erst in der Gegenwart wird daraus eine an die Wurzeln gehende Kritik entwickelt“ (v. Heydebrand, Winko 1994: 145). Anstöße dafür habe es schon in den 70er Jahren durch den französischen Philosophen Gilles Deleuze und den französischen Philosophen Félix Guattari gegeben, die sich in ihrem Buch „Kafka. Für eine kleine Literatur“ (1975) für eine „kleine Literatur“<sup>40</sup> aussprechen, sowie durch den französischen Philosophen Jaques Derrida, dessen Dekonstruktivismus allen genderspezifischen Theorien zugrunde liegt. Von der grundsätzlichen Infragestellung des Kanons berichtet im Jahr 2001 auch Irmgard Ackermann (2001: 1348f.).

Ausgangspunkt und Anlass für allgemeine Kritik sind:

- a) die überzeitlich gültigen ästhetischen Normen, das Gerichtetsein des „Klassischen“ auf eine einzige, relativ homogene Schicht und der präskriptive Charakter des Kanons: Der Kanon soll auf die für nicht kanonwürdig gehaltenen Formen „niederer“ Literatur, wie Trivilliteratur, Songs, Jugendliteratur und volkstümliche Literatur sowie auf andere Medien wie Filme, Videoaufzeichnungen, Tonträger mit literarischem Anspruch und graphische Texte ausgeweitet werden. Der Blick soll sich zunehmend auf die Gegenwartsliteratur richten (vgl. ib. 1349);

<sup>40</sup> Gilles Deleuze und Félix Guattari (1976: 24) schreiben: „Eine kleine oder mindere Literatur ist nicht die Literatur einer kleinen Sprache, sondern einer Minderheit, die sich einer großen Sprache bedient. Ihr erstes Merkmal ist daher ein starker Deterritorialisierungskoeffizient, der ihre Sprache erfaßt. In diesem Sinne hat Kafka die Sackgasse definiert, die den Prager Juden den Zugang zum Schreiben versperrte und ihre Literatur ‚von allen Seiten unmöglich‘ machte: Sie lebten zwischen ‚der Unmöglichkeit, nicht zu schreiben, der Unmöglichkeit, deutsch zu schreiben, und der Unmöglichkeit, anders zu schreiben‘.“

- b) die Pluralität der materialen Kanones: Allerdings stehen diese Kanones in einer hierarchischen Bezogenheit;
- c) die Pluralität in Deutungen;<sup>41</sup>
- d) die Verbindung von Ideologie und Ästhetik sowie die ethnische, klassenspezifische und geschlechtliche Gruppenzugehörigkeit: *race*, *class* und *gender*. „Die Proportionen von im Kanon repräsentierten Werken dominanter Gruppen und den Werken der ausgeschlossenen Gruppen von Marginalisierten“ (Ackermann 2001: 1349) sollen korrigiert werden. Es wird „nicht nur von *Entkanonisierung*, sondern auch von *Entkolonisierung des Kanons* gesprochen“ (ib.);
- e) die prinzipielle, philosophisch-sprachtheoretische Bezweiflung des Konzepts „Kanon“: Die hierarchisierenden und wertenden Unterscheidungen sowie das Prinzip der Repräsentation werden angezweifelt (z.B. von den Poststrukturalisten Jaques Derrida und Paul de Man), denn diese seien Ideologie und Willkür (vgl. v. Heydebrand, Winko 1994: 149).

Eine der Optionen für *feministische und genderspezifische Kritik* am Kanon als maßgebendem Korpus von Werken und Autoren<sup>42</sup> ist der Gegenkanon von Autorinnen. Bei dieser Forderung entsteht unter

<sup>41</sup> Immer häufiger werde auch ein „empirisches“ Kanon-Konzept vertreten, das Kanones mit statistischen Methoden ermittelt und eine nicht mehr hierarchische Kanonalpolitik verteidigt. Der Verlust an verbindlichen Normen müsse mehr noch als den materialen Kanon die Deutungen betreffen. Dies führe die Rezeption solch eines kanonisierten Werkes wie der Bibel plausibel genug vor. Es seien nicht nur individuelle Werte der Rezipienten, sondern auch „zeit- und gruppenspezifische Werte und Normen, die an den Werken hervorgehoben oder auch an ihnen vermißt werden. Insofern stellt der eine literarische Kanon, auch wenn er als herrschender noch anerkannt wird, selbst schon eine Kanon-Pluralität dar, die nur durch bestehende Übereinstimmung unter den maßgeblichen Vermittlern oder durch gezielte Maßnahmen der Deutungslenkung beschränkt ist resp. werden kann“ (vgl. v. Heydebrand, Winko 1994: 147f.).

<sup>42</sup> Vorbereitung für einen materialen Kanon sei ein Hauptgeschäft der sog. „Frauenforschung“. Im Rahmen eines Nationalprojekts werden beispielsweise in der Schweiz für den Zeitraum von 1700 bis 1945 eine sehr große Anzahl von Schriftstellerinnen mit ihren Veröffentlichungen zu Tage gefördert. Vgl. dazu die Bibliographie von Stump, Widmer, Wyss 1994.

anderem die Frage nach einer „weiblichen Schreibweise“, nach einer „weiblichen Ästhetik“, wie dies beispielsweise Silvia Bovenschen 1976 in ihrer Schrift „Über die Frage: Gibt es eine ‚weibliche‘ Ästhetik?“ macht. Ihr Fazit ist, dass es sich höchstens aus der Perspektive einer konzeptuellen, aber nicht normativen Beschreibung von weiblicher Ästhetik sprechen ließe und es wohl eigentlich Zeit sei, den patriarchalischen Normen überhaupt keine Bedeutung zuzugestehen, „nicht einmal eine negativ orientierende für unsere eigenen Einschätzungen“ (Bovenschen 1976: 70). Ein Gegen-Kanon setzt natürlich voraus, dass die Frauen sich nicht selber wieder ein trivialästhetisches Normgefüge schaffen, da sie anderenfalls in das *In-Einheiten-Denken* zurückverfallen und sich bei der Errichtung eines ebenso erstarrten normativen, geschlechtsorientierten Denk- und Wertsystems ertappen. Zudem birgt solch ein Gegenkanon in sich die Gefahr, dass, wie Renate von Heydebrand vermerkt, eine weibliche weiße Mittel- und Oberschichtkultur absolut gesetzt wird. In einem sinnvollen, verschiedene Ismen und Oppositionen überwindenden Gegenkanon von Autorinnen müsste, „literarisch umgesetzt, eine große Vielfalt von weiblichen Geschlechtsrollen in den unterschiedlichsten Konstrukten von *gender*, als Gegebenheit und als Entwurf, Platz finden“ (Heydebrand, Winko 1994: 152).

Einen zweiten Lösungsansatz bietet die Erweiterung des einen materialen Kanons durch die weiblichen Autoren. Hier geht es zunächst vornehmlich darum, ob die Autorinnen an den Kriterien des ‚männlichen‘ Kanons gemessen oder in einer eigenen ‚weiblichen‘ Literaturgeschichte nach eigenen Kriterien repräsentiert werden sollten (vgl. Heydebrand, Winko 1994: 152f.).

Die dritte Option betrifft die Korrektur des Deutungskanons, d.h. „der traditionelle Kanon bleibt unberührt, wird aber durch Veränderungen der Deutungen unterminiert“ (ib. 153).<sup>43</sup>

Nicht zuletzt nähert sich die feministische Kanonkritik dem Problem des Kanons auch aus poststrukturalistischer Sicht: Man muss sich von Kanonizität überhaupt verabschieden. „Wenn aus praktischen Gründen doch eine Art Kanon gebildet werden muß, soll er das Verschiedenste integrieren, und allem bisher Unterdrückten

<sup>43</sup> S. dazu noch Heydebrand, Winko 1994: 154ff.

und ‚Marginalisierten‘ gebührt besonderes Interesse“ (zit. n. ib. 155) – erklärt Renate von Heydebrand. Die renommierte englische Germanistin Elizabeth Boa behauptet im Jahr 2000 in Jo Catlings „History of Women’s Writing in Germany, Austria and Switzerland“ gar, dass *die notorische Traditionslosigkeit und Brüchigkeit einer Frauenliteraturgeschichte* die Kanonbildung und Literaturgeschichtsschreibung selbst in Frage stellen (vgl. Keck, Günter 2001: 223).

Wie groß ist eigentlich der Kanonbedarf in einer sich globalisierenden und sich vernetzenden Welt? Oder hat das Phänomen Kanon, wie Aleida und Jan Assmann bereits 1987 rhetorisch fragen, auch nicht ein Ende, wenn es einen historischen Anfang hat (vgl. A. Assmann, J. Assmann 1987: 23). Im Jahr 1998, als die Kanondebatte zu einem „clash of cultures“, d.h. zu einem Kampf der Kulturen geführt worden sei, sich „in eine vitale und weltweite Auseinandersetzung um kulturelle Selbstbestimmung verwandelt“ (A. Assmann 1998: 48) habe, plädiert Aleida Assmann doch noch für einen Kanon, nämlich für die lebenspraktische Dimension des Kanons, d.h. für die Öffnung der Literaturwissenschaft<sup>44</sup> für die kulturwissenschaftliche Perspektive. Mit der Umperspektivierung komme in den Blick der literaturwissenschaftlichen Untersuchungen die Rolle von Literatur als Medium einer geschlechts-, klassen-, Nationen- oder kulturspezifischen Identitätsbildung, aber auch die Frage nach der Verbindlichkeit dieser Texte in der Dimension der Geschichte sowie die Frage nach den institutionellen und lebensweltlichen Kontexten von Literatur.

<sup>44</sup> Als Beispiel für die literaturwissenschaftliche bzw. rein literaturkritische (im angloamerikanischen Bereich) Behandlung wird Harald Bloom genannt, der methodisch die Dimensionen der Geschichte und Institutionen negiert und für den nur noch „die Autonomie des Ästhetischen und die Innerlichkeit der einsamen Seele“ (A. Assmann 1998: 49) gilt. Er setzt seine rein literaturkritische Position von der der „cultural studies“ ab, denn er versteht darunter die Politisierung und Moralisierung von Literatur, und erklärt diese als eine „Flucht vor dem Ästhetischen“ (zit. n. A. Assmann 1998: 49). Der Prozess der Kanonisierung wird von ihm als ein einsames und abgehobenes Ringen der großen Geister um Unsterblichkeit beschrieben (vgl. ib. 48).

Einen Lösungsansatz für die Öffnung oder Neukonstituierung eines Kanons bietet 1998 auch Gisela Brinker-Gabler, die sich in Anlehnung an den amerikanischen Kulturkritiker Cornel West dieser Problemstellung unter Berücksichtigung des historischen Augenblicks nähert, der durch die deutsche Wiedervereinigung, durch die europäische ‚Einigung‘, durch die wachsende Zahl von Im/migranten sowie die Europäisierung und Globalisierung bestimmt ist,<sup>45</sup> wobei die Letztere wieder zur Stärkung nationaler und auch regionaler Identifikation bzw. zu lokaler Solidarität und ihrer aggressiven Verteidigung führt (vgl. Brinker-Gabler 1998: 90ff.). Anstelle der Möglichkeit einen „kritischen Nationalismus“ (ib. 91) bzw. einen kritischen nationalen<sup>46</sup> Kanon zu entwickeln plädiert sie für einen *postnationalen Kanon* – die Bewegung vom nationalen Kanon zur *Assemblage*<sup>47</sup>, „die Bewegung vom Bild oder Gemälde zur räumlichen Kunst“ (ib. 96). Also nicht nach „gut“ oder „schlecht“ seien die Texte in einem Kanon zu beurteilen, sondern die postnationale Kanonizität<sup>48</sup> solle es bewirken, dass man zwischen den bisher isolierten Texten Begegnungen inszeniert (vgl. ib. 94) und dass die „Grenze des Kanonisch-Nichtkanonischen zum Zwischenraum, der Assemblage“ (ib.) geöffnet wird. Dadurch würden andere

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<sup>45</sup> Europäisierung und Globalisierung hat, worauf Gisela Brinker-Gabler (1998: 91) verweist, „die Konfrontation mit Fragen, wie wir ‚uns‘ und ‚andere‘ (außen und innen) in nationaler und literarischer Kultur konstruiert haben und konstruieren, unabdingbar gemacht“ – mithin erneut die Konfrontation mit Fragen des Eigenen und des Fremden.

<sup>46</sup> Dabei befolgt Gisela Brinker-Gabler den Grundgedanken: „Nationen sind vorgestellte Gemeinschaften, die eine neue kulturelle Formation hervorbringen, oder anders gesagt: Nationen sind eine Form, in der moderne Kulturen sich konstituieren.“ (Ib. 91)

<sup>47</sup> *Assemblage* bezeichnet in der Kunst Hochrelief oder dreidimensionalen Gegenstand, der aus einer Kombination verschiedener Objekte entstanden ist (vgl. *DUDEN*), oder: Assemblagen sind Collagen mit plastischen Objekten, die auf einer Grundplatte montiert sind. So entstehen Kunstwerke mit reliefartiger Oberfläche (vgl. *WIKIPEDIA*).

<sup>48</sup> Nationale Kanonizität hingegen bewirke, „daß die Normen, die konstitutiv für die Identität der Disziplin sind, als kanonischer Wert eines literarischen Werkes verstanden werden, der gleichzeitig den universalen Wert einer nationalen Identität bestätigt“ (Brinker-Gabler 1998: 96).

Blicke, der Wechsel der Positionen und eine kreative Interpretation der Tradition in neuen Konstellationen ermöglicht, die „nicht Grenzen zum Außereuropäischen errichtet, sondern die vielfachen kulturellen Überschneidungen artikuliert“ (Brinker-Gabler 1998: 95).

*Sollten nun die herkömmlichen Literaturgeschichten umgeschrieben werden?* Umschreiben sollte man die bisherigen Literaturgeschichten wohl nicht, *neu* schreiben aber allemal. Denn die literarischen Werke aus der Feder von Frauen, die *auch* auf der Bühne der Menschheitsgeschichte mitagierten und mitagieren – wohl selten im Rampenlicht, meistens im Souffleusekasten –, müssen in die Historiographie der Literatur eingeschrieben werden. Oder zunächst doch erst in die Sondergeschichten, die frauenzentrierten Literaturgeschichten? Denn festgefahrene Einseitigkeiten im Kanonisierungsprozess sind nach wie vor nicht aufgehoben worden und zudem gibt es noch viele über Jahrhunderte hinweg verdrängte und vergessene Autorinnen auszugraben und ihre Werke aufzuarbeiten:

Und dies gilt so lange, bis der traditionelle, an Männern ausgerichtete Kanon, wie er an [...] Schulen und Universitäten immer noch gelehrt wird, endlich aufgesprengt wird. Eine „Frauen-LiteraturGeschichte“ hat so lange Berechtigung, wie die spezifischen Produktionsbedingungen von Frauen, ihre literarischen Leistungen in konventionellen Literaturgeschichten keinen oder nur beschränkten Eingang finden. (Kanz 1999)<sup>49</sup>

Ich glaube nicht, dass sich die Situation in Deutschland oder auch in Estland heute bemerkenswert verbessert hat, denn nach über zwanzig Jahren „frauenspezifischer Literaturwissenschaft [ist] die ästhetische und kanonische Orientierung noch immer – oder wieder – männlich konnotiert“ (Keck, Günter 2001: 224). Vielleicht tatsächlich *wieder*, denn wie die Biologin Sigrid Schmitz in „Die Zeit“ vom 24. August 2006 berichtet, werde ihre Wissenschaft wieder gerne benutzt, um unterschiedliche Verhaltensweisen von Mann und Frau zu erklären. Sollte es den Kanon dennoch noch geben, dann hat er:

<sup>49</sup> Diese Worte sprach Christine Kanz im April 1999 anlässlich der Herausgabe der überarbeiteten Literaturgeschichte schreibender Frauen von Hiltrud Gnüg und Renate Möhrmann.



die Kultur einer Gesellschaft, ja der Welt, unter Wahrung ihrer Verschiedenheit zu symbolisieren, er hat die im Zeichen des „einen“ Kanons übersehenen, vergessenen, unterdrückten Kulturen zur Geltung zu bringen, und an die Stelle hegemonialer Kanonpflege soll gleichberechtigter Austausch unter Kulturen treten [...]. (v. Heydebrand 1998a: 625)

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## *Textual Editions, Gender and Literary History: The Case of Ilmi Kolla<sup>1</sup>*

Writing literary history is based on different factors that all influence its formation.

It is also inseparable from the process of canon formation which is by nature an ideological construction, i.e. it is connected with decision-making on which authors to include and which authors to leave out, based on both conscious and unconscious attitudes evaluating authors and their production. It is also connected with judgements of how to represent authors and their production and from which ideological positions. The canon formation is influenced also by gendered meanings that have been attached to authors and to their production, and these can also define their place in literary history.

One important although often neglected aspect of canon formation is also the availability of the authors' works, i. e. the availability of printed text editions. Generally, the printed editions create the idea of the production of the author for the reading public and through this also for literary history. On the other hand, the process behind printed editions – editing – is largely invisible although its role is sometimes remarkable. Editing is rarely an activity without interpretation. On the contrary, editing a selection of an author's work involves necessarily the interpretation of those works. One may claim that the entire editorial practice is inseparable from interpretation. In this sense, editing becomes the critical activity contingent on different factors such as the critic's academic training, the intended readers of the text, its previous editions and studies, and even national upheavals, etc. (Spadaccini 1992: xvi). Editing involves also "the editor's own presuppositions and biases, i.e., his or her own agenda or project" (ib. xix).

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<sup>1</sup> The article was written with the support of targeted research project "Sources of Cultural History and Contexts of Literature" (SF0030065s08).

There have always been authors who have not succeeded, for different reasons (such as censorship, the author's early death etc.), in publishing their work during their lifetime. Hence the role of literary researchers and editors will arise in publishing their works posthumously. In those cases the editors will have the decisive role in shaping the creative process and the production of a writer. The role of editing as interpretation will have more importance in this context: the editor(s) will shape the image of a writer's production influencing through this also the later reception of an author. I will discuss in this article the problem how the posthumous editions of an author's works have shaped the reception of the author's production and through this her place in (gendered) literary history. I will also deal with the relationship between the author's published texts and unpublished manuscripts in the context of constructing (gendered) literary history.

Textual editions are based either on the first printed editions which have been published during the author's lifetime, or on the author's manuscripts if these have been preserved. Manuscripts represent the whole body of an author's production. They include not only finished works (which generally have been published) but also unfinished texts, drafts, notes and so on. They include also texts in other genres which are side products of the author's creativity (as prose texts for a poetry writer) and also the so-called ego-documents<sup>2</sup> – autobiographical texts, like diaries, letters, memoirs. Usually, all those texts have not been published (except when the author is very outstanding) but the author has been represented by a selection of her/his work. In the usual case, the author has done this selection in his/her lifetime but in some cases the editors or critics have to do this posthumously. This is the case with the Estonian poetess Ilmi Kolla (1933–1954) who has left hundreds of poems in the manuscript form.

Kolla began publishing poetry at an early age: her first poems were published in newspapers when she was 15 years old. Although

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<sup>2</sup> The term 'egodocument' was coined by the Dutch historian Jacques Presser in the mid-1950s to indicate texts such as autobiographies, diaries, personal letters and other texts in which the author writes explicitly about his or her affairs and feelings (Dekker 2002: 13).

during her lifetime she published a lot of poems she did not succeed in publishing a collection of her poems due to her early death from tuberculosis at the age of twenty one. The second reason for not succeeding in publishing a collection was the dominant aesthetics of socialist realism with the rules with which the greater part of Kolla's poetry did not comply. Also, censorship has left its mark since during the Stalinist years it was very strict and the authors had to conform to its norms.

Since the poetry of Kolla has been preserved in manuscripts in the Estonian Cultural History Archives, it has been possible to get an overview of her whole production considering both published and unpublished poems.

One part of Kollas's poetry of has been influenced by the discourses of her time: by Stalinism and its ideological premises. Those were the poems she wrote for publishing in newspapers and magazines. Like every author, she, too, wanted to be published, to find recognition as an author by a larger public. The only way to get published during the Stalinist period in Estonia, from the end of 1940s until the mid-1950s, was writing conformist poetry. Besides, Kolla needed money because she had to support herself financially (her parents were not able to do so). Since the royalties were high in the Stalinist and in the Soviet period in general (literature was among the most important textual forms for the Soviet ideology), it was a powerful motivator for publishing conformist poetry. The royalties that Kolla received prove that authors were well paid indeed. Kolla's letters confirm this and she also kept a record of the royalties she received. There existed even laws concerning royalties which classified different kinds of texts according to their ideological importance: the more important (i.e. ideological) a text was, the more money the author got for it (e.g. ENSV Teataja 1952: 191–194).

That is why Kolla wrote also conformist poetry: poems on the Soviet themes, e.g. about life in the collective farms, about the happy Soviet people, about Stalin etc. For herself she wrote very different kinds of poems knowing the impossibility of publishing them due to ideological reasons: she wrote about love and intimate relationships, about nature, about sadness of leaving her life because of illness. Such poetry was not in accordance with the dominating discourse of

socialist realism and it was not possible to publish it. For critics and editors of periodicals it represented the decadent worldview unsuitable for the Soviet people. This is evident from the letters of editors to Kolla where they give direct and detailed instructions about the themes of her poems and how (in which manner) to write them. For example, in a letter by the editor of the cultural weekly *Sirp ja Vasar* (Hammer and Sickle) from May 5, 1953 the editor wrote: "Dear comrade I. Kolla, we have already had a discussion about your poems that constantly indulge in beautiful fancies. If this happens in poems dedicated to the May Day then this is still all right, but our working-day does not consist in weaving wreaths but in straining, heroic work. It is time for you to find other themes and generally to take a more serious stand toward the poet's work. It is not possible to remain "a promising beginner" forever, but your poetry does not show any development or deepening. But stagnation means going backwards." (EKLA f 220, m 5: 16)

During the Stalinist years poetry (and literature in general) had the ideological function of creating a desirable image of the society and shape through this the new type of human being, the Soviet one. Also, the existence of censorship has left its mark since during the Stalinist years it was very strict and the authors had to conform to its norms and develop a kind of self-censorship. There were few authors who had a chance to publish their work during the period from the end of the 1940s to the mid-1950s: they were the authors approved by the authorities. The most important authors were the laureates of the Stalin's Prize: August Jakobson, Hans Leberecht and Juhan Smuul but there were also others, like Debora Vaarandi, Aira Kaal, Manivald Kesamaa, Jaan Kärner, Mart Raud et al, all in all 35 authors from whose 9 were already dead. (Olesk 2003: 466–467) The only approved method of creating literature was the method of socialist realism which meant the representation of the class struggle led by the proletariat, and using the method of realism.

The collections of poems which were published during this period reflect this ideological bias also in their titles: *Oktoobrivõit* (The Victory of October, Raud 1947), *Mina – kommunistlik noor* (Me, a Member of the Young Communist League, Smuul 1953), *Poem Stalinile* (A Poem to Stalin, Smuul 1949), *Rahu rahvastele*

(Peace for Nations, Smuul 1952), *Võitluspostil* (In the Forefront, Parve 1950), etc.

The private and romantic themes in Kolla's poetry (in the poems she wrote for herself) make her poetry strongly autobiographical but also very intimate and personal which is in sharp contrast with the aesthetics of socialist realism. Even in poems meant for publishing she could not sometimes avoid intimate tonality because the romantic manner of representation was the essential feature of her poetry. Her poetry reflects her love relationships and some poems have as their titles the names of her lovers. The representation of illness in her poems is also based on her real experiences with tuberculosis and her life in health resorts where she spent long periods. Her contemporary critics were critical of her poetry since they had to follow the ideological demands of the era. There was a custom to criticize the work of young poets who published their poems in newspapers and magazines but had not yet published a book of poems. The role of critics in those cases was ideological: to teach young authors "the Soviet values" and how to write poems based on socialist-realist aesthetics, guiding young authors toward the "proper" writing.

For example, the poetess Debora Vaarandi wrote about the poetry of Kolla that there was self-repetition and routine in it although she was talented. Among the shortcomings of her poetry was also her indifference "to social life" and "to the joys of a worker" and for that reason there was "the gap between the public and the private" in her poems. (Vaarandi 1953) The harshest critical article was written by the young writer Vladimir Beekman in 1952 in the daily *Noorte Häääl* (The Voice of the Young). Beekman blamed Kolla for superficiality, for the lack of "inner conviction" and "the passionate Party spirit", for her passing over the important problems of the society and for the lack of a real Soviet hero. He concluded that the development of Kolla as a poet had come to a standstill and for overcoming that situation she had "to give up the role of a spectator" and participate actively in social life by "being a convinced, passionately high-principled fighter for the hope of the whole world – communism." (Beekman 1952)



That kind of criticism was, of course, unjust toward Kolla as an author. Besides, it was dangerous considering the political context of the era. There was a possibility of repressions: for example, in 1950 many authors were expelled from the Estonian Writer's Union for ideological reasons, being accused of bourgeois nationalism. After that they could not publish their work until 1955. Vladimir Beekman's harsh criticism affected the publishing possibilities of Kolla too: in a letter to her female friend from 1952 she wrote that her literary position was not good and she referred to the fate of the authors who were expelled from the Writer's Union. (An undated letter of I. Kolla to I. Jürna. EKLA f 220, m 11:5). During the year 1952 Kolla published only 10 poems and some lyrics for songs (Osjamets 1983: 34–40).

Since the most important part of her poetry was not published during her lifetime it did not have a chance to influence the poetic discourse of the period in question. Only after her death some hand-copied manuscripts of her poems began to spread among readers before they got published in the middle of the 1950s. Although she was well-known as an author already in her lifetime, greater recognition came only afterwards, posthumously. For some literary critics her poetry and also her fate (early death because of illness) began to represent the resistance to the Stalinist ideology giving her poetry an existentialist dimension. Her poetry was understood as outstanding in the context of the Stalinist discourse in the centre of which was the positive hero and where the human weakness was foreign: "Therefore the existentialist cry of Kolla is at the same time a deep act of humanity in the Stalinist one-dimensionality and marks also a breaking point in the former practice of poetry." (Veidemann 2000: 44) Another critic, Pärt Lias, has attributed to Kolla's poetry a certain prophetic quality, seeing her "credo of poetry born from tragedy" as the symbol of the post-war generation with "clipped wings" and this attitude has reached also our school textbooks (Lias 1996: 20).

The place of Kolla in literary history has been varied. In 1966 Helene Siimisker published an article about the life and poetry of Kolla (Siimisker 1966) where she emphasized her creative path as having been disrupted. In the official literary history written during

the Soviet period but published in 1991 she was represented as a marginal author (Kalda 1991). In the new Estonian literary history published in 2001 and written from the post-socialist perspective, she is absent (Annus et al. 2001). In Cornelius Hasselblatt's German language literary history (2006) meant for foreign readers, her poetry is presented as a new, independent lyric poetry incompatible with the dominant ideology.

The first collection of poems by Kolla was published in 1957, three years after her death, and the editor was also a writer (poetess), Heljo Mänd. The book has also a preface by Lehti Metsaalt – a friend of Kolla. This slim book (with only 41 poems, including 14 previously unpublished poems) with a simple title *Luuletused* (Poems) represents her poetry according to the demands of the era: as the (post)stalinist discourse favoured social themes (for example the representation of work in collective farms and factories, the victories of the Soviet youth in creating a communist society etc.), the selection of Kolla's poems was shaped in accordance with this. Thus, there were poems Kolla had written to earn money, but which she herself did not value, as she had written to her female friend in her letters. She wrote frankly: "I have to write, so as to make travelling possible once again. It means that I am making money" (Ilmi Kolla to Lehti Metsaalt 6 September 1952. EKLA f 220, m 1: 4). The titles of such poems are characteristic: "I Joined the Young Communist League", "Men from the Army" etc. However, the most ideological poems were left out of this collection, for example poems glorifying Jossif Stalin which actually had not been published as weak during her lifetime. Regardless of the somewhat ideological emphasis this first collection includes also some poems that had not been published earlier (14 poems), such as "Pean minema jälle" (I Have to Go), "Rahutus" (Disquiet), "Raske on sinuta olla" (It is Hard to Be Without You), "Vennale" (To My Brother), "Öine valu" (Night Pain), "Kevadunelm" (A Spring Dream)

One factor which certainly affected the choice of poems was the fact that the editor did not have Kolla's original manuscripts. The manuscripts were in the hands of Kolla's mother and they were donated to the Estonian Cultural History Archives not until 1963. For that reason the editor did not have the overview of Kolla's poetry as

a whole. The editor had to rely mostly on the published versions of Kolla's poems (and also on some typewritten versions that had spread from hand to hand after Kolla's death) and she had no chance to compare those to the manuscript versions. Therefore, the published versions of the poems differ in some cases from those in the original manuscripts.

In general, this small collection of poems leaves the impression of Kolla's poetry as scarce and in part conforming to the norms of the socialist-realist aesthetics. Also, the fact that the editor did not have Kolla's original manuscripts has limited the choice of her poems to be published and their printed form.

This book had in general a good reception by critics who appreciated the sincerity of Kolla's poetry although sometimes they blamed her poems on the Soviet themes for their superficiality (Viiding 1958; Tamm 1957; Treier 1957).

The second collection of Kolla's poems was published in 1983 under the title of *Minu kevad* (My Spring) and it is more voluminous (there are 78 poems). In this new collection there are more previously unpublished poems (although in comparison with manuscripts their number is not great) and the book has an afterword about Kolla's poetry written by the editor Silvia Nagelmaa.

The principles of the selection of poems in this new collection were shaped by the editor's view of an author and her poetry but also by the time period in question. Although in the 1980s the ideological control was not as strong as during the Stalinist years there were some aspects which had to be handled with care. Thus, poems which were not included were poems about intimate relationships, a kind of very personal poetry – for example poems written to real persons (lovers) and titled in such a way (for example the title of one poem included the name of the lover – “To Kaljo Reimand”). Likewise, erotic poetry did not belong to the public discourse during the Soviet years, thus, those poems also had to be left out since Kolla wrote about her erotic experiences quite frankly. Those poems represent sincere female desire which had no place in the Soviet ideology and aesthetic that was in general very puritan toward the representation of sexuality. Thus, the poems which did not suit the image of Kolla as a young and innocent girl giving, instead, a more mature picture

of her as a young, sexually mature woman, were not included. As a woman writer, Kolla and her poetry have been represented one-sidedly, construing her personality and her poetry as somewhat childish or girlish. This is reflected also in the title of this collection *Minu kevad* which is the title of one of her poems written at the age of 15. The entire structure of the collection follows this path creating the girlish image through the arrangement of poems.

Some good poems in manuscript containing clear allusions to Soviet national politics were also not included: for example the poem without a title where the author describes the fate of her male friend who is far away in the Soviet army among foreign people where he will be a stranger forever. However, considering the late Socialist period with its newly strengthening ideological control at the beginning of the 1980s this choice – not to publish poems with ideological allusions – is understandable.

Although it is clear that the editor's selection was based on the aesthetic grounds – she chose first of all the best poems according to her taste – it is hard to overestimate the underlying ideological assumptions because many of the poems which were left out are actually good also by aesthetic standards. On the other hand, many published poems in this collection were the ones which Kolla wrote for earning money thus conforming to the ideological demand of her era. Those were poems which she herself probably did not want to publish in her collection. In letters she had written to her friend about this issue that she did not like those poems but valued more the ones which she wrote for herself. Among her manuscripts there is also an incomplete table of contents of her collection and it does not contain the poems written for publishing.

Some changes were introduced also in published poems: some of them could be called minor, but there were also some more significant corrections. In some cases the so-called minor changes could seriously change the meaning of some stanzas or verses. For example, in Kolla's best-known poem "Nukrad hetked" (Sad Moments, 1953) there is a line in manuscript "Ma ütlen laulus – ma ei taha surra" (I will say in song that I do not want to die), but in the published version the comma is placed so that the line reads as "Ma

ütlen, laulus ma ei taha surra” (I will say that I do not want to die in song.)

In some cases, some stanzas were left out in the published version of the poem. For example in the poem “Pean minema jälle” (I Have to Go Again) the three middle stanzas were left out, probably because they were considered too personal, since the author wrote there about concrete matters of her life. In some cases, the poem was published partly: the poem with title “To Kaljo Reimand”, consisting of two separate parts, was published without a title, and the first part which openly describes the author’s erotic encounters, was left out. Thus, the published poems were not always authorial versions, especially considering the fact that their original manuscripts were preserved in the Estonian Cultural History Archives.

When I asked the editor Silvia Nagelmaa about her choices and the principles of compiling the collection, she confirmed that she relied on the author’s manuscripts and that all the changes in the texts were done by the editorial board of the publishing house. If that is the case, it indicates well the ideological nature of the Soviet publishing and through this also the reliability or unreliability of the published texts of the Soviet era.

The last collection with the title *Kõik mu laulud* (All My Songs) was published in 2009 and I was the editor. I have researched Kolla’s life and poetry for a long time so I found it necessary to edit a new collection of poems based on the authorial versions of her texts. I tried to include as many poems as possible, relying also on the table of contents found among the manuscripts. Since it is not a textual-critical edition including all poems, I had to make my own decisions about the principles of selection of the poems. As such, this selection is of course as subjective as any selection done by others instead of the author. My goal was to represent Kolla’s poetry – using the words of one critic: to present the ‘true’ Kolla – and to publish texts which rely on manuscripts as authorised texts. It had to be also a beautiful book since the Soviet-period editions were, as a printed work, poor in their quality (bad paper, ugly book-design). I included more early poems written when the author was about fifteen-sixteen years old because they represent many of the later themes of her poetry, and also those beautiful love poems which had been left out

from earlier editions because of their erotic and sexual sincerity. Since Kolla's poems are very autobiographical – it is even possible to read some of her poems as resembling diary entries – the tonality of this new collection acquired a more personal character. The feminine subject who is speaking through those poems is very vulnerable in her openness and feminine fragility. In the period when those poems were written – in the context of the Stalinist aesthetics – expressing this kind of identity was almost impossible. But even today when the freedom of expression is one of the preconditions of poetry and poetry itself has fallen prey to postmodernist games it is something very rare.

Nevertheless, my own selection is also ideological, in the sense that I left out a great part of conformist poetry written on Soviet themes. Thus, I also consciously shaped Kolla's image by presenting her poetry in a certain way. Since the poems written for publishing were the ones the author herself did not like, it seemed justified to leave most of them out. On the other hand, it is clear that those poems are also part of Kolla's creative output and as such, they deserve to be published because they create the understanding about the ideological climate of the Stalinist period. The problem how to represent Kolla's poetry is therefore complicated, depending on different factors and the editor's underlying ideological assumptions toward her poetry.

## Conclusion

Text editions are an important aspect of canon formation and through the canon formation they contribute to shaping a literary history. Editing an author's texts is inseparable from the interpretation of those texts as editing is comparable to any critical activity involved in literary interpretation and research.

The edited collections of the Estonian poetess Kolla are good examples of the editing process as interpretation because all books provide a different image of her poetry. Three collections of her poetry have been published so far – in 1957, 1983 and 2009 – belonging to different periods. Neither of them contains all of her

poems but a selection, reflecting different viewpoints and aesthetic understandings. Therefore, to come closer to the essence of Kolla poetry, it is necessary to rely on manuscripts. Only they can give an idea of her production as a whole in the context of the Stalinist period in the Estonian literary history.

In the cases when the author had no chance to publish her work during her lifetime – which was also Kolla's case –, this task is left to editors who will face the difficult problem of making a selection from the author's work. The only way to avoid selection is to publish all poems. Otherwise, in making a selection of the author's texts, the editor has the power to shape the image of the author in question and through this also her place in literary history.

If we look back – and the making of literary history means always looking back – we construct literary history also in a gendered way. The place of Kolla's poetry in literary history depends also on gendered meanings. Kolla's poetry is feminine poetry – the speaking subject is feminine. It is a young woman's point of view that is presented in her poems. The feminine subject of Kolla's poetry posed a problem for the Soviet literary history and also for the Soviet editors of her texts. Besides, the resistance of literary history to femininity is connected to the idea of literature as non-gendered, as representing general and national values which – paradoxically – often turn out to be masculine ones. We cannot also underestimate the role of text editions in creating a gendered subject since hidden gendered evaluations will lie behind the selective processes of texts.

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EKLA = Estonian Cultural History Archives: The archives of Ilmi Kolla, Fund 220.

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## *New Identity in Children's Literature Reprinted in Textbooks after 1999*

### 1. Around the concept of 'identity' – from the sociological and national perspective

This paper was inspired by P. Saukkonen's article *On the Concept of National Identity* (1996) presented at the 'Crossroads in Cultural Studies' conference in Tampere, Finland. Saukkonen analyses the concept of national identity among others against the background of political and economic transformations which have taken place in Finland since the 19th century.

In a country which suffered occupation (first Swedish, then Russian from 1809) for such a long time as Poland (that is until 1918), the 1990s' economic and educational reforms demonstrated that the concept of identity connected with 19th-century fight for independence and language, patriotic integration of this small nation, and above all intensive post-war work has changed completely and that it is possible to carry out such revolutionary transformations to turn a poor country into a state of well-being over a short period of time. Patriotic identity of the nation at the turn of the 20th century is presently perceived in a different way by the Finnish society. New Finnish identity consists to a large extent of identification with Europe – modern globalisation, active participation in the European Union, intensive and honest work, language education, new technologies and easy access to computers throughout the country. And above all acceptance of multiculturalism and tolerance towards others<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Ihonen, *Promoting the teaching of literature: experiences from Finland*, in: *Metodyka a nauka o literaturze i nauka o języku*, ed. by D. Michułka, K. Bakula, Wrocław 2005, p. 37–45.

Similar theories are proposed by contemporary Danish authors and illustrators of children's books, e.g. Egon Mathiesen, author of the popular book *Frederic and His Car* (Copenhagen 1944) as well as Bergson Flemming and Borge Bjornbol, authors of *The Children on the Globe* (1950). Mathiesen emphasises the role of humanistic education, attitude of tolerance and understanding of 'otherness' – which serves as a basis for forming propositions regarding equality of different races and cultures as well as equality of all children.<sup>2</sup> In the opinion of Nina Christiansen, author of an article on tolerance in contemporary Danish children's literature, Mathiesen's ideas refer to frequently quoted words of a Social-Democrat Julius Bonholt, who later became the Danish Minister of Education and Culture: 'School must foster children's individual abilities and talents and focus on shaping independent citizens who are prepared to function within a system of 'responsible democracy.'<sup>3</sup> In their books Mathiesen, Flemming and Bjornbol excellently implement trends to promote international trends in children's literature, encouraging children to become acquainted with other countries and cultures. Their ideas and comments concerning respect for multiculturalism enhance the school-created image of 'a new identity' based both on national and world history and teach openness towards the world.<sup>4</sup>

The concept of national identity is rich and comprehensive. In his excellent book *Tożsamości zbiorowe* (2005)<sup>5</sup> Zbigniew Boksański differentiates between ethnic identity and national identity, juxtaposes national identity and postmodernity, the dynamics of the

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<sup>2</sup> E. Mathiesen, in *Bogvennen* 1986/86. Quote after N. Christiansen, 2000, *An Attempt to Create and International Identity. The Picture Book in a Literary, Didactic and Historical Perspectives. A Comparative Reading of Egon Mathiesen: "Frederik with the Car" and Flemming Bergsôe: "The Children on the Globe"* in: *Text, Culture and National Identity in Children's Literature*. International Seminar on Children's Literature: Pure and Applied, University College Worcester, England, June 14<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup>, 1999, ed. J. Webb, NORDINFO Helsinki, pp. 112, 114.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 115. Today in Denmark the term 'racism' has been replaced with the concept of 'ethnicity.'

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 114.

<sup>5</sup> Z. Boksański, 2005, *Tożsamości zbiorowe*, Warsaw PWN.

Western civilisation and the identity of an individual. Bokszański explains the concept of collective identity among others with the use of A. Kłosowska's definition: 'In line with its theoretical background, the concept of identity entails a reflective approach of the subject towards himself. National identity of a national community is composed of its collective self-knowledge, its self-determination, the created self-image and the whole content, essence of this self-knowledge, and not externally constructed idea of national characteristics' (Kłosowska 1996: 99). It is also composed of different forms of collective autoperception and manifestations of beliefs, attitudes and hierarchy of values of all the members of a national community conditioned by social, political and economic circumstances (Bokszański 2005: 108). One of the key factors influencing the concept of identity is the continuity – otherness dichotomy (ib. 110–111). The continuity aspect (*the dimension of sameness*) consists in 'emphasising continuance of the past, endeavouring to remain within the boundaries of the community' and determining a repertory of meanings; in accentuating '<external> exploration of society and a tendency to expose its constitutive features.' On the other hand, the aspect of otherness (*the dimension of distinctiveness*) focuses on differentiating and making distinct by drawing comparisons with 'what lies outside' the community – 'it sees identity as a result of differentiating between 'us' and 'them'. The concept of identity is undoubtedly linked with the definition of a nation.

Another typology of collective identities presents four models: 1/ the objective model (it defines identity from the position of an external observer and takes into account political and economic 'hard facts' (Smith 1991: 14). Smith adds that the Western model emphasises the significance of the national territory, the legal system and institutions, citizens' equal rights and political culture while the Eastern model concentrates on ethnic origin, culture and folklore; 2/ the so-called researched model of identity accentuates the fact of 'cultural distinctiveness of a national community having roots in the distant past' (Malinowski 2001) – ideals, traditions and language, family, friendship, social relations, entertainment, institutions and schools, freedom, justice, honour and values. In her interpretation of this model Kłosowska attributes particular importance to aspects of

symbolic culture (e.g. works of art, their aesthetics, content or ideology), which in developed nations constitute a representative repertory: 'symbolic culture remains ... a sphere most significantly differentiating national cultures and determining their specific character' (Kłoskowska 1990: 15). The repertory may be defined as a manifestation of the collective identity of a nation; it is considerably the most stable part of culture; it comes into being as a historical process, drawing from various social sources and reflecting the features of its particular culture' (Kłoskowska 1996: 59). Borrowing some terms from structuralists ('the paradigm axis' and 'the syntagm axis'), Kłoskowska also uses the notion of 'the national culture syntagm' as a specific 'utterance' (constructed on the basis of syntactic rules) combining elements of different systems: art, customs, religion, literature, historical reflection, politics (1990: 5). 3/ the model of national identity construed – often developed by intellectuals and politicians – sees identity evolving as a historical process. A characteristic feature of identity in this model is nationalism (Gellner 1991: 64); 4/ the public opinion model.<sup>6</sup>

An important source quoted by Bokszański is Zygmunt Bauman's article analysing the metaphor of a pilgrim, a tourist and a vagabond in the context of postmodern identity.<sup>7</sup> The contemporary world of 'globetrotters' (e.g. young Poles – emigrants) is marked by metaphors. The pilgrim – an individual who journeys to one place –

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<sup>6</sup> See A. Smith, *National Identity*. London 1991.

<sup>7</sup> Bauman, Z. (1993) *Ponowoczesne wzory osobowe*, 'Studia Socjologiczne' no. 2; 1995 – *Modernity and Ambivalence*, transl. R. Lis, PWN, Warsaw; 1995 A – *Freedom*, transl. J. Tokarska-Bakir, Znak, Cracow; 1995 B – *Body and Violence in the Face of Postmodernity*, The Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń; 1996 – *Postmodern Ethics*, transl. J. Bauman, J. Tokarska-Bakir, PWN, Warsaw; 1998 – *Identity – Then. Now, What for?* 'Polish Sociological Review', no. 3; 2000 A – *Postmodernity and its Discontents*, Warsaw; 2000 B – *Globalization*, transl. E. Klekot, PIW, Warsaw. Other significantly related issues are the concepts of globalisation, postmodernity and sociology of identity discussed in the works of Anthony Giddens. See Giddens, A. 1994, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Polity Press, Stanford; 2001 – *Modernity and Self-Identity*, transl. A. Szulżycka, PWN, Warsaw. See Bokszański, Z. *Tożsamości zbiorowe* (2005), Warsaw.

represents the past and his identity is determined by his profession and particular work. Over time the pilgrim evolves into a tourist – a person who voluntarily chooses to travel to different places – changing his place of abode, jobs, being mobile, creative and active. Apart from the tourist, the contemporary world of social consciousness also distinguishes the model of a vagabond who can never 'settle down', who has no choice in choosing his home, as he is forced to live where he can find a job, where the circumstances allow him to stay longer. Our acceptance of the model of a pilgrim, a tourist or a vagabond depends on us – on our education and various personality traits and disposition, e.g. our profession, openness to suggestions, flexibility in thinking, communicative skills, language education and cultural tolerance. These components at the same time constitute parameters of modern humanistic education, a token version of which is represented for children by literature reprinted in textbooks. These factors offer us freedom in following our life's path and free choice, though to a large extent we are still dependent on the political, economic and cultural situation of our country.<sup>8</sup>

In his article *Social Theory and Politics of Identity* Craig Calhoun refers to the criterion of political correctness in his considerations of the concept of identity (Calhoun 1998: 9),<sup>9</sup> e.g. from the American perspective this criterion may be troublesome, but there are clear differences in meaning of the following terms: *negro*, *colored*, *black*, *Afro-American*, *African American*. Polish people still become emotional when e.g. talking about controversial homophobia (homo-

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<sup>8</sup> The concept of national identity also introduces theories of transformation of contemporary nations and ethnic groups inhabiting a given country (See comparative analysis of national cultures). Bokszański, Z. *Tożsamości zbiorowe* (2005), Warsaw, p. 101. Psychological aspects of identity and functioning of an individual within a group (society) and in culture are discussed by Robert Szwed in his book *Tożsamość a obcość kulturowa* (Lublin 2003).

<sup>9</sup> One of sections in Calhoun's work is devoted to the issue of 'recognition' (*self-recognition* and *recognition by others*). The author sees it as the essence of considerations related to identity – here analysed from the perspective of political correctness.

sexuality) or 'standard' heterosexuality (Calhoun 1998: 21).<sup>10</sup> This in other European countries (e.g. Finland and Sweden) is no longer an issue, as tolerance of otherness – also in the context of sexual identity – is taken for granted there.<sup>11</sup>

In *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* Tim Edensor claims that contemporary symbols of culture influencing identity of a nation include also elements of popular culture: material culture of objects and goods, e.g. cars, cosmetics, clothes, alcoholic drinks – products associated with a particular nation, e.g. Nokia is associated with Finland, Volkswagen – Germany, Honda – Japan, Clinique and Gap – the USA, whisky – Scotland,<sup>12</sup> or media products – e.g. films and comics (with the notable example of Walt Disney's film adaptations of *belles lettres* for youngsters). In Edensor's opinion an important role in the development of national identity in Scotland was played e.g. by the film *Braveheart*.

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<sup>10</sup> Here Calhoun emphasises the significance of the influence of private and public life on identity, recalls the context of differentiating (me and others) and – referring to Charles Taylor's work – claims there is a need for 'soft relativism.' See also Taylor, C., 1989, *Sources of the Self*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press;

<sup>11</sup> See Taylor, C., 1992, *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition*, Princeton University Press; 1992b, *The Ethics of Authenticity*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press. C. Calhoun, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

<sup>12</sup> Edensor, T. 2002, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life*, Cracow. The author analyses identity among others in the context of nationalism, writing: 'The literature on nationalism and national identity has been dominated by a focus on the historical origins of the nation and its political lineaments ... (Cubitt 1998:1).' 'Identity is a process, not an essence, which is continually being remade in consistent ways, through an 'internal-external dialectic' involving a simultaneous synthesis of internal self-definition and one's ascription by others (Jenkins, 1996: 20).' Identity is also associated with identification: 'A key element of the process of identification, especially in the case of national identity, ... is the drawing of boundaries between self and "other"' (recognition of these differences). 'National identity, like other identities, is about using "resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being" ... (Hall 1996b: 4).'

Important for research on sociological aspects of childhood and construction of children's identity is also Doris Bühler-Niederberger and Beatrice Hungerland's paper *Children's Social Value*. As research shows, it is not national identity that determines children's range and strength of values, but such factors as family, everyday needs (e.g. school, play), safety and friendship. Moreover, the authors observe that children are important consumers on the market; thus from the sociological perspective market needs should also be taken into consideration.<sup>13</sup>

Undoubtedly, these considerations can benefit from observations made by researchers of children's literature printed in the international publication entitled *Text, Culture and National Identity in Children's Literature*<sup>14</sup>, which lists among others the following aspects: the road to independence, history and national identity in Irish children's literature, the role of landscapes in English and Icelandic children's literature, 'a room of one's own' – the advantage and dilemma of Finno-Swedish children's literature, and – as it was mentioned – very interesting cultural aspects appearing in contemporary Danish children's literature – the development of international identity, transgressing cultural boundaries and the vision of children becoming members of democratic countries in the post-war Europe concerned with tolerance and understanding of multiculturalism.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Doris Bühler-Niederberger and Beatrice Hungerland, 2002, *Children's Social Value in Childhood and Children's Culture*, ed. Flemming Mouritsen and Jens Qvortrup, University Press of Southern Denmark.

<sup>14</sup> *Text, Culture and National Identity in Children's Literature*, 2000, International Seminar on Children's Literature: Pure and Applied, University College Worcester, England, June 14<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup>, 1999, ed. J. Webb, NORD-INFO Helsinki.

<sup>15</sup> ... and children are the same all over the world: 'They can be black or white, yellow or brown.' See N. Christiansen, 2000, *An Attempt to Create and International Identity. The Picture Book in a Literary, Didactic and Historical Perspective. A Comparative Reading of Egon Mathiesen: 'Frederik with the Car' and Flemming Bergsøe: 'The Children on the Globe'* in *Text, Culture and National Identity in Children's Literature*. International Seminar on Children's Literature: Pure and Applied,



## 2. National identity of a Pole or the identity of a European?<sup>16</sup>

In the analysis of national identity of Poles it might be worth referring to some literary and educational phenomena from the past, for example Polish Romantic literature studied in Polish language education classes. Romanticism is often associated with 'patriotic identity' defined through codes and metaphors of landscapes relating to nature, (political and mental) geography and Polish history. National place and space is delineated by cultural geography, political geography (the country's territory, regions, mountains, lakes), national rural landscapes, our nation's past represented in textbooks through national heroes or sites of historic battles, the place of gentry and Sarmatism in the history of Polish culture, borderline territory issues, the country's nature, Polish Catholicism, historical symbols (cemeteries, graves, castle ruins) as well as particular places (e.g. Polish cities: Cracow, Warsaw) and the genteel household.<sup>17</sup> All these cultural markers of national identity were visible in literature reprinted in the 19th-century textbooks (Michułka 2003).

Educational approach to children's literature has radically changed since and new Polish language textbooks for primary schools and lower secondary schools already contain a rich collection of

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University College Worcester, England, June 14<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup>, 1999, ed. J. Webb, NORDINFO Helsinki, p. 111. The article's author analyses two books: Egon Mathiesen's *Frederik with the Car* and Flemming Bergsøe's *Children on the Globe* and observes that 'The message of *Children on the Globe* is that even though children live in different places, under very different conditions, they have some things in common: they have to learn to read and write; they have the same basic needs and the same fundamental feelings,' p. 112.

<sup>16</sup> Z. Bokszański, *Stereotypy a kultura*, Warsaw 1997; *Stereotypes and Nations*, 1995, ed. T. Walas, Cracow; *Borderlands. What does it mean for Poland and Finland*, 2004, ed. D. Michułka, M. Leinonen, Tampere; Mitosek, Z. *Literatura i stereotypy*, Wrocław, 1974; E. Reigrotski and N. Anderson, *National Stereotypes and Foreign Contacts*, 'Public Opinion Quarterly' 1959, no. 23.

<sup>17</sup> Yi-Fu Tuan, 1995, *Space and Place*, Warsaw.

literary and cultural texts referring not so much to national issues as to universal values.<sup>18</sup> The main principle in Polish language education in the reformed educational system is the ability to read and interpret literary and cultural texts and to refer to the broad context of values and traditions present in both Polish and European culture. This European, axiological context undoubtedly affects the construction of the concept of new identity. This corroborates Kłoskowska's theses concerning symbolic culture and the repertory of cultural texts which become a criterion differentiating national cultures and determining the collective identity of a nation.

From the perspective of literary criticism and education the process involves among others 'introducing [pupils] to the world of culture especially through ... inspiring the motivation to read and developing the ability to appreciate literary works and other texts connected with culture, also audio-visual, and through that gaining a better understanding of the human being and the world; introducing them to traditions present in national and European culture.'<sup>19</sup> With such a repertory, there is a visible freedom in the choice of set texts in different syllabi. It must be admitted that there is also a number of texts that form the repertory core, constituting 'a basic code determining the existence of collective memory and a sphere of shared cultural experience' (Inglot, Patrzalek 1996), and thus indispensable for participation in culture. These also include literary works for adults adapted for children in order to popularise cultural, educational and national values.<sup>20</sup> In comparison with Polish language education of the previous century and earlier, e.g. post-war

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<sup>18</sup> An excellent book edited by Anna Janus-Sitarz *Przygotowanie ucznia do odbioru różnych tekstów kultury* (Cracow 2004) presents the newest trends and tendencies in teaching about culture in schools. See also M. Latoch-Zielińska, 2005, *Wiedza o kulturze – nowy przedmiot kształcenia w szkole ponadgimnazjalnej*, in *Metodyka a nauka o literaturze i nauka o języku*, 2003, ed. D. Michulka and K. Bakula, Wrocław.

<sup>19</sup> *Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej o reformie podstawy programowej, kształcenie blokowe*, 1999, 'Biblioteczka reformy,' Warsaw.

<sup>20</sup> Michulka D, Olszewska B. 2006, Polishness or Europeaness? Adaptations of the classics in Polish textbooks after 1999, in "Interlitteraria", ed. J. Talvet, Tartu.

times, when the repertoires were dominated by works in the spirit of Polish literary tradition and domestic culture and the concept of national identity was inseparable from the definition of patriotism and homeland – one's country of origin, recent textbooks already present shared European or world heritage. Thus, apart from national values, they contain common truths and universal values. And so textbooks feature among others *the Bible*, Homer's *Iliad*, Miguel Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, *The Song of Roland*, *Tristan and Iseult*, *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare and many others.<sup>21</sup>

Textbooks are divided into sections according to the themes and issues with a variety of cultural references that they contain and have telling headings: *The World of Feelings*, *The World of Values*, *The World of Culture* sections in Maria Nagajowa's textbook *Słowa i świat* (*The Word and the World*),<sup>22</sup> or *The Beginnings of the World*, *The Beginnings of the Word*, *Deeper into Thoughts and Feelings* sections in the textbook for grade 1 of the lower secondary school *Świat w słowach i obrazach* (*The World in Words and Pictures*) by Witold Bobiński (Bobiński 2002). The textbook for grade 4 *Dziwię się światu* (*The World Amazes Me*) features the following: history of Poland, texts about great Poles, landscapes and nature, references to educational issues, myths, fairy tales and legends, but also numerous excerpts from literary works representing different areas of culture: e.g. Oscar Wilde's story *The Happy Prince*, a motif taken from *The Chronicles of Narnia* by Clive Staples Lewis – *This Poor Dragon*

<sup>21</sup> Naturally, there are also national accents, e.g. excerpts from *Pan Tadeusz* by A. Mickiewicz or *The Teutonic Knights* by H. Sienkiewicz. Very patriotic in character is e.g. the lesson devoted to the Independence Day (11.11). The textbook features the lyrics of Jan Pietrzak's famous song *Żeby Polska była Polską* presented in a splendid red-and-white graphic outline against the background of reproductions of historical paintings with battle scenes, Polish flags and Solidarity demonstrations, and a few pages further there is an excerpt of *The Deluge* by Henryk Sienkiewicz accompanied by batalistic stills from Jerzy Hoffman's film, again in a red-and-white colour scheme. H. Dobrowolska, 2000, *Jutro pójdę w świat*, grade 6, Warsaw, pp. 101, 120–121.

<sup>22</sup> M. Nagajowa, 1997, *Słowa i świat. Podręcznik do kształcenia literackiego i językowego dla klasy szóstej szkoły podstawowej*, Warsaw, WSiP.

Called *Eustace*, ' a 5-line Inuit song sung on setting off to hunt from the tale *Odarpi, Son of Egigwa* by Alina and Czesław Centkiewicz. The textbook selection manifests openness to European issues and interest in cultures from different parts of the world.

Alina Kowalczykowska and Krzysztof Mrowcewicz's syllabus for grade 1 of the lower secondary school *Do Itaki (To Ithaca)* offers a great variety of literary and cultural texts. It contains sections with collections of texts which on the one hand accentuate respect for tradition and the past (*Tradition, That Is Living History*) and on the other make strong references to the issue of construction of the identity of a European in Bauman's understanding and his 'pilgrim' metaphor with particular emphasis on tolerance of 'otherness', e.g. *Me and Others, Dreams and the World* or *Our Europe, My Home*. Apart from a number of excerpts taken from great world classics, e.g. Homer's *Odyssey*, Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote and the Windmills*, John Ronald Reuel Tolkien's *Barrow-Wight* from *The Long of the Rings*, the textbook is basically dominated by Polish literature,<sup>23</sup> yet dealing with both Polish and European identity issues. Polish texts refer to universal truths and themes and the headings of further sections pertain to the role of Poland and Poles in Europe, e.g.: *I Live in Poland, I Live in Europe* (Norman Davies's *Europe: A History*), *The European Myth* with Wanda Markowska's tale *Europe*, or the section called *The Heart of Europe* with J. Iwaszkiewicz's *A European in Rome* and *Europe*.

The lower secondary school textbook *Rozwinąć skrzydła (Spread Your Wings)*<sup>24</sup> abounds in cultural texts relating to the concept of identity. Particularly valuable here is an excerpt from *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils* by Selma Lagerlöf with four important issues: the metaphorical significance of the juxtaposition of domesticated and wild geese, the young gander's feelings, Nils's observations and feelings, symbolic meaning of the Animals' Congress and the crane

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<sup>23</sup> The collection is rich and diverse, ranging from Jan Kochanowski's poems through Mickiewicz to Białoszewski, Szymborska, Iwaszkiewicz and Tischner.

<sup>24</sup> T. Michałkiewicz, *Rozwinąć skrzydła. Język polski. Kształcenie kulturowe. Gimnazjum kl. I (part 1)*, Warsaw 2000: 84–87.

dance. The third task accompanying the text requires interpretation of the whole book: 'What does the little protagonist learn, how does he change during the journey, what choices does he have to make, what rules govern the birds' world, what human longings, fears and other feelings do the geese experience (and elf-sized Nils together with them, gradually)' (ib. 87). The textbook also draws attention to the patriotic significance of Selma Lagerlöf's story – the boy's air trip allows the author to portray Sweden as a country, its geography, nature and culture.

### 3. New identity – on communicating

New papers on the concept of identity focus on the ability to communicate and the act of communication, which is essentially indispensable in the united Europe of present times – an age of travelling, journeying and constant discovery of new countries (cultures). And therefore young school recipients of different cultural texts learn how to freely express themselves, how to discuss issues, how to use arguments, how to apply practical (pragmatic), even instrumental, linguistic devices in a conversation. Thus a number of texts reprinted in textbooks also refer to the concept of communication between people, and textbook tasks develop conversation and negotiation skills (Wlazło 2005: 56, 58–59).<sup>25</sup> The following

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<sup>25</sup> Marcin Wlazło first assumes a philosophical perspective (among other Martin Buber's interpersonal relationships and Hans-Georg Gadamer's discovery of the truth through dialogue), then he looks from the point of view of literary criticism (among others Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogic relations), and then moves on to adopt an educational stand (relying on questions (heuristics) e.g. in the Socratean approach). He emphasises the significance of the other person (THOU) in dialogue (M. Buber, *I and Thou*, selected and translated by J. Doktór, Warsaw 1992). School education may especially rely on emotions stemming from the particular understanding between the interlocutors ('genuine dialogue,' 'attentive silence') and the discovery of the truth (G. Gadamer). School education may use a form of heuristic dialogue (a heuristic talk, which is in a sense an adaptation of the Socratean method) and different kinds of questions that can be asked in

quotation from Myrdzik's paper excellently reflects this school reality of communication, dialogue and the art of conversation: 'The Polish language as a school subject, consisting of education in the Polish language (including linguistics, literature and culture), media, readership and information,<sup>26</sup> makes use of dialogue in its various forms. Polish language teachers' task is to foster the pupils' ability to communicate ... The teachers' incentive to stimulate conversation, encouragement for the pupils to ask questions, competence in developing in pupils an approach of constructive criticism to phenomena occurring in culture of old and of present days constitute the basic components of the dialogue model in Polish language classes' (Myrdzik 1999).<sup>27</sup>

Let us illustrate it with a few examples. In the textbook for grade 5 *To Lubię (I Like It)* (workbook) Halina Mrazek and Iwona Steczko set a pantomime task 'Let's Talk Without Words', discuss 'the magic power of politeness' and precise communicative meaning of utterances.<sup>28</sup> Hanna Dobrowolska in the textbook *Jutro pójdę w świat (Tomorrow I'll Venture Out into the World)* uses Mark Twain's *Broken Heart* to introduce communicative tasks (Dobrowolska 2000: 25–32), while 'dialogues about politeness' are presented to fourth-graders on the basis of an excerpt from Clive Staples Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (from *The Chronicles of Narnia*

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class (motivating, explanatory, defining the subject and the scope of discussion, helping with inductive or deductive reasoning, checking understanding and inviting comments).

<sup>26</sup> See *Podstawa programowa języka polskiego*, 'Polonistyka' 1995, no. 5, p. 22.

<sup>27</sup> Quote after M. Wlazło, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>28</sup> E.g. the question: 'Excuse me, have you got the time?' does not always mean 'What time is it?', as it can be answered with 'Sure I have, plenty,' or 'Mary, how can I solve this problem?' 'The sooner the better, bro.' H. Mrazek and I. Steczko *To Lubię* (workbook), grade 5, Cracow 2002, pp. 56–57. The textbook authors classify utterances according in the following way: asking, announcing, stating, expressing surprise (e.g. I request, I order, I suggest, I invite, I ask; or – I tell you, I comfort you, I guarantee you, I threaten you, I beg you, I promise you, I assure you, I warn you). Another section is devoted to advising and counselling.

series), bearing the textbook title of *The First Encounter*. The main protagonists of this famous tale – little Lucy and faun Mr. Tumnus – exchange polite words. When the protagonists see each other for the first time, the faun's verbal reaction at the sight of a human being is as follows: 'Excuse me – I don't want to be inquisitive – but should I be right in thinking that you are a Daughter of Eve?' (Łuczak, Murdzek 2001: 12), after which he introduces himself. Little Lucy continues the conversation in an equally polished manner, replying: 'Pleased to meet you, Mr. Tumnus' (ib.). An ironic and amusing approach to 'politeness' is presented in Wiera Badalska's poem *Excuse me, Mr Dragon*, where a knight is courteously and elegantly trying to convince a dragon to behave properly: not to roar, spit fire, throttle sheep by saying: 'Excuse my boldness – said he – but the matter is important ... I wish to talk to you, Sir, about serious matters ... As a rule I shun brawls, but unfortunately you, Sir, behave in a despicable manner ... Should I jab you with a sword? Or a spear? What would you rather? But first I must warn you, it hurts terribly' (ib. 15–17).

Pupils' critical approach to cultural texts presented in class is essential. Here there is a wide range of options – learners may disagree with the author, they may quote appropriate arguments in a discussion with other classmates, defend their points of view, consider the interlocutors' arguments – converse, in a nutshell. This can be illustrated with Sharon Creech's *Absolutely Normal Chaos* written in the form of a journal, where the protagonist offers an account of a love affair and makes comments about her friends' behaviour. The third task accompanying the text runs as follows: 'Read some journal excerpts in which Mary writes about Christy. Decide whether the words are impartial and justified (objective), or whether they are biased (subjective) and the writer was influenced by her own feelings and emotions' (Dobrowolska 2000: 62–63).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Pupils analyse the meaning of objectivism and subjectivism (e.g. the differences between an objective account of the school reporter and a subjective, emotional commentary of a participant).

#### 4. Multiculturalism and tolerance of otherness

With reference to Richard Shusterman's deep philosophic insight into multiculturalism as one of the key terms describing the world in the age of globalisation, it is necessary to consider the related complex issues from the fields of politics, ethics, religion and aesthetics. In a Polish language class discussion of all the 'pros and cons' of globalisation and cultural integration, understanding of the issue of multiculturalism and the ensuing tolerance of otherness may help pupils in solving the dilemmas connected with multiculturalism and answer the questions: Does globalisation really constitute a threat to the existence of national identity? How to talk about multiculturalism in a country as homogeneous (uniform and unvarying) as ours? How to treat Bauman's claim that 'tolerance petrifies hypocrisy,' and Levy-Strauss, who asks: 'How to reconcile the diversity of cultures with a belief in their inequality'?<sup>30</sup>

Research on multiculturalism is thus connected with cultural identity, cultural relativism, ethnocentrism and numerous questions that could also be asked in classrooms, e.g. 'Is it really possible to understand other cultures? Are there any uniform cultures or are they all hybrids to some extent? Are all cultures equal? If so, how can conflicts between them be settled? (over e.g. Mohammed's caricatures or headscarves of Muslim schoolgirls) If not, then who decides which culture is superior and which is inferior and how? Is the identity of a cultural group more important than the identity of an individual? Should autonomy of cultures be preserved, or should mixing be encouraged? Do literature and art constitute bridges

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<sup>30</sup> See Z. Bauman, *Kultura jako spółdzielnia spożywców in Perspektywy refleksji kulturoznawczej*, 'Studia Kulturoznawcze I', Poznań 1995; P. Boski, M. Jarymowicz, H. Malewska-Eyre (ed.) *Tożsamość a odmiennność kulturowa*, Warsaw 1992; M. Carrithers, *Why Humans Have Cultures*, Warsaw 1996; M. Jarymowicz, *Studia nad postrzeganiem relacji 'ja-inni'. Tożsamość, indywidualizacja, przynależność*, Wrocław 1988; A. Kapciak, L. Karporowicz, Z. Tyszko (ed.), *Komunikacja międzykulturowa: zderzenia i spotkania. Antologia tekstów*, Warsaw 1990; T. Pilch (ed.), *O potrzebie dialogu kultur i ludzi*, Warsaw 2000.



linking cultures or are they a manifestation of their diversity and incommensurability? Did publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* really help abolish slavery? Does the repertory of Western literary works constitute a tool of political domination over ethnic minorities?<sup>31</sup> There are many questions of this kind.

In this respect of great assistance may be a book entitled *Edukacja wielokulturowa. Poradnik dla nauczyciela (Multicultural Education: A Handbook for Teachers)* edited by Anna Klimowicz.<sup>32</sup> It tackles such issues as self-knowledge as a way of understanding others, search of national, regional and European identity, tolerance as a tool of influencing the contemporary world, multiculturalism versus the legal system.<sup>33</sup> Let us illustrate it with textbook examples.

Textbooks from the series *To lubię* abound in cultural texts. They construct identity not only of a Pole or a European, but of a human being.

At a higher level of school education – in grade 5 – the textbook authors include an interesting section entitled *It Was Like This ... Was It Like This?* in which they present issues related to basic concepts connected with man's identity in the universe. The section contains a selection of explanatory, illuminative texts presenting among others mythological and Biblical creation of the world and man, contemporary knowledge about the universe, trying to throw some light on cultural differences, e.g. Jan Parandowski's *Chaos, Gaia and the Gods*, Anna Kamińska's *In the Beginning God Created Heaven and Earth*, Jadwiga Stańczakowa's *I Can Feel Cosmic Laws, How Snowstorms Form* by Alina and Czesław Centkiewicz, Michał Jędrychowski's *Moon – Our Satellite, Big Bang* – a press article, *The Cosmic Egg* – a drawing of a serpent-entwined egg

<sup>31</sup> To use ideas of W. Małecki, who is a translator and interpreter of R. Shusterman's works and the author of the multiculturalism syllabus at the postgraduate studies programme at the Institute of Polish Philology in Wrocław (typescript), and D. Lesiak's analysis (typescript).

<sup>32</sup> *Edukacja wielokulturowa. Poradnik dla nauczyciela*, ed. A. Klimowicz, Wydawnictwo CODN, Warsaw 2004.

<sup>33</sup> Another book worth reading is J. Ambrosiewicz-Jacobs's *Me. Us. Them. Ethnic Prejudices Among Youth and Alternative Methods of Education. The Case of Poland*, the Jagiellonian University, Cracow 2003.

symbolising time ('world egg') (accompanied by a definition from Władysław Kopaliński's *Dictionary of Symbols*) (Kłakówna, Jędrzychowska 2000: 106), a funny picture story by Jean Effel *The Creation of the World* (Kłakówna, Jędrzychowska 2000: 115) or Michaelangelo's painting *The Creation of the Sun and Moon*.

An interesting piece presented in the textbook is Maria Krüger's tale *Why Bushmen's Skin Is Dark* illustrating the important issue of acquainting children with elements of another culture. To match young readers' perceptive skills the textbook version has a child protagonist. The passage presents the lifestyle and behaviour of a little girl 'Mbi, who lives in the heart of the African land ... amidst impenetrable jungle, infinite steppes and vast deserts of Africa' (ib. 96). Introduction to the tale retains the style of a mythical fantasy tale: 'In those very distant times, when the sky was not as yet lit up by the stars and the moonless nights were dark and gloomy...' (ib.). Naturally, a tale for young readers must also contain references to ethical and moral issues, with a clearly delineated protagonist type right from the start. The girl is presented against the background of the African bush: 'Mbi was as slender as a young palm tree bending in the wind, her skin was a light shade of golden brown and her hair copious and shiny. But, more importantly, she was good' (ib.).

Interesting and discussion inspiring is also Karl May's tale about a brave Indian *Winnetou* presented in H. Dobrowolska's textbook for grade 5. Apart from preparing an in-depth characteristics of the protagonist based on direct descriptions from the novel, Winnetou's words and other characters' opinions of him (admiration, disdain), pupils try to form their own judgements about the protagonist with the use evaluative language. With the help of popular films, comics, gadgets (e.g. toys, Lego blocks) and country music, they also bring Indian issues to life in a class discussion: 'Why is the legend of the Wild West still alive?' (ib. 85). Such discussions expand pupils' knowledge of other cultural areas, in this case – Indian customs.

Another notable example is that of a beautiful Indian tale about the creation of the world (*Indian Tale*) – an excerpt from Sat-Okh's novel *White Mustang* (ib. 117–123). In Indian culture presented in it the role of the creator of the world is played by the Great Spirit Gichy Manitou, who sits 'on a huge rock sprung up in the middle of

a green prairie like a lonely cloud in the clear sky' and smokes 'his pipe pondering.' The Great Spirit bakes people in an oven and thus 'creates' beings differing in skin colour: a white man (who has not stayed in the fire long enough and so is pale and weak), a black man (who has 'baked' too long and so gets burnt) and a brown man ('beautiful, statuesque in shape ... he had in himself might of the forest and the strength of an oak. His muscles glistened in the sunshine and the wind swept his black hair') and it is the latter, the brown one, that he chooses to be his 'successor,' saying: '[Now] you are the host, be a just ruler and love nature. Do not raise your hand against your brother, or the people I expelled behind the Big Water will return and take your land. Then the prairie and the forest will die, and so will you. Go, build a tipi and live there, and a ray of the first full moon will bring to your tent a woman who will be your wife' (ib.).

This quotation from the Indian tale may serve as a good way of summing up our considerations concerning new identity. Despite recent considerable political and economic transformations in Poland and great debates over the role of Romanticism and history in the contemporary world, old moral and ethical truths remain valid at various levels of education. Already in early humanistic education postmodern Europe promotes bringing up young people in the spirit of moral integrity, honesty, communicativeness, reliability and conscientiousness. In the context of wider research on literary and cultural education in schools it can be observed that the approach of multiculturalism and tolerance of otherness prevails.

This survey of excerpts reprinted in textbooks functioning as 'cultural readings' leads to an interesting conclusion: the concept of identity in the Polish language education is constructed on the basis of universal truths and values – both European and global. And although school repertoires are dominated by Polish authors, they not only contain references to national traditions such as Romantic rebelliousness, nobility and religiosity of Poles, but also introduce a wide scope of different cultural areas, construct an image of modern Polish society, present our country situated in the heart of Europe from a variety of angles and in an interesting way while 'cultural guidelines' in new textbooks prove that the underlying principle is

that of comprehensive education of a nation which may play an important role in an age of globalisation and European integration.

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*Was ist estnische Kinderliteratur?  
Versuch einer Neudefinition des  
Untersuchungsgegenstandes*

Die Kinder- und Jugendliteratur<sup>1</sup> und ihre wissenschaftliche Forschung haben in der ganzen Welt seit Jahren Konjunktur. Dies hat vielfältige Gründe, aber sicherlich liegt es auch an der veränderten gesellschaftlichen Rolle der Literatur in der multimedialen Konsumwelt und an den neuen Lesegewohnheiten des Publikums. Darüber hinaus verlangen neue literarische Formen (Fantasy, Hörbuch, *All-Age*-Literatur) und spektakuläre Erfolge einiger Titel wie etwa der "Harry Potter"-Sage (Joanne K. Rowling) oder der sog. "Bis(s)"-Tetralogie (Stephenie Meyer) nach Erklärungen und Analysen seitens der Literaturexperten. Auch in Estland hat die Anzahl der Kinder- und Jugendbücher sowie der wissenschaftlichen Beiträge über sie in den letzten Jahren zugenommen. Eine neue Autorengeneration hat viele hochwertige Titel vorgelegt, Kinder- und Jugendliteraturwettbewerbe sowie Seminarreihen und Autorenlesungen sind durchgeführt worden. Wissenschaftler<sup>2</sup> haben zahlreiche Arbeiten zu

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<sup>1</sup> Eine gewisse begriffliche Verwirrung ist in der vorliegenden Arbeit unvermeidlich, weil in Estland hauptsächlich der Begriff "Kinderliteratur" bevorzugt wird, in der deutschsprachigen Diskussion die Doppelbezeichnung "Kinder- und Jugendliteratur". Handelt es sich weiter unten um gegenwärtige Entwicklungen oder allgemeine literaturtheoretische Fragen, wird auch im estnischen Kontext der Begriff "Kinder- und Jugendliteratur" verwendet. Ist die Rede von früheren Erscheinungen, wird der Begriff "Kinderliteratur" herangezogen, weil sich die spezifische estnische Jugendliteratur erst in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts herausbildete.

<sup>2</sup> Auf weibliche Grammatikformen wird hier und im Folgenden verzichtet, obwohl sie stets mitzudenken sind.

Fragen der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur veröffentlicht (siehe ELTK 2004, 2005, 2008; Webb, Mürsepp 2005; LKS 2006).

Die Kinderliteraturforschung in Estland beschränkt sich nicht nur auf aktuelle Entwicklungen, sondern versucht auch historische Phänomene neu zu akzentuieren. Eine verstärkte Aufmerksamkeit gilt dabei den kinderliterarischen Erscheinungen der zweiten Hälfte des 19. und der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts (siehe Palm 2004, 2005, 2008; Mattheus 2008, 2009). Das Interesse an historischen Vorgängen hat in Estland auch in anderen geisteswissenschaftlichen Disziplinen zugenommen. Angesichts der veränderten politischen und kulturellen Lage (Zusammenbruch der Sowjetunion und Ausrufung der Unabhängigkeit Estlands 1991, Beitritt zur EU und NATO 2004, Ende der globalen Kolonialismusära und das Zusammenwachsen von Europa), der sogenannten *turns* innerhalb der Geisteswissenschaften (linguistischer *turn*, postkolonialer *turn*, performativer *turn* etc.) und des Aufstiegs neuer Wissenschaftsdisziplinen (Translationswissenschaft, Kulturwissenschaft, Semiotik etc.) ist es auch verständlich. Man beschäftigt sich in Estland zur Zeit intensiv mit der nationalen Identität und mit den Disziplinen, die die Identität konstruieren wie beispielsweise Geschichte, Literatur, Anthropologie etc. Literaturwissenschaftler denken über Grenzen und Möglichkeiten der estnischen Nationalliteratur nach, diskutieren über Bedingungen ihrer Herausbildung, über ihre Zukunftsaussichten in der globalen Welt und auch über ihre Beziehungen zu anderen (National-)Literaturen (siehe Hasselblatt 2008a; R. Undusk 2008; Mihkelev 2009).

Der vorliegende Artikel versteht sich als Beitrag zu diesem neu erwachten Interesse an identitätsstiftenden Nationaldisziplinen und nimmt die estnische Kinder- und Jugendliteratur unter genauere Betrachtung. Ähnlich wie bei der Untersuchung der Erwachsenenliteratur muss man auch in der Kinderliteraturforschung als erstes fragen, ob die Begriffe, mit denen man arbeitet, für neuartige Zugänge angebracht und überhaupt anwendbar sind. Hier scheint mir eine gewisse Korrektur notwendig, denn der heute gebräuchliche Begriff der estnischen Kinderliteratur wird meines Erachtens zu eng und nicht mehr zeitgemäß verstanden. Im ersten Teil des Artikels erläutere ich deshalb, warum die estnische Kinderliteraturwissen-

schaft eine Neudefinition des Begriffes benötigt und im zweiten Teil schlage ich – gestützt auf Hans-Heino Ewers handlungs- und kommunikationstheoretischer Konzeption der Kinderliteratur – ein Modell vor, das hilfreich für die Untersuchung der estnischen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur sowohl in Geschichte als auch in Gegenwart sein könnte. Die theoretischen Überlegungen werden mit Beispielen aus der estnischen Kinderliteratur illustriert.

## 1. Problematische Begriffsdefinition

Neben der veränderten gesellschaftspolitischen und kulturellen Lage gibt es auch wissenschaftsinterne Gründe, warum man über eine Neudefinition der estnischen Kinderliteratur nachdenken sollte. Hier ist vor allem der niedrige Status der Kinderliteraturforschung innerhalb der estnischen Literaturwissenschaft zu erwähnen. Obwohl die literaturwissenschaftliche Beschäftigung mit Kinderliteratur weltweit lange Zeit nicht besonders angesehen war – die Kinderliteratur wurde als eine einfache oder pädagogische Literatur verstanden, die wenig ästhetisch Wertvolles bieten kann – genießt sie in angloamerikanischen, deutschsprachigen und skandinavischen Ländern seit Jahrzehnten ein hohes Renommee. Unter anderem ist dies auf hochwertige Wissenschaftspublikationen zurückzuführen, die wichtige Impulse für den ganzen Literaturbetrieb vermittelt haben.

In Estland gilt die Kinderliteraturforschung aber immer noch als unwichtiger Teil der Literaturwissenschaft. Zum Beispiel fehlt in den letzten Historiographien der estnischen Literatur (EKL 2001; Hasselblatt 2006) ein Überblick über kinderliterarische Entwicklungen, Experten der Kinderliteratur werden nicht in großangelegte literaturwissenschaftliche Untersuchungen einbezogen. Gleichzeitig werden die Veranstaltungen, auf denen Fragen der Kinderliteratur besprochen werden (z. B. der alljährliche Tag der estnischen Kinderliteratur in der Stadtbibliothek von Tartu, die Veranstaltungen des Zentrums Estnischer Kinderliteratur), von den Spezialisten der Allgemeinliteratur nicht besucht, Veröffentlichungen der Kinderliteraturwissenschaftler bleiben in metatextueller Hinsicht unbeachtet.



Die niedrige Wertschätzung der Kinderliteraturwissenschaft in Estland mag mit dem Generationenwechsel innerhalb der Kinderliteraturwissenschaft zu tun haben, der während der gesellschaftlichen Umbruchszeit der 1990er Jahre stattfand und noch keine bemerkenswerten Erfolge hervorgebracht hat, aber sie könnte auch daran liegen, dass die Arbeiten der Kinderliteraturexperten zu wenig theoretisch fundiert sind. Obwohl sich die Situation in den letzten Jahren geändert hat und die Kinderliteraturwissenschaftler Estlands gattungs- und medientheoretische, *gender*-orientierte oder semiotische Analysen vorgelegt haben, ist immer noch ein Mangel an literaturtheoretischen Reflexionen in ihren Arbeiten zu beobachten. Der Grund dafür liegt meiner Meinung nach im veralteten Verständnis der estnischen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur. Was bedeutet es genau?

Die estnische Kinder- und Jugendliteratur wird bis heute von einem belletristik- und wertorientierten, biographisch-deskriptiven und nationalromantischen Standpunkt definiert und analysiert, welcher in vieler Hinsicht nicht mehr zeitgemäß ist. Mit dem Charakteristikum "belletristik- und wertorientiert" meine ich, dass die Kinderliteraturwissenschaft in Estland zu stark auf schöngestige Texte mit ästhetischem Wert beschränkt ist und zu wenig mit den Veränderungen des Literatursystems rechnet. Dabei werden die Zuteilungen "schöngestig" oder "ästhetisch wertvoll" von der Sicht des Forschers zum Zeitpunkt der Betrachtung vorgenommen, was sowohl auf frühere Jahrhunderte als auch auf die gegenwärtige Situation übertragen nicht immer angebracht ist. Denn die Kinder einst wie heute beschäftig(t)en sich nicht nur mit ästhetisch wertvollen schöngestigen Texten, sondern zu ihrer Lektüre gehör(t)en auch Schul- und Sachbücher, Zeitungs- und Zeitschriftenartikel, Erwachsenenbücher und heutzutage immer mehr auch Filme, TV-Unterhaltungsprogramme, Hörbücher, Online-Literatur und sonstiges. Also müsste auch die Kinderliteraturwissenschaft in ihren Untersuchungen mit den Veränderungen des Literatur-Begriffes und -Systems rechnen und stärker interdisziplinär verfahren. Zu denken wäre hier an die Einbeziehung der Kindheitsforschung, der Medien- und Kunstkritik u. ä.

Das Charakteristikum "biographisch-deskriptiv" bedeutet, dass sich die Erforschung der estnischen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur vor

allem auf Werke einzelner großer Autoren beschränkt ist und andere wichtige Komponente der literarischen Kommunikation wie z. B. das Medium, den Vermittler, den Leser und den Kontext außer Acht läßt. Eine Neudefinition des Untersuchungsgegenstandes, der diese Aspekte stärker berücksichtigen würde, könnte mehr genre-, text-, medien- und rezeptionstheoretische Aspekte in die kinderliteraturwissenschaftliche Analysen einbringen.

Mit dem Charakteristikum "nationalromantisch" verweise ich darauf, dass unter estnischer Kinderliteratur bis jetzt eine Literatur verstanden wurde, die von ethnischen Esten, in estnischer Sprache und hauptsächlich in Estland für estnische Kinder geschaffen wurde. Gleichzeitig wissen wir, dass im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert mehrere deutschbaltische Autoren estnischsprachige Texte für estnische Kinder vorgelegt bzw. aus dem Deutschen übersetzt haben, aus dem 20. und 21. Jahrhundert sind russischstämmige Autoren bekannt, die zweisprachig verfahren. Bedenkt man noch, dass viele estnischsprachige Texte aus früheren Zeiten eigentlich Übersetzungen oder Adaptationen fremdsprachiger Werke sind oder von ihnen stark beeinflusst, wird die Frage nach dem estnischen Ursprung noch prekärer. Erweitert man den Begriff der estnischen Kinderliteratur um die kulturgeographische Dimension, könnte man die vielfältigen intertextuellen und interkulturellen Beziehungen der estnischen Kinderliteratur und auch der Kinderliteraturen in Estland besser studieren. Übersetzungswissenschaftliche, intertextuelle, interkulturelle und literatursoziologische Analysen könnten dabei hilfreich sein.

Und zuletzt soll noch erwähnt werden, dass die Untersuchung der estnischen Kinderliteratur bis heute noch unter der sowjetideologischen Vereinnahmung leidet, denn die meisten Überblicksdarstellungen, Nachschlagewerke und historischen Abrisse der estnischen Kinderliteratur, die es heute gibt, wurden während der stark ideologisierten Sowjetzeit verfasst. In der Sowjetunion, darunter auch in Sowjet-Estland, herrschte die marxistisch-leninistische Ideologie, zu deren Leitprinzipien der Klassenkampf, der Kollektivismus, der Atheismus und die Arbeiterziehung der Bürger gehörten, das Kunstsystem musste die Prinzipien des sog. sowjetischen Realismus verfolgen. Zwischen 1940–1991 stand sowohl die Produktion, Vermittlung, Rezeption als auch die Untersuchung der estnischen

(Kinder-)Literatur unter der marxistisch-leninistischen Ideologie, in deren Folge mehrere Verzerrungen des literarischen Gesamtbildes und weiße Flecken bei ihrer Untersuchung entstanden sind. Einige gesellschaftliche Diskurse wie etwa die Religion oder Autoren wie etwa deutschbaltische Adelige wurden aus der Literaturgeschichte ausgeklammert bzw. ihre Bedeutung wurde heruntergespielt. Es wird noch ange dauern, bis die Lücken und Verzerrungen, die während der Sowjetzeit entstanden sind, beseitigt werden.

Im Folgenden erläutere ich die Begriffe "Kinderliteratur" und "estnisch" im Einzelnen und mache Vorschläge wie man sie künftig sowohl für historische als auch für gegenwärtige Analysen einsetzen könnte.

## 2. Annäherungen an den Begriff "Kinder- und Jugendliteratur"

Es gehört zu den Gemeinplätzen der heutigen Kinderliteraturwissenschaft, dass es keine einheitliche und für alle Zeiten und Kulturen gültige Definition der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur geben kann. Auch darüber herrscht heute Einigkeit, dass sie nicht anhand eines fest umgrenzten Textkorpus, z. B. anhand der an die junge Generation gerichteten schöngestigten Texte definiert werden kann, denn Kinder und Jugendliche rezipieren sehr vielfältige Literatur. Es ist auch wichtig zu wissen, dass nicht alle Texte, die speziell an Kinder oder Jugendliche adressiert sind, von ihnen Anerkennung finden, d. h. von ihnen angenommen und gelesen werden. Alle diese Aspekte muss man bei der Neudefinition der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur berücksichtigen.

Um den Begriff "Kinder- und Jugendliteratur" möglichst umfassend zu definieren, schlägt der deutsche Kinderliteraturwissenschaftler Hans-Heino Ewers eine handlungs- und kommunikationstheoretische Annäherung an das Phänomen vor, die ich fruchtbar auch für die Erforschung der estnischen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur halte. Ich stütze mich im Folgenden auf Ewers elektronisches Manuskript, das auf der Internetseite seiner Forschungsstätte des Instituts

für Jugendbuchforschung der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität in Frankfurt am Main zu finden ist (Ewers 2009a), im Jahr 2009 ist auch die englische Übersetzung seiner Theorie herausgekommen (Ewers 2009b). Weiter unten beziehe ich mich nur auf diejenigen Gedanken von Ewers, die für die Neudefinition der estnischen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur von Nutzen sind und erweitere manche Ausführungen, wo es mir angebracht scheint.

In seinem Theorievorschlag geht Ewers von einem dreiteiligen Kommunikationsmodell mit Sender bzw. Adressanten, Botschaft bzw. Adressierung und Empfänger bzw. Adressaten aus. Hinzu kommen weitere wichtige Bestandteile des Kommunikationsaktes wie das Medium bzw. der Sendekanal und der Kontext, der von Ewers zwar nicht genannt wird, aber den man an dieser Stelle anführen könnte. Den Kontext der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur bilden alle gesellschaftlichen Diskurse dessen Bezugsfelder einerseits Kinder und Jugendliche und andererseits literarische Aktivitäten sind. Zu denken wäre hier beispielsweise an das vielfältige soziale Beziehungsgefüge, in welches ein kleiner Mensch eingebettet ist (Familie, Schule, Freizeitangebote, Rechtssystem, Gesundheitswesen etc.) und das bei der Untersuchung der Kinderliteratur von Bedeutung sein könnte.

Anstatt von Kinder- und Jugendliteratur spricht Ewers von einer kinder- und jugendliterarischen Kommunikation, wobei "mit "literarisch" keine Eingrenzung auf Belletristik vorgenommen sein soll, sondern stets auch sachliterarische Kommunikationen mitgemeint sind" (Ewers 2009a: 1). Damit erweitert Ewers wesentlich den Begriff "literarisch", der nicht nur auf schöngestige und ästhetisch wertvolle Texte beschränkt bleibt, sondern auch Nachschlagewerke, populärwissenschaftliche Abhandlungen und sonstige Schliteratur miteinschließt. Die kinder- und jugendliterarische Kommunikation unterscheidet sich von der weiter umfassenden literarischen Kommunikation dadurch, dass Kinder und Jugendliche darin als Adressaten literarischer Botschaften auftreten. Gleichzeitig beteiligen sie sich auch an anderen Kommunikationssituationen wie etwa an der Freizeit- und Alltagskommunikation, an der audiovisuellen oder musikalischen Kommunikation etc. Wenn Kinder Erwachsenenliteratur lesen, die nicht speziell an sie gerichtet ist (z. B. Werke von

Stephen King, Terry Pratchett, aus der estnischen Literatur können Eduard Bornhöhe, Eduard Vilde, Juhan Liiv, Mait Metsanurk u. a. genannt werden), dann nehmen sie an allgemein-literarischer Kommunikation teil. Die Beschäftigung mit allgemeinkommunikativen Lektüreprozessen gehört laut Ewers nicht zu den direkten Aufgabenfeldern von Kinderliteraturwissenschaft, sondern in den Bereich der Lese(r)forschung, was allerdings auch ein Teilgebiet der Literaturwissenschaft ist.

## 2.1. Differenzierung der Senderrolle

Die handlungs- und kommunikationstheoretische Annäherung ermöglicht Ewers die kinder- und jugendliterarische Situation umfassend zu charakterisieren und die bisher zu eng gedachten Begriffe breiter zu fassen. Am deutlichsten kommt es zum Ausdruck bei der Position des Senders der literarischen Botschaft, der in Ewers' Modell detailliert aufgefächert wird. Gewöhnlich verstehen wir unter dem Sender der kinder- oder jugendliterarischen Botschaft einen Erzeuger bzw. Autor eines Textes, der seine Botschaft über verschiedene Vermittler (Redakteure, Literaturagenten, Bibliothekare, Journalisten, Lehrer, Kinder(literatur)institutionen etc.) an Kinder oder Jugendliche richtet, wobei diese von allen Beteiligten als solche auch angenommen und akzeptiert wird. Diese Situation nennt Ewers (2009a: 4) originäre kinder- und jugendliterarische Kommunikation.

In der kinder- und jugendliterarischen Kommunikation ist aber auch der Weiterleiter oder Vermittler als Sender der literarischen Botschaft zu verstehen. Zum Beispiel ein Zeitungsredakteur, der in der Kinderzeitung oder -zeitschrift Texte abdruckt, die ursprünglich nicht für Kinder gedacht waren oder ein Lesebuchverfasser, der neben Kindertexten auch allgemeine Literatur präsentiert. Estnische Kinderliteratur kennt mehrere solche Beispiele. Eine der führenden Persönlichkeiten der Bewegung des nationalen Erwachens im 19. Jahrhundert, Carl Robert Jakobson, hat ein dreiteiliges "Kooli Luge-mise raamat" (I – 1867, II – 1875, III – 1876) (Dt. Das Schullesebuch) zusammengestellt, das zahlreiche Gedichte von Lydia Koidula, Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald, Friedrich Brandt und anderen

Autoren beinhaltetete, deren Texte ursprünglich nicht für Kinder gedacht waren. Der erste Teil des Schullesebuches erreichte eine unglaubliche Popularität; zwischen 1867 und 1906 wurde es insgesamt in 16 Auflagen mit mehr als 200 000 Exemplaren herausgegeben, womit es zu einem der am meisten verbreiteten estnischsprachigen Lehrbücher aller Zeiten aufstieg (Kahu 1969: 413). Aufgrund Jakobsons Herausgebertätigkeit haben Gedichte von Koidula, Kreutzwald und anderen sog. Erwachsenenautoren einen großen Einfluss auf die Ideale der estnischen Jugend gehabt und gehören seitdem zum Kanon der estnischen Kinderliteratur. Ein anderes gutes Beispiel für eine Vermittlertätigkeit, die eine aktive Teilnahme an der Kinder- und jugendliterarischen Kommunikation zum Vorschein bringt, ist Jaan Bergmann. Bergmann war der erste Redakteur der ersten Kinderzeitung Estlands "Lasteleht" (Dt Kinderzeitung), die zwischen 1900–1940 erschien. Er hat in "Lasteleht" teils anonyme Erinnerungstexte, historische Erzählungen, Gedichte und Prosawerke, Mythen und Legenden abgedruckt, die ursprünglich nicht an Kinder bestimmt waren. Nach dem Erscheinen in "Lasteleht" wurden sie aber auch in Kinderalmanache oder -anthologien aufgenommen und somit zum Bestandteil der Kinderliteratur.

Ein Vermittler kann die literarische Botschaft unverändert an Kinder weitersenden, aber er kann sie auch modifizieren, z. B. mit einer Moral ausstatten, Kürzungen am Text vornehmen, in einem bestimmten Kontext durch andere Texte oder Bilder erscheinen lassen, in einen neuen kinder- oder jugendspezifischen Sendekanal einführen etc. Die Herausgabe allgemeinliterarischer Texte in Kinder- und Jugendzeitschriften, Rundfunk- und Fernsehprogrammen oder auf Internetseiten ist ein klassischer Fall von solchen Modifizierungen.

Ewers sagt, dass als Vermittler oder Weiterleiter der literarischen Botschaft auch Eltern, Lehrer, Bibliothekare, Journalisten oder Institutionen fungieren können, die bestimmte Texte geeignet für Kinder oder Jugendliche halten und diese in Form von Buchgeschenken, Lektüreempfehlungen, Buchbesprechungen und Empfehlungslisten an junge Leser weiter leiten (Ewers 2009a: 3). "In einzelnen Fällen kann sich ein dauerhafter Konsens herstellen: Teile des allgemeinliterarischen Angebots können so eine Markierung als

geeignete potentielle Kinder- und Jugendliteratur erfahren, ohne ursprünglich für die Lesergruppe gedacht gewesen zu sein und auch ohne eine gesonderte, auf diesen Empfängerkreis zugeschnittene Publikation zu erfahren.” (Ewers 2009a: 3) Aus estnischer Kinderliteratur findet man mehrere Texte, die ursprünglich nicht an Kinder oder Jugendliche adressiert waren, aber durch Empfehlungen zu diesen geworden sind. Beispielhaft sind hier die Romane “Väike Illimar. Ühe lapsepõlve lugu” (1937) (Dt. Illimar. Roman einer Kindheit, 1959) von Friedebert Tuglas und “Mina olin siin: esimene arest” (2005) (Ich war hier: der erste Arrest) von Sass Henno.

Auch der dritte Sendertyp der kinder- und jugendliterarischen Kommunikation erzeugt eine literarische Botschaft nicht selbst, sondern modifiziert oder adaptiert diese, bis sie für das junge Publikum annehmbar wird. Zu diesem Typus zählen Bearbeiter, Übersetzer, Nachdichter oder -erzähler einer literarischen Botschaft. Eines der bekanntesten internationalen Beispiele davon ist Daniel Defoe’s Abenteuergeschichte “Robinson Crusoe” (1719), der über Joachim Heinrich Campes “Robinson der Jüngere” (1779–1780) und Johann David Wyss’ “Der Schweizerische Robinson” (1812) schon am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts nach Estland gelangte und hier im Laufe des 19. Jahrhunderts mehrere teils anonyme Bearbeitungen erfuhr (Jaaksoo 1987: 191–192; LKS 2006: 156).

Die Grenze zwischen dem Erzeuger und dem Bearbeiter einer literarischen Botschaft kann unklar sein, denn die Bearbeitungen reichen unterschiedlich weit. Wenn “der Sender die eigene Botschaft ausdrücklich als die Modifikation einer zuvor empfangenen Botschaft ausgibt” (Ewers 2009a: 4), sprechen wir vom Bearbeiter und nicht vom Erzeuger der Botschaft. So z. B. der estnische Kinderautor Eno Raud, der das von Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald zusammengestellte estnische Nationalepos “Kalevipoeg” (1862) und weitere Legenden und Mythen von alten Esten für kleine Leser bearbeitete.

Aus früheren Jahrhunderten sind allerdings viele Fälle bekannt, die die Tatsache der Bearbeitung oder Übersetzung verschweigen und das Werk unter eigenem Namen herausgeben. Es ist für alle Kulturen bis zu einer bestimmten Entwicklungsphase eigen gewesen, dass keine strenge Trennung zwischen der originären Literatur und der Adaptation oder der Übersetzung gemacht wird – man denke

beispielsweise an die antike *aemulatio*-Konzeption –, in Estland dauerte es bis zum 20. Jahrhundert. Man kann sogar behaupten, dass der Großteil der estnischen kinderliterarischen Texte der früheren Jahrhunderte eigentlich Übersetzungen oder Bearbeitungen deutschsprachiger Vorlagen sind, obwohl sie unter den Namen der hiesigen Autoren erschienen.

Um welche deutschen (Kinder-)Texte oder Autoren es sich dabei genau handelte, kann man aufgrund der fehlenden Informationen oder verschollenen Vorlagen oft leider nicht mehr feststellen und nur einige Quellen sind nachgewiesen worden. So hat Friedrich Gustav Arvelius ein zweiteiliges Schullesebuch „Üks Kaunis Jutto- ja Öppetusse-Ramat“ (I – 1782, II – 1787) (Dt. Ein schönes Geschichts- und Lehrbuch) herausgegeben, dessen erster Teil eine ziemlich genaue Übertragung des ältesten deutschen Volksschullesebuches von Friedrich Eberhard v. Rochow „Der Kinderfreund. Ein Lesebuch zum Gebrauch in Landschulen“ (1776) ist. Der zweite Teil des Schullesebuches kann in der Tat Arvelius zugeschrieben werden, aber er ist auch nicht mehr eindeutig an Kinder gerichtet und bleibt in der künstlerischen Gestaltung hinter dem ersten Teil zurück. Auch der vorhin erwähnte C. R. Jakobson hat viel aus dem Deutschen übersetzt und bearbeitet und unter seinem Namen herausgegeben (siehe Matheus 2008).

Zusammenfassend kann man sagen, dass die Differenzierung der Senderposition der kinder- und jugendliterarischen Kommunikation viele neue Möglichkeiten für die Erforschung der estnischen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur bietet. Dadurch wird die Kommunikationssituation wesentlich genauer und umfassender beschrieben als wenn man nur von einem originären Autoren ausgehen würde. Darüber hinaus scheint mir wichtig, dass dieser Ansatz die Rolle des Übersetzers, Herausgebers oder eines anderen Vermittlers gegenüber dem Ersterzeuger aufwertet, was wichtig ist, denn sie spielen in der kinder- und jugendliterarischen Kommunikation oft eine zentrale Rolle. Zeitungs- und Zeitschriftenredakteure wählen Texte aus, die ihrer Meinung nach für Kinder und Jugendliche geeignet sind, Übersetzer und Verlagsagenten treffen eine Auswahl, welche Kindertexte übersetzt werden sollen, Lehrer und Bibliothekare geben Kindern und Jugendlichen Literaturempfehlungen und formen dadurch ihren



literarischen Geschmack und Eltern kaufen für ihre Nachkommen literarische Erzeugnisse. Diese Asymmetrie der Kommunikation – Erwachsene bestimmen, was und wie Kinder lesen sollten – ist für die Kinder- und Jugendliteratur charakteristisch und wird im vorgestellten Modell gut zum Ausdruck gebracht. Die angeführten Beispiele aus der estnischen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur haben aber gezeigt, dass das Spektrum von Sendern kinder- und jugendliterarischer Botschaften viel breiter ist, als man bisher angenommen hat und dass es hier noch viele Namen und Institutionen zu entdecken gilt, deren Beitrag zur estnischen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur sehr bedeutsam (gewesen) ist.

## 2.2. Kinder- und jugendliterarische Botschaften

Neben dem Sender spielt im Kommunikationsmodell auch die Botschaft, die gesendet wird, eine wichtige Rolle. Dabei handelt es sich gewöhnlich um kinder- und jugendliterarische Texte oder Werke, inklusive Bilderbücher und Comics, aber heutzutage immer mehr auch um audiovisuelle oder elektronische Medienprodukte wie z. B. Hörspiele oder interaktive Hypertexte. Man kann kinderliterarische Botschaften sehr unterschiedlich systematisieren, z. B. nach Epochen, Genren, Themen, Formen (Lesebuch, Bilderbuch, Beschäftigungsbuch, Almanach, etc.), Darstellungsarten (realistisch, fantastisch), Sendekanaltypen (Periodika, Rundfunk, multimediale Angebote etc.), Altersstufen, Geschlechtern, ideologischen oder weltanschaulichen Grundannahmen (christlich, jüdisch, sowjetisch) etc. Man kann von der sogenannten originär eigenen oder von der Übersetzungsliteratur sprechen oder kanonische Texte von den trivialen trennen. Im Grunde sind diese Kategorien für die Kinderliteraturwissenschaft gut bekannt, denn darauf beruht die kinderliteraturwissenschaftliche Korpusbildung.

Aber Ewers bringt in die Diskussion um die kinder- und jugendliterarischen Botschaften einige neue Aspekte hinein, die meiner Meinung nach die Situation treffend charakterisieren. Er macht den Vorschlag, die speziell an Kinder oder Jugendliche gerichteten

Botschaften als intendierte Kinder- und Jugendlektüre<sup>3</sup> zu bezeichnen (Ewers 2009a: 7), ganz gleich, ob sie von Anfang an oder erst durch einen Vermittler eine Adressierung an Kinder erfahren haben. Dazu gehören alle Texte, die von Erwachsenen an Kinder gerichtet sind, aber auch Texte, die Kinder oder Jugendliche selbst für ihre Altersgenossen verfassen. Ewers nennt diesen letzten Typus nicht, aber ich finde, dass er kaum zu ignorieren ist, vor allem wenn man an zahlreiche Schulalmanache oder an Kinderperiodika denkt, die Eigenproduktionen von Kindern und Jugendlichen veröffentlichen. Diejenigen Botschaften, die "bei ihrem erstmaligen Erscheinen, bei ihrer Erstpublikation bereits eine Adressierung an Kinder und Jugendliche aufweisen" (Ewers 2009a: 9), z. B. im Titel, im Untertitel, durch Einbandtexte, Illustrationen, o. ä., nennt Ewers originäre Kinder- und Jugendliteratur. Die originäre Literatur stellt die größte Untergruppe innerhalb der intendierten Kinder- und Jugendlektüre dar und gehört zum Hauptuntersuchungsgebiet der Kinderliteraturwissenschaft.

Eine weitere Unterscheidung, die Ewers macht, bezieht sich auf die Schullektüre und die unterrichtsbegleitenden Texte. Er will aus der intendierten Kinder- und Jugendlektüre diese Botschaften ausschließen, denn zur kinder- und jugendliterarischen Kommunikation sollen nur solche Texte gehören, die vom jungen Publikum in seiner Freizeit und mehr oder minder freiwillig gelesen werden und keinen pädagogischen Zweck erfüllen. Er muss allerdings zugeben, dass diese Trennung für historische Entwicklungsphasen der Kinderliteratur kaum möglich ist, weil in früheren Jahrhunderten Schul- und Freizeitlektüren voneinander nicht einfach auseinander zu halten waren; nahezu jede Lektüre besaß einen dominant belehrenden Charakter und gleichzeitig konnte von einem ausdifferenzierten Schulwesen noch nicht die Rede sein (Ewers 2009: 7). Schwierigkeiten können auch mit den sachliterarischen Texten von heute entstehen, denn es ist nicht einfach die in den Unterricht eingebundenen und die in der Freizeit zu lesenden Sachtexte voneinander zu trennen. Vor allem Enzyklopädien, Lexika und andere Nach-

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<sup>3</sup> Mit "Lektüre" meint er den Gegenstand, die gelesenen Titel oder Werke, nicht den Prozess des Lesens.

schlagewerke können sowohl in der Schule als auch in der Freizeit rezipiert werden. Grundsätzlich finde ich aber die Einbeziehung der Sachliteratur in die Kinderliteraturforschung wichtig.

Bei der Erläuterung der intendierten Kinder- und Jugendlektüre macht Ewers noch eine notwendige Einschränkung. Er unterscheidet erfolgreiche, d. h. von Kindern tatsächlich angenommene und gelesene Kommunikationsangebote von den nicht erfolgreichen. Erfolgreiches Angebot bedeutet, dass die vom Sender an Kinder und Jugendliche adressierte literarische Botschaft (intendiertes Lektüreangebot) von ihnen tatsächlich gelesen wird. Er nennt solche Texte auch faktische Kinder- und Jugendlektüre (Ewers 2009a: 8). Unter den Angeboten, die an Kinder und Jugendliche gemacht werden, gibt es aber in jeder literarischen Epoche auch solche, die von ihnen nicht gelesen werden, Ewers bezeichnet sie als nicht-erfolgreiche Lektüreangebote.

Aus der Geschichte der estnischen Kinderliteratur findet man dafür ein prominentes Beispiel, das Schullesebuch von Otto Wilhelm Masing „ABD ehk Luggemise-Ramat Lastele, kes tahavad luggema õppida“ (Dt. ABD oder ein Lesebuch für Kinder, die lesekundig werden wollen) aus dem Jahre 1795. Das Werk von Masing nimmt in der Geschichte der estnischen Kinderliteratur eine wichtige Stelle ein, weil es die erste estnischsprachige Fibel ist, die neben religiösen Texten auch acht weltliche beinhaltete. Gleichzeitig ist bekannt, dass sie sich nicht gut verkaufte, weshalb der Verfasser die restlichen 300 Exemplare verbrannte (Anvelt 1979: 43). Die genaue Auflagenzahl ist zwar nicht überliefert, aber sie kann zu der damaligen Zeit nicht besonders hoch gewesen sein, weshalb anzunehmen ist, dass die Fibel eigentlich nicht ihr Zielpublikum erreichte und seine Rolle in der Geschichte der estnischen Kinderliteratur vielleicht nicht so groß ist wie bisher angenommen. Auch heutzutage kann man vermuten, dass viele (Kinder-)Texte, die sozusagen im Eigenverlag erscheinen, ihr Zielpublikum oft nicht erreichen, weil bei ihnen die üblichen Distributions- und Rezeptionsmechanismen fehlen (Buchladen nehmen solche Texte nicht in ihr Sortiment auf, es mangelt an Werbung über solche Publikationen etc.) Wir können resümieren: nicht jedes erschienene (Kinder-)Buch wird zum literarischen Fakt und übt eine Auswirkung auf den Leser oder auf das Literatursystem aus.

Ewers verweist in seinen theoretischen Überlegungen noch auf einen wichtigen Umstand, womit man bei der Untersuchung der Kinderliteratur rechnen sollte. Kinder und Jugendliche lesen in ihrer Freizeit auch Texte, die nicht speziell an sie gerichtet sind (z. B. Erwachsenenliteratur, Medienangebote etc.) und die man als "unbeabsichtigte Lektüreangebote" oder "nicht-intendierter Literaturkonsum" (Ewers 2009a: 9) bezeichnen kann. Zusammen mit den erfolgreichen Angeboten aus der intendierten Kinder- und Jugendliteratur bilden diese Texte die faktische Kinder- und Jugendliteratur, d. h. in der Tat gelesene Literatur.

Die von Kindern und Jugendlichen konsumierte nicht intendierte Literatur kann von Erwachsenen toleriert oder bekämpft werden. Aus der Geschichte sind zahlreiche Fälle bekannt, wo sie aktiv bekämpft wurde. In Sowjet-Estland hat man z. B. eine Zeit lang kinder- oder jugendliterarische Lektüreangebote tabuisiert, die Gewalt, Drogen, Alkohol, Krankheiten und Sex thematisierten oder aus der Zeit der sogenannten bürgerlichen Estnischen Republik (1918–1940) stammten. Die zuletzt genannten waren ideologisch verdächtig, weil sie den Kapitalismus oder die Ideen der Eigenstaatlichkeit verherrlichten. Da während der Sowjetzeit alle Kommunikationsprozesse des Literatursystems einer strengen ideologischen Kontrolle unterlagen, konnten solche verbotenen Texte in der Regel gar nicht zu den Kindern oder Jugendlichen gelangen, aber es sind auch Fälle bekannt, wo junge Leser z. B. ausländische Comics mit Gewaltszenen oder freizügiger Sexualität in die Hand bekamen, weil Verwandte, die in der Emigration lebten, sie über Büchersendungen zugänglich machten.

Zusammenfassend kann man sagen, dass man das Gesamtangebot an kinder- und jugendliterarischen Botschaften einer Epoche in drei große Gruppen einteilen kann: in Schul- und unterrichtsbegleitende Lektüreangebote, in intendierte kinder- und jugendliterarische Angebote, die von Erwachsenen oder von Kindern selbst an Kinder und Jugendliche offeriert werden und schließlich in die Texte, die Kinder und Jugendliche selbständig zur Lektüre auswählen. Faktisch lesen Kinder und Jugendliche Texte von allen diesen Gruppen, aber an den Rändern einer jeden Gruppe findet man auch Angebote, die bei ihnen keinen Erfolg erzielen. Die Kinderliteraturforschung muss mit solchen Entwicklungen rechnen. Nimmt man die traditionellen Text-

korpora der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur hinzu, hat man damit ein Beschreibungsinventar gewonnen, das den Bereich der kinder- und jugendliterarischen Botschaften umfassend zu analysieren ermöglicht.

### 2.3. Sendekanäle der kinder- und jugendliterarischen Botschaften

Die Publikations- und Verbreitungskanäle der kinder- und jugendliterarischen Kommunikation können unterschiedlich sein. Eine Botschaft kann in schriftlicher Form übertragen werden (Manuskript, Buch, Anthologie, Kinderzeitschrift), aber sie kann auch in gesprochener (Volksdichtung, Hörbuch, Radio), audiovisueller (TV, Video) oder elektronischer Form (Internet) vermittelt werden. Durch die rasante technische Entwicklung der letzten Jahrzehnte haben sich die Sendekanäle der kinder- und jugendliterarischen Botschaften vervielfältigt und somit wurde auch das Untersuchungsfeld der Kinder- und Jugendliteraturwissenschaft aufgefächert.

Bei schriftlichen Formen der Kommunikation sind ältere handschriftliche Botschaften von gedruckten zu unterscheiden, obwohl Ewers auf handschriftliche Texte nicht gesondert eingeht. Bis jetzt sind die älteren handschriftlichen Texte in die Untersuchung der estnischen Kinderliteratur noch nicht einbezogen worden, obwohl man an ihrer Existenz nicht zweifeln sollte. Z. B. ist bekannt, dass in den deutschbaltischen Adelsfamilien im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert Kinder- und Haustheater gespielt wurde, die Aufarbeitung von (Familien-)Archiven könnte allerdings mühsam werden. Die gedruckten Botschaften lassen sich bekanntlich in Bücher und in periodisch erscheinende Druckerzeugnisse wie Zeitungen, Zeitschriften, Kalender oder Almanache aufteilen. Ewers sagt, dass bei schriftlichen Botschaften das Material, die Drucktechnik, die Aufmachung, das Format, die Innengestaltung, der Satz und die Illustrierung ein besonderes Gepräge aufweisen, wobei die Verwendung von Illustrationen, die seit dem 19. Jahrhundert massiv

stattfindet, zu den auffälligsten Kennzeichen der kinder- und jugendliterarischen Kommunikation gehört (Ewers 2009a: 11).

In den letzten Jahren ist verstärkt eine Tendenz zu beobachten, dass kinder- und jugendliterarische Zeitungen und Zeitschriften auch oder sogar ausschließlich durch elektronische Kanäle verbreitet werden. Man denke etwa an die estnische Kinderzeitung "Täheke" (Dt. Sternchen), die seit 2004 im Internet zugänglich ist, aber weiterhin auch in Printform erscheint oder an zahlreiche elektronische Schulzeitungen, die von Kindern selbst gemacht werden. Welche Änderungen im Rezeptionsverhalten des Publikums die elektronische Verbreitung der Kinderperiodika mit sich bringt, handelt es sich bei der Internetausgabe um eine bloße Kopie der Druckzeitung oder werden darin auch interaktive Spiele, Animationen, andere Texte als in der Printausgabe etc. vorgeführt, kann die Kinderliteraturwissenschaft über neuartige Medienanalysen herausarbeiten.

Für alle kinder- und jugendliterarische Sendekanäle bietet sich der Begriff "Kinder- und Jugendmedien" an, wobei man klar trennen muss, was speziell an Kinder und Jugendliche adressiert ist (intendierte Kinder- und Jugendmedien) und was sie in ihrer Freizeit benutzen, wobei diese Kanäle womöglich gar nicht an sie gerichtet sind (faktische Kinder- und Jugendmedien).

### 2.3 Adressat der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur

Die letzte wichtige Position der kinder- und jugendliterarischen Kommunikation ist diejenige des Empfängers bzw. des Adressaten, der entweder Leser, Hörer oder Zuschauer, kurzum Rezipient der literarischen Botschaft ist. Bei der Diskussion um den Adressaten geht es hauptsächlich um das Alter des Rezipienten, während die Geschlechtsbestimmung kaum Fragen aufwirft, denn literarische Botschaften können entweder an Mädchen oder an Jungen adressiert sein.

Die UN-Kinderrechtskonvention definiert Kinder als Menschen, die das 18. Lebensjahr noch nicht abgeschlossen haben, in der Kindheitsforschung wird das Kindesalter (0–10/12) vom Jugendalter (12–18) getrennt (siehe LKS 2006: 99). Je nach Kulturkreisen kann die

Unterteilung der Altersstufen ein wenig differieren, aber in der Regel werden Kinderbücher mit ihren verschiedenen Differenzierungen von Jugendbüchern unterschieden. In der gegenwärtigen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur können wir aber beobachten, dass Texte, die für jugendliche Leser gedacht sind, die Altersgrenze nach oben offen lassen und man spricht von Angeboten für "junge Erwachsene" oder gar für "*All-Ages*". Doppeladressierte Texte hat es schon immer gegeben (z. B. Tove Jansson's Mumin-Bücher (1945–1993) oder Eno Raud's "*Naksitrallid*" (1972–1982) (Dt Drei lustige Gesellen, 1975–1983)), aber heutzutage hat die Anzahl der doppel- und mehrfach adressierten Angebote so stark zugenommen, dass man dieses Phänomen sogar gesondert untersucht (siehe Blume 2005). In Estland sind Analysen zu altersgrenzenlosen Texten noch selten zu finden, aber einige Titel von Andrus Kivirähk könnten dazu durchaus auffordern.

Wenn der klare Adressatenbezug, das eines der auffälligsten Kennzeichen der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur ist, allmählich verschwimmt, steigt die Nachfrage nach sachkundlichen literaturwissenschaftliche Analysen.

### 3. Ambivalenz des "estnischen"

Nachdem ein theoretisches Modell für die Erfassung der Kinderliteratur vorgestellt worden ist, soll nun im zweiten Schritt auch der Begriff "estnisch" kurz erläutert werden. In der Einleitung war bereits davon die Rede, dass die heutige Kinderliteraturwissenschaft Estlands von einem nationalromantischen Verständnis ausgeht, das die Blut- und Sprachverbindung der Literatur betont. Ich habe auch darauf hingewiesen, dass die Erforscher der Allgemeinliteratur, die sich mit der Genese der estnischen Literatur befassen, den Begriff "estnisch" neu zu definieren versuchen und dafür mehrere Vorschläge gemacht haben.

Kurz gesagt sind sich die einen (z. B. Hasselblatt 2008) sicher, dass für die Definition der estnischen Literatur das Sprachkriterium ausreichend ist, was bedeutet, dass zur estnischen Literatur alle Texte gehören könnten, die auf Estnisch verfasst worden sind, ganz gleich

ob der Autor ein Deutscher, ein Schwede oder ein Russe (gewesen) ist und ob sie in Estland oder außerhalb entstanden sind. Die anderen (z. B. Lukas 2008) versuchen den Begriff "estnisch" geographisch und kulturgeschichtlich auszudehnen und sprechen von einer mehrsprachigen baltischen Schriftkultur, die in der hiesigen Gegend mehrere Jahrhunderte vorherrschte. Es bleibt allerdings unklar, ob damit eine Art geistiger Einflussraum, in dem sich verschiedene Sprachen, Texte, Weltanschauungen, Diskurse und Kulturen gegenseitig befruchten gemeint ist oder etwas anderes. Am provokativsten ist der Vorschlag von Jaan Undusk (2008), der von der estnischen (und lettischen) Literatur als vom "Hinterhof der deutschbaltischen Literatur" oder von seiner "niederen Stilschicht" spricht, die während ihrer Herausbildung an das einfache Volk gerichtet war und lange Zeit nicht alle Diskursformationen (z. B. den historisch-politischen Diskurs) oder Stilrichtungen (z. B. den Hochstil) hervorbringen konnte. Undusk sagt, dass die deutschbaltische Literatur die gemeinsame Wurzel der estnischen und lettischen Literatur ist und meint damit, dass die Deutschbalten diese beiden Literaturen in deutscher Sprache in einem deutschbaltischen Gedächtnisraum gründeten. Alle drei Positionen sind sehr inspirierend sowohl in Hinblick auf ältere Literaturperioden als auch auf neuere Entwicklungen und können mit kleinen Modifikationen auch für die Neudefinition der estnischen Kinderliteratur verwendet werden.

Sicherlich stimmen alle dem zu, dass die estnische (Kinder-)Literatur eng an die estnische Sprache gebunden ist, problematischer scheinen mir die geographischen und geistesgeschichtlichen Bestimmungen. Es stimmt, dass die estnische (Kinder-)Literatur innerhalb der deutschsprachigen Kultur entstanden ist, weil Deutsch zwischen dem 12. und 19. Jahrhundert in unserer Region die dominierende Kultursprache war. Aber vorsichtig wäre ich mit dem Begriff "deutschbaltisch". Das deutschbaltische Selbstverständnis, darunter auch die deutschbaltische Literatur, ist ein Produkt des 19. Jahrhunderts (siehe Ungern-Sternberg 2009; Hennoste 2009) wie auch das estnische oder lettische Selbstverständnis. Die Herausbildung der estnischen (Kinder-)Literatur begann aber viel früher, zu einer Zeit, als es noch kein deutschbaltisches Einheitsgefühl oder keine spezifische deutschbaltische Kultur gegeben hat.



Folglich kann die deutschbaltische Literatur auch nicht die gemeinsame Wurzel der estnischen und lettischen Literatur sein. Die estnische (Kinder-)Literatur wurde zwar von deutschsprachigen Estophilen geschaffen, aber sie waren geistig stärker an ihr Vaterland, Deutschland, als an ihre baltische Ostsee-Heimat gebunden. Dies kann man beobachten, wenn man den Ursprung der Texte und geistiger Strömungen studiert, die in früheren Jahrhunderten nach Estland und ins Estnische gelangten. Sie stammten nämlich hauptsächlich aus dem nord- und ostdeutschen Kulturraum, wo die meisten jungen deutschbaltischen Adeligen vom 16.–18. Jahrhundert ihre Ausbildung erhielten (siehe Tering 2008). Deshalb würde ich hier einfach vom deutschen Kultureinfluss sprechen, der mittels Bearbeitungen, Entlehnungen und Übersetzungen der Deutschbalten ins Estnische gelangte. Oder sogar vom westeuropäisch-deutsch-(baltisch)en Einfluss, denn viele Geistesströmungen aus der französisch- und englischsprachigen Kultur sind über die deutschsprachige Kultur nach Estland und in die estnische Sprache gelangt.

## Zusammenfassung und Ausblick

Die vorangegangenen Ausführungen haben gezeigt, dass es sowohl gesellschaftliche, kulturelle als auch wissenschaftsinterne Gründe gibt, warum eine Neudefinition des Begriffes "estnische Kinderliteratur" notwendig ist. Gestützt einerseits auf das handlungs- und kommunikationstheoretische Modell der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur von Hans-Heino Ewers und andererseits auf den Neuansatz bei der Erfassung des Begriffes "estnisch", kann man sie wesentlich genauer und umfassender bestimmen und analysieren als bisher. Die Erweiterung des Begriffes "estnisch" um die kulturgeographische und mentalitätsgeschichtliche Dimension und die Differenzierung der Senderrolle kinder- und jugendliterarischer Kommunikation ermöglicht den Beitrag der Bearbeiter, Übersetzer und Weiterleiter der literarischen Botschaften eingehender zu untersuchen und besser einzuschätzen, seien sie estnischer, deutsch(baltisch)er, russischer oder anderer Abstammung. Eines kann man aber fest halten: bei der Untersuchung der Genese und der Herausbildung der estnischen

Kinderliteratur spielt das Verhältnis zwischen der deutsch-(baltisch)en und estnischen (Kinder-)Literatur eine zentrale Rolle.

Die von Ewers vorgeschlagene detaillierte Auffächerung der kinder- und jugendliterarischen Kommunikation ermöglicht neben belletristischen Werken auch sachliterarische Texte in die kinderliteraturwissenschaftliche Analysen einzubeziehen. Besonders vielversprechende Perspektiven eröffnen sich für die Untersuchung der estnischsprachigen religiösen Kinderliteratur mit ihren Kinderbibeln, Nacherzählungen der Bibelgeschichten für Kinder (Weihnachtsgeschichten), der Erbauungsliteratur (Gebets- und Gesangsbücher, Kinderpredigten) und Texten für den Religionsunterricht (Evangeliien, Katechismen). Aus den historischen Entwicklungsperioden der estnischen Kinderliteratur bedürfen auch Schul- und Lesebücher, Volksbücher und andere Texttypen, die an der Grenze zu Sachliteratur stehen, einer eingehenden Analyse.

Zum Schluss kann man sagen, dass der handlungs- und kommunikationstheoretische Zugang zu Kinder- und Jugendliteratur diese in ihrem vielfältigen sozialen Beziehungsgefüge zu erforschen ermöglicht. Für aktuelle Entwicklungen können Medienanalysen fruchtbar werden, aber auch andere (interdisziplinäre) Forschungsansätze, die komplexe Analysemöglichkeiten für das kontextuelle Feld der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur anbieten wie etwa die Kindheitsforschung oder die Mentalitätsgeschichte.

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*Literature of Slovenians in Italy:  
A Subsystem of Slovenian Literature or  
a Supranational System?*

Systemisation

The (poly)systemic theory, developed by Itamar Even-Zohar and thoroughly researched on the Slovenian territory by Marijan Dovič, can also be applied to the so-called “smaller” literary systems, like for example the literature of national minorities.

One of these “smaller” literary systems is the one created by Slovenians in Italy: a diverse and dynamic corpus of texts, relations and structures, which are – despite being constantly researched in bio-bibliographies – in many aspects still open to new analysis.

One of these aspects is offered here as food for thought.

The contemporary researchers of this system (Miran Košuta, Marija Pirjevec, Lojzka Bratuž, etc.) agree on the fact that it should be analysed as an autonomous system which is not completely separated from the system of Slovenian national literature. Re-searching a literary system that is not completely autonomous, like the literature of the Slovenian community in Italy, can be demanding, because it is difficult to detach it from its original matter, namely from the Slovenian literary system. The latter is conceived as a large contextual net uniting and interweaving the literature created on the geographical area of Slovenia (canonised “national Slovenian literature”), the literature created on the linguistic area of the Slovenian language (the “literature of Slovenian minorities in Austria, Italy and Hungary”), and the literature produced in areas where Slovenians live (the “literature of emigrated Slovenians”).

The threads of this contextual net are therefore diverse and interwoven and provide many opportunities for research. The system cannot be severed from its body and it may be researched as a micro-cosmos inside a macro-cosmos, where the macro-cosmos is the Slovenian literature, the micro-cosmoses are the fore-mentioned national Slovenian literature, the literature of Slovenian minorities, and the literature of emigrated Slovenians. Our research is focused on the literary system of the Slovenian minority in Italy.

Miran Košuta, who has been working on this system for a long time, is the only scholar who has tried to define this literature typologically. His predecessors did not work so much on the theoretical systemisation and their work was limited to recording data and writers. At that time the analysis of Slovenian literature in Italy was at its beginnings and it did not lead to adequate results. The first analysis of the literature from "across the border" was presented by Martin Jevnikar in 1967 in the literary journal *Mladika*. He called it "zamejska literature" ("cross-border-region literature") and named at the same time its most prominent authors. His work was later continued by Jože Pogačnik in *Slovensko zamejsko in zdomsko slovstvo* (Slovenian Cross-Border-Region Literature and the Literature of Emigrated Slovenians) in 1972. He revised Jevnikar's work and published a first comprehensive publication that described the so-called cross-border-region literature, which is today outdated. Later on, the research work on this system has been sporadically continued by Lojzka Bratuž (especially in her so-called "older literature"), Marija Pirjevec (concentrating mostly on the literature written in Trieste), Roberto Dapit (who researched the work of Slovenians in the Benečija Region), Diomira Fabjan Bajc, Boris Paternu, etc.

Recently, a renewed interest in the structural analysis of this system has emerged and although there are still certain evident scientific problems to be solved the research has been yielding some interesting results.

In addition to the difficulties at finding a suitable denomination for this literary system, there is also the problem of the previously mentioned premise which poses the question: is researching of this (sub)system possible only in connection with its over-system (Slovenian literature), or is it possible to consider it as an autonomous

literary system that depends on both neighbouring literary systems (Italian and Slovenian) but that is at the same time focused on overcoming them and aiming at being considered as a supra-national literary system?

### Literary system of Slovenians in Italy, naming dilemmas

The first dilemma arose at naming the literature written by members of the Slovenian minority in Italy.

Martin Jevnikar (1967: 142) believed "that today the cross-border-region literature presents many uniquely original and characteristic features". It is obvious that he defined the Slovenian literature in Italy as "zamejska" ("cross-border-region"), even though he included in this definition the literature of Slovenians in Austria and even the literature of emigrated Slovenians: the term "zamejski" gained thus a very wide range of meanings. Jože Pogačnik (1972: 5) expressed his doubts about the suitability of the denomination and in fact the term "zamejska književnost" ("cross-border-region literature") has not been widely accepted yet. For similar reasons it was refused by Košuta as well (2008: 26) as the term "zamejska književnost" implies a centralistic point of view and excludes the fore-mentioned network of the Slovenian literature system, which also includes the authors living and working outside the national borders. In fact, the borders delimitate a geographical area not an ethnical or literary one. Besides, the terms "zamejec" (Slovenian living in the cross-border area), "zamejstvo" (cross-border area), "zamejsko" (of the cross-border) have become a kind of silent synonym for "foreign" and "unconventional" compared to Slovenian specifics. This can be rather offensive to Slovenians in Italy (and Austria and Hungary), considering their efforts to resist assimilation by means of "Slovenian" activities, way of life and thinking: these are indeed characteristic of areas at the border but they are not less Slovenian than those in the inland.

Another incorrect denomination is the *pars pro toto* definition "tržaška literature" ("Trieste literature"), which appeared in Slovenia as a term used to define literary achievements of Slovenians in Italy,

arguing that Trieste is an “economic, social and cultural centre where the strengths from the whole region converge” (Pogačnik 1972: 48). Due to the fact that Slovenians in Italy live in various areas and towns (Trieste, Gorizia, S. Pietro al Natisone, Cividale, Tarvisio and the Resia Valley), the term “Trieste literature” is inappropriate even though it is the capital city of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, with the greatest density of Slovenian population in Italy. Later on, some more international definitions were coined within Slovenian literature. The term “Trieste literature” however did not succeed in becoming the official denomination and it today denotes literature produced in Trieste and its surroundings.

The term “manjšinska književnost”<sup>1</sup> (littérature mineure, minority literature) might be more appropriate, even though Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari used it for literature produced by a minority in a major language (and not for literature written in a minor language). They defined its three main characteristics: a high degree of “territorial independence” of the language, the linkage of the individual to the political moment and the collective value (Deleuze – Guattari 1995: 24–25). The two researchers analyzed the writings of Kafka (a Czech Jew) in German language and their conclusions about minority literature should therefore be interpreted with regard to this fact. It is possible to draw many parallels between the “minority literature” as described by Deleuze and Guattari and the literature of Slovenians in Italy. However, the adjective “manjšinska” (minority) is too tight and could possibly be used just for a part of this literature, certainly not for all the literature.

Flaker’s term *Grenzliteratur* (border literature) is also problematic. It cannot be used for just “one side” of the border (the border has always two sides and “border literature” means thus “literature on both sides of the border”). Moreover, the term seems obsolete at a time when borders between nations are disappearing. Today, it is inappropriate to define literature produced in the area where Slovenians in Italy live with adjectives as “on-the-border”, “close-to-

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<sup>1</sup> The Slovenian translation of Deleuze and Guattari’s definition made by Vera Troha denotes a connection with the adjective »minority«. Perhaps it would be more correct, yet less aesthetically successful, as »minor«.



the-border”, or “across-the-border”. Firstly, because the point of view of the subject is non-selective (as it encompasses Slovenia as well) and secondly, because it is too narrow (it describes the geographic area on the border only and does not take into account the fact that Slovenian literature in Italy can be produced both in towns on the border and in towns far from it; although the latter is rather improbable, as the chances of its production in areas with no Slovenian reference – in our case the reference would be the Slovenian community in Italy – are very small if not completely unreal).

This literature’s geographic connotation is evidently one of the most important factors of the analysis and is therefore taken well into consideration by the majority of the researchers. Taras Kermauner even suggested the term “poetry of the Slovenian west”, which is indeed geographically borderless. Nevertheless, the term is unfortunately (still) inappropriate for the reason that it does not include only the literature of Slovenians in Italy. Janez Strutz described this kind of literature as “regional”, which might be an acceptable denomination as it puts the geographic connotation in the right place. Miran Košuta, “due to a lack of a more appropriate proposal” (2008: 27), uses the definition “Slovenian literature in Italy”. So far, this is the most modern and probably the best definition as it refers to the Italian geographical area with the addition of the term “Slovenian”. We have to understand that Košuta wanted to point out the linguistic specifics of this literature in connection with Slovenian, the language in which the works in this area are written.

In order to avoid possible misunderstandings, we would like to suggest at this point a somewhat improved name for the Slovenian literature in Italy, namely “literature of Slovenians in Italy”. This implies a formal tie to the area but excludes a complete linguistic predominance of the Slovenian language.

### A subsystem or a supra-national literary system?

The linguistic influence of the Slovenian language is probably a major obstacle to new interpretations of this literary system’s structure.

Slovenian language is the dominant means of expression in the literature of Slovenians in Italy, unlike in the literature of Slovenians in Carinthia in Austria, where both German and Slovenian are used. Košuta says (ib. 44) that "the mother-tongue is the bearer of deeper, extra-artistic, trans-aesthetic values". This causes feelings of constraint that result either in an increased lexical activism or in linguistic discomfort. Writers fight for their identity through the word-language. At the same time, especially among younger authors, it is possible to observe the development of relativism of the national moment named by Košuta "relativism of the national" (ib. 36). Younger authors do not try to avoid minority and identity issues or complexes. They instead try to live their situation in an unburdened and untroubled way. In some cases this makes them choose Italian as their dominant linguistic code, or they even opt for bilingualism. This phenomenon, which is not very common, implies two things:

- a) the Slovenian language *is not* (anymore) the only linguistic code in the over-system of Slovenian literature as other languages (in our case Italian) appear in its sub-systems;
- b) the above discussed term "the linguistic area of the Slovenian language", denoting the area of literary production in which minority literatures originate, becomes problematic and needs new consideration.

In our view these two issues allow the possibility of analyzing the literary system of Slovenians in Italy (and consequently any system of Slovenian minority-border literature) as an autonomous entity.

A comparative study of literature implies a thorough knowledge of parallel or related phenomena that link, influence and enrich the respective literatures. Contacts between Italian and Slovenian literature, especially in the area close to today's western Slovenian border (or eastern Italian), have been well recorded and rich since the very beginning of Slovenian literature in this area. For its specifics, this literature has always demanded bi- or multi-lingual social interactions (the evidence for which is found in manuscripts and records of Stara Gora – *Starogorski rokopis* (1492–98), Udine – *Videmski rokopis* (1458) and Černejca – *Černejški rokopis* (1497)). Even though these manuscripts are not literary writings as they were

written for administrative purposes, they provide evidence of an early and practical use of more languages (Latin, Friulan, Slovenian, Italian) as early as in the 15th century.

Such phenomena unveil the peculiarity of this geographic area enriched by a network of different cultures that do not function as monolithic and closed systems, but rather as systems in a reciprocal and vivid relationship throughout history. The following works provide ample evidence of how the Italian and Slovenian cultures have always kept alive the interaction, creating a new literary space, which was in many aspects quite different from that of central Slovenia: the Italian – Slovenian dictionary (*Vocabolario italiano e schiauo*, 1607) by Alasia da Sommaripa, an Italian monk who came to serve to Devin/Duino and understood the importance of mastering the Slovenian language and who immortalised it in a unique dictionary, which indeed contains mistakes but has a priceless imagological value; an attempted Slovenian grammar (*Saggio grammaticale italiano-cragolino*, 1811) by the Italian nobleman Vincenzo Franulo de Weissenthurn from Trieste; the correspondence in Slovenian between the noblewomen Maria Isabella Marenzi and Ester Massimiliana Corraduzzi, which proved that Slovenian was not used only by the peasantry or by uneducated people; and finally the very interesting and still not thoroughly researched influence of Italian futurism on Slovenian literature.

This however is not a sufficient reason to abruptly separate the literature of Slovenians in Italy from its over-system and neither is this our intent. On the other hand, if we agreed with Claudio Guillén (1992: 101–102), who offers three different types of supra-national forms and states that supra-national groups or phenomena are those which

- a) imply internationalism,
- b) imply common historical-social conditions,
- c) are independent in their origin,

we would immediately notice that the literary system we are analysing satisfies all three Guillén's conditions and that we could accordingly call it a supra-national phenomenon.

Even though Guillén is concerned with phenomena and not with systems, we can still accept his theories as appropriate enough in the case of literature of Slovenians in Italy. In fact, this literature has internationalism right in its core as it is a literature of a nationality inside another nationality. It is just as well possible to observe the common historical-social conditions, in part already mentioned before. Especially in the border areas, the Italian and Slovenian peoples have often come into cultural contact, not only historically but most often socially. The constant crossings of the border that divided a once-common land have brought a new understanding of the purpose of that border region that does not belong to just one of the two peoples – or to one of the two nationalities – but is in the cultural ownership of both. This is why the literature of Slovenians in Italy is mostly “Slovenian” due to its language, but it is also “Italian” due to its cultural influences. The independent origin of this literature as a need for artistic expression of “intra-border” and “intercultural” features is a further proof of the international nature of the literature of Slovenians in Italy. Besides, this literature’s specifics differ considerably from the specifics of the central Slovenian one. Miran Košuta (2008: 29–45) defines them as “typological denotations” and divides them into ontological, ethical, national, spatial and linguistic. They define the literature of Slovenians in Italy as an autonomous phenomenon.

But the road from a phenomenon to a system is still long. And if we agree with Marijan Dovič (2004: 142), who in his researches about Even-Zohar’s poly-systemic theories draws the conclusion that a system, before being recognised as such, has to be internally stable or rather independent from other systems that surround it, it becomes quite obvious that the literature of Slovenians in Italy has to go a long way before reaching its systemic independence. It would be incorrect to claim that the literary system of Slovenians in Italy is completely autonomous as it is strongly influenced both by Slovenian literature and Italian culture. It differs from them because of its intercultural characteristics which link the two (Slovenian and Italian) entities, connect them and shape them into a third entity. We could also interpret it as a system that follows Even-Zohar’s communication principles on the relation “producer – receiver”. These

are an adaptation of Jakobson's model and they regulate the network of relations needed for a system to work, as the understanding of the whole depends more on relations that take place around the text than on the text itself (see Dovič 2004: 142).

There are enough of these relations within the literature of Slovenians in Italy that justify its classification as an independent system aspiring to a complete independence from its over-system and striving to become a connecting intra-space between Slovenian and Italian culture. In contemporary poetry in particular it is possible to perceive the pursuit of a new understanding of the border-line reality, where the "border" is as a phenomenon of contact rather than division.

Even though the literature of Slovenians in Italy cannot be considered a fully independent literary system yet, it has all the chances to soon become a supra-national literary system connecting the Italian and Slovenian culture into an interesting unity. This unity would be historically important, socially interesting, and would most probably lead to a reinterpretation of the area at the border. Consequently, the border could become a meeting point for cultures, a place of exchange and a confirmation that it is possible to overcome the outdated ideas about the physical and intellectual seclusion of the area at the Italian-Slovenian border.

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*A Subsystem of Slovenian Literature or a Supranational System?*

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*Zur Literaturgeschichte und zur Geschichte  
des Lesens. Privatbibliotheken in Tallinn/  
Reval im 18. Jahrhundert<sup>1</sup>*

1. Das 18. Jahrhundert gilt als Jahrhundert der Aufklärung. Literaturgeschichtliche Darstellungen, die die Entwicklungen im deutschsprachigen Raum in dieser Zeit behandeln, nennen dabei neben der Aufklärung (Gottsched, Lessing) auch den Sturm und Drang (Lenz, Goethe, Schiller) und die Klassik (Goethe, Schiller) als Epochen dieses Jahrhunderts. Zudem fallen auch die Anfänge der romantischen Literatur in diese Periode. Im Gegensatz zur Entstehungszeit weist jedoch die Betrachtung der im Tallinn/ Reval des 18. Jahrhunderts in privaten Händen vorhandenen Literatur darauf hin, dass die Rezeption hier erst mit einer gewissen Verspätung einsetzte.

Meine Forschungen nehmen ihren Ausgangspunkt in den Katalogen der privaten Bibliotheken in meiner Heimatstadt Tallinn im 18. Jahrhundert. Die Untersuchung der privaten Bestände ist für das Tallinn dieser Periode deshalb von entscheidender Bedeutung, weil es in dieser Zeit hier keine entscheidenden Entwicklungen im Bereich der kommunalen Bibliotheken gegeben hat (vgl. Garber 2007: 119) und auch Lesegesellschaften erst in den letzten Jahrzehnten jenes Jahrhunderts gegründet wurden (vgl. Jürjo 1990: 550).

Das Ziel meines Beitrages ist es, anhand der Kataloge der Privatbibliotheken das literarische Feld der Stadt Tallinn im 18. Jahrhundert buchkundlich zu charakterisieren. Es geht dabei nicht darum, wie der literarische Raum damals wahrgenommen, konzipiert oder erlebt wurde, sondern um die Analyse der Texte, die als Grund-

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<sup>1</sup> Der Beitrag steht im Rahmen der Forschungsprojekte ETF 8304 und ETF 7824.

lage für die Intertextualität in einem Raum fungierten und die somit die Entstehung der Literatur vor Ort beeinflussen konnten. Angesichts der Fülle des Materials handelt es sich um vorläufige Ergebnisse, doch scheint das bestehende Korpus hinreichend repräsentativ zu sein, um die Tendenzen in der Entwicklung der privaten Buchbestände in Tallinn zu veranschaulichen.

2. Als Grundlage für die Analyse dienen die in Nachlassverzeichnissen aus Tallinn zu findenden Bücherlisten. Die meisten dieser Urkunden befinden sich im Magistratsbestand des Tallinner Stadtarchivs (Bestand 230), einige entstammen dem Bestand des Waisenkindgerichts (Bestand 166).

Die in den Nachlassverzeichnissen überlieferten Bücherlisten sind zum Teil in edierter Form zugänglich. 2009 veröffentlichte Raimo Pullat einen Sammelband, der die Listen der Bibliotheken von 17 Literaten und Beamten, 33 Handwerkern und 44 Kaufleuten berücksichtigt<sup>2</sup>. Diese Edition beruht auf früheren Quellenpublikationen desselben Autors und anderer Forscher (Pullat 1997, 2002; Pullat u. a. 2004, 2005, 2007). Die 102 Seiten dieser Veröffentlichung, die Tallinn betreffen, machen keine statistischen Angaben zu den Einträgen (meist bezeichnet ein Eintrag ein Buch, aber es gibt auch mehrbändige Werke, Konvolute u.ä.), ihre Zahl kann jedoch auf etwa 3500 geschätzt werden. Von allen in den edierten Bibliothekslisten aufgezeichneten Einträgen fallen etwa die Hälfte auf die oft wesentlich größeren Bibliotheken der Literaten und Beamten.

Von diesem Befund ausgehend habe ich mich bei meinem eigenen Editionsvorhaben auf diesen Personenkreis (Literaten und Schreibbeamte) konzentriert. Die zurzeit in Arbeit befindlichen Listen ergänzen die bereits von Pullat erschlossenen Quellen. Der Umfang dieser Ergänzung beträgt momentan etwa 4000 Einträge.

Der Umfang der privaten Bestände im Tallinn des 18. Jahrhunderts insgesamt übersteigt damit wesentlich die Menge der Bücher, die in den öffentlichen Bibliotheken der Stadt vorhanden

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<sup>2</sup> Zeitlich berücksichtigt diese Edition, die auch eine Auswahl der Bibliotheksverzeichnisse der Stadt Pärnu enthält, auch die ersten Jahre des 19. Jahrhunderts.



waren. Es gibt keine genauen Zahlen für das 18. Jahrhundert, bei der Übergabe an eine öffentliche Bibliothek im Jahre 1831 wird die Größenordnung der Revalschen Bibliothek mit 2732 Werken angegeben (vgl. Tiisel 2001: 17). Die Bibliothek des Gymnasiums war in derselben Zeit, 1834, 1717 Bände stark, wobei davon 925 zu der „alten Büchersammlung“ gehörten (vgl. Garber 2007: 125). Mit diesen Bibliotheken verglichen, sind die privaten Bestände der Stadt durchaus ansehnlich.

Die meisten Inventarien, die ausgewertet worden sind, wurden von den Stadtsekretären, Protonotarien oder ähnlichen Schreibbeamten der Stadt aufgestellt und folgen einer relativ stabilen materialbezogenen Struktur. Es wird mit dem Bargeld (Rubrik An Contantem) und mit Wertmetallen (An Gold, An Silber usw.) angefangen; die verschiedensten Bereiche der damaligen Haushalte werden berücksichtigt. Es handelt sich dabei also um Listen, die unter anderem einen Einblick in die Alltagskultur der Zeit ermöglichen. Die für unseren Kontext interessanten Bücher stehen meist am Ende des jeweiligen Nachlassverzeichnisses und werden dort genauer beschrieben, wobei die Genauigkeit der Angaben sehr stark variiert. Mal werden der Erscheinungsort und die Erscheinungszeit angegeben („Friedlibri Medulla Theologiae. Stetini 1673“ Schindler 1728: 168v.), mal fügt der Schreiber genauere Angaben zum Text hinzu („Sturms Anweisung zu der Civil Bau Kunst mit Kupffern“ Bartholomäi 1739: 80), mal werden lediglich der Autor und der Titel genannt („Mevii Decisiones Juris“ Mickwitz 1770: 471). Manchmal steht in der Liste ohne genauere Angabe sogar „Ein französisches Buch ohne TitelBlat“ (Inventarium Bartholomäi 1739: 90) oder „Ein Band mit kleinen Land Charten“ (Inventarium Mickwitz 1770: 480).

Auch wenn hier nicht in jedem Fall eine eindeutige Identifikation möglich ist, vor allem in Bezug auf die konkrete Ausgabe, und die bibliographischen Angaben meist nur in einer sehr redundanten Form vorhanden sind, so ergibt sich doch ein facettenreiches Bild davon, welche Bücher damals in den privaten Bibliotheken vorhanden waren.

Die Bücher werden in den Nachlassverzeichnissen meistens nach Formaten geordnet angegeben. Innerhalb eines Formates werden die Bücher jedoch nicht systematisiert. Es sind zumeist weder inhaltliche

noch alphabetische Ordnungsprinzipien erkennbar, und auch Werke in unterschiedlichen Sprachen werden nicht auseinander gehalten. Es handelt sich also um ein chaotisches und sehr vielfältiges Material.

3. Die Größenordnungen der Buchbestände innerhalb eines Verzeichnisses variieren stark. Es gibt viele Nachlassverzeichnisse, die gar keine oder nur einzelne Bücher enthalten. Bei vielen kleineren Buchsammlungen der Handwerker und Kaufleute ist die Auswahl der Literatur auf Bibel, Gesangbuch, Erbauungsliteratur sowie verschiedene Haushaltungs-Bücher beschränkt (vgl. z. B. Pullat 2009: 60, 75, 105). So besaß auch die 1738 verstorbene Witwe des Superintendenten Arnold von Husen, geb. Anna Elis Wartmann, 8 Bücher:

An gedruckten Büchern

In Fol.

Die ganze heil. Schrift Altes und Neues Testaments Nürnberg 1652.

In 4to.

Die ganze Heil. Schrift. Lüneburg 1642.

M. Christian Scriver's Seelen=Schatz Leipzig 1691.

Ejud. Seelen Schatzes und zwar des funften Teils letztes Stuck Leipzig 1696. der Stern oder verneuerte und vermehrte Anweisung, wie Crist: Scriver in den Sonn= und Festtäglichen Episteln und Evangelien Texten wohl zu gebrauchen.

In 8<sup>vo</sup>.

Erasmi Francisci Wol der Ewigkeit, für die Verächter der Eitelkeit. Nürnberg 1683.

Ejud: Wol der Ewigkeit für die Verächter der gnaden Zeit Nürnberg 1682.

Thom. Honsteden Palaestra veri Cristiana oder christliche Burg=Predigten Lübeck 1675.

Ein alt Gebeth und Gesang-Buch ohne Titel=Blat. (Husen 1738: 225)

Als weitere Größenkategorien sind Bibliotheken mit 20–50 Einträgen zu nennen; viele Bibliotheken, insbesondere von Literaten, aber auch diejenigen einiger Kaufleute, enthalten über 100 Werke, so

wie es bei der Bibliothek des Professors Andrea Bartholomäi (1739) mit ihren 129 Einträgen der Fall ist.

Es gibt auch mehrere Buchsammlungen, die noch größer sind. Bei mehreren Lehrern liegt die Größenordnung des Bücherbestandes bei über 200 Titeln. So besaß der 1768 verstorbene College an der Trivialschule Peter Joh. Nyberg (Nieberg) 210 genauer beschriebene gedruckte Bücher; auch der unvollständig überlieferte „Catalogus über des seel. Herrn Professoris Christian Pfützners Bibliothek“ (es fehlt in diesem Katalog das übliche Format Duodecimo) aus dem Jahre 1738 enthält 284 Einträge<sup>3</sup>, und in der Liste der Bücher von Professor Anton Mickwitz aus dem Jahre 1770 sind 239 Einträge enthalten.

Die bis jetzt größte bereits edierte Bibliotheksliste eines Literaten aus dem 18. Jahrhundert in Tallinn, die von Professor George Salomo aus dem Jahre 1768, enthält 408 Einträge (vgl. Pullat 2009: 35–47). Von den nicht edierten Listen müsste diejenige der Bibliothek des Ober-Landes-Gerichts Ober-Secretärs Justus Johannes Riesen-kampff (1772) erwähnt werden, in der über 800 Einträge notiert sind. Diese Bibliothek ist nach den Tallinner Maßstäben des 18. Jahrhunderts geradezu riesig.

Bei der Betrachtung der Bücherlisten aus literaturwissenschaftlicher Sicht fällt als erstes auf, dass die Menge der in den Bücherlisten enthaltenen Werke schöngestigen Inhalts gering ist, vor allem, was die damalige Gegenwartsliteratur betrifft. In vielen Bibliotheken, so etwa bei Professor Andrea Bartholomäi (1739), finden wir höchstens antike Autoren, wie etwa Ovids *Metamorphosis* oder Texte Ciceros. Dennoch gibt es auch Bibliotheken, in denen, wenngleich in zurückhaltender Auswahl, auch deutsche Literatur vorhanden ist. So enthält zum Beispiel die Bibliothek des Professors Anton(ius) Mickwitz (1770) neben mehreren Texten von Johann Christoph Gottsched auch einige Gedichtsammlungen (z. B. von Harthold Heinrich Broeckes).

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<sup>3</sup> Die Akte des Waisengerichts (Des Wohlseel. H. Professoris Christian Pfützners Kindern vormundschaftliche Dispositionen, TLA B. 166, Verz. 1. 485, hier Bl. 71) gibt als Bibliotheksgröße 445 Bücher an.

Die Bevorzugung der Sachliteratur weist vermutlich u.a. auf den Wissensdurst der Ära hin, die die Rezeption solcher Texte begünstigte. Zugleich ist sie ein Hinweis auf den hohen Preis der Bücher, was die potenziellen Leser zu einer pragmatischen, oft berufsbezogenen Wahl der Bücher gezwungen hat.

Dabei muss erwähnt werden, dass offenbar nicht alle vorhandenen Bücher aufgelistet wurden. Ausgehend von der materiellen Intention – die Bücherlisten wurden zumeist während der Inventarisierung nach dem Tod des Inhabers erstellt und, sollten somit die materielle Sicherheit der Nachfahren gewährleisten (vgl. Pullat 1997: 15) – wurden wahrscheinlich weniger wertvolle bzw. nicht verwertbare Gegenstände nicht aufgezeichnet. Daher gibt es in den Listen nur vereinzelt Katechismen, Fibeln und auch Kalender, auch wenn etwa ein Buchbinder (Gottlieb Wilhelm Boldts Witwe Maria Elisabeth, geb. Nesemann, 1802) diese sowohl auf Deutsch als auch auf Estnisch in vielen Exemplaren auf Lager gehabt hat (z.B. waren vom „Ehstnische[n] große[n] Cathechismus“ 112 gebundene Exemplare vorhanden – vgl. Pullat 2009: 72). Es ist möglich, dass eine stillschweigende Selektion der Bücher einer der Gründe ist, warum in den Inventarien die religiös gebundene sowie die Sachliteratur so stark dominiert. Dennoch schien vieles auch von den Entscheidungen des einzelnen Schreibers abzuhängen, wofür die unterschiedliche Ausführlichkeit der Angaben zu den notierten Bücher in den einzelnen Nachlassverzeichnissen ein Indiz ist. Zugleich spiegelt die Dominanz der Sachliteratur natürlich das Sortiment der im 18. Jahrhundert gedruckten Bücher wider.<sup>4</sup>

So werden im Inventarium des Rechenmeisters Johann Conrad Greve (1782) in den beiden darin enthaltenen Listen insgesamt 283 Bücher (Sammelbände u.ä.) namentlich genannt, worüber hinaus es aber

105 Stück diverse alte Bücher welche sämtlich durchgesehen ihrer gänzlichen Unerheblichkeit und Unbrauchbarkeit halben aber nur der Anzahl nach nicht aber namentlich aufgenommen wurden. (Inventarium Greve 1782)

<sup>4</sup> Der Anteil der schöngestigen Werke wird für Deutschland im Jahre 1740 mit 6%, im Jahre 1800 mit 20% angegeben (vgl. Wehler 1989: 304).

gibt. Möglicherweise gehörten zu den „gänzlich unerheblichen“ Büchern neben Kalendern und Zeitschriften auch belletristische Werke. In der Auflistung der Buchbestände des Kaufmanns Johann Daniel Intelmann (1759) werden etwa „177 Allerhand Historische Bücher und Romainen“ (Pullat 2009: 99) genannt – ohne diese detailliert zu beschreiben – im Unterschied zur Sachliteratur. Solche Sammelbezeichnungen machen eine detaillierte Analyse schwierig. Auf Umwegen demonstrieren sie dagegen die Werteinschätzungen in Bezug auf die fiktionale Literatur.

In diesem Sinne werden im Inventarium sub sequestro des Kaufmanns Diedrich Vermeer Jun. aus dem Jahre 1749 (in: Pullat 2009: 88–93) schöngeistige Werke sogar paketweise zusammengefasst, leider ohne genauer beschrieben zu werden: „20 Packen mit allerhand Gelegenheits Gedichten und Reden. [...] 1 Pack mit Comedien und Opern“ (ebd.: 93). Neben solchen „Packen“ sind auch Sammelbände mit verschiedenen zusammengebundenen Texten vorhanden, und mehrbändige Ausgaben werden in den Listen oft als eine Ausgabe betrachtet, so dass die Anzahl der Bände erheblich größer ist als die Anzahl der Einträge.

4. In den Bücherlisten ist eine deutliche Dominanz (nord)deutscher Einflüsse festzustellen. Zu dieser Zeit war das literarische Feld in Tallinn vorwiegend von deutsch(sprachigen) Intellektuellen geprägt, die in vielen Fällen aus Deutschland stammten und weiterhin oft intensive Beziehungen zum kulturellen Mutterland unterhielten. Es fand ein aktiver kultureller Transfer vor allem aus dem Kulturkreis West- bzw. Mittel-Europas statt, der sich unter anderem in den Beständen der Bibliotheken zeigt.

Die Bücherverzeichnisse geben dabei auch Hinweise auf die damalige Mehrsprachigkeit in der Region. Neben Werken auf Deutsch und Lateinisch, die den Großteil ausmachen, gibt es etwa auch Bibliotheken, wo französische Titel überwiegen, und vor allem gegen Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts gibt es mehrere Bibliothekskataloge, wo der Anteil der französischsprachigen Werke hoch ist. Dies trifft zum Beispiel auf die kleine Bibliothek des Candidats Carl Ludwig Boursdorffs aus dem Jahre 1778 zu (vgl. Pullat 2009: 50). Auch im Nachlassverzeichnis Greve (1782) gibt es viele Werke auf

Französisch. So besaß der 1785 verstorbene Regierungs-Protokollist Herr August Ludwig Carl Schwarz (1785) eine reichliche Auswahl der Werke von Jean-Jacques Rousseau, aber auch Nicolas Boileau Despréaux ist in seinen Buchbeständen vertreten. Man kann daraus schließen, dass die französische zeitgenössische Philosophie durchaus auch die dem Russischen Reich zugehörige Provinz erreicht hatte und somit Kulturtransfer auch aus dem frankophonen Bereich stattfand. Die Präsenz des Französischen weist dabei auch auf die wichtige Rolle des Französischen als Bildungssprache hin. Das Interesse für diese Sprache scheint groß gewesen zu sein: Es gibt etliche Französisch-Wörterbücher und insbesondere die französische Grammatik Jean Robert des Pepliers ist in vielen Exemplaren vorhanden.

Auch auf eine Kenntnis der estnischen Sprache finden sich in den Nachlassverzeichnissen viele Hinweise: Es gibt sowohl estnische (bzw. undeutsche, wie es damals heißt) Grammatiken, Vokabulare, aber auch Katechismen und Haus- und Handbücher. Der Anteil der Literatur in der Sprache des Anderen ist aber klein und thematisch vor allem auf die mit der Missionierung verbundenen Texte beschränkt – wie die in dieser Zeit in der estnischen Sprache vorhandene gedruckte Literatur. Vereinzelt kommen ähnliche Titel auch auf Lettisch vor.

Bei der Analyse der Bücherlisten fällt des weiteren auf, wie gering der Anteil der Literatur aus Schweden ist – immerhin gehörte die Region bis 1710 zu Schweden. Ein Großteil der wenigen Texte auf Schwedisch ist juristischer (z.B. Gesetze u.Ä. – vgl. die Bibliothek des Sekretärs Hetling 1755), in einzelnen Fällen auch theologischer Natur (Oberpastor Roos, 1790, vgl. Pullat 2009: 53–55).

Noch marginaler ist der Anteil russischen Materials, das nur sehr vereinzelt vorliegt. Auch wenn Tallinn seit 1710 zum russischen Reich gehörte, war die Verwaltungssprache hier Deutsch. Daher werden die wenigen russischen Titel in den Listen meistens mit lateinischen Buchstaben geschrieben (vgl. Schwarz 1785); eine originalgerechte Schreibung kommt nur in Einzelfällen vor (vgl. Carl August Gabriel Thüring Gürtler, 1799, Pullat 2009: 72). Dieser Umstand zeigt deutlich, dass die Intellektuellen der Region sich vor

allem an Mitteleuropa, und insbesondere am deutschen Sprachraum, orientierten.

Vereinzelt gibt es auch noch Werke in weiteren Sprachen, z.B. in Englisch, Dänisch, Finnisch, Griechisch, Hebräisch, Italienisch und anderen.

5. In den meisten Listen dominiert Sachliteratur. Neben den berufsrelevanten Texten, z.B. Werken über die Chirurgie in der Bibliothek eines Arztes (vgl. Wisoginski 1766) oder Lehrbüchern zu Geografie und Mathematik bei einem Lehrer (vgl. Bartholomäi 1739, Greve 1782), findet sich eine umfangreiche Sammlung religiöser Texte (Bibel, Exegesen, Gesangsbücher) sowie an Erbauungsliteratur.

Einen auffällenden Teil, vor allem in den Bibliotheken der Lehrer, machen Lehrwerke aus. Vielfach sind hier ähnliche Werke zu finden wie die, die Kaja Tiisel (2001: 55) in Bezug auf die Revaler Domschule jener Zeit als wichtig genannt hat: Neben den Lehrwerken von Joachim Lange (so ist z.B. seine lateinische Grammatik vielfach vertreten) sind Hieronymos Freyers Geschichtswerke und Orthografien ebenso Bestandteil der Bibliotheken wie etwa die juristischen Handbücher von Samuel Pufendorff, religionstheoretische Schriften von Johann Anastasius Freytingshausen und die Werke zu Geografie, Geschichte und Latein von Christoph Cellarius. Diese Werke sind auch in Norddeutschland damals in den Schulen üblich gewesen (vgl. ebd.) – was ein weiterer Hinweis auf die kulturelle Verbundenheit mit dieser Region darstellt.

Die Fülle der Erbauungsliteratur, insbesondere in den Buchbeständen der Literaten bis in die Mitte des Jahrhunderts, macht deutlich, wie stark der Einfluss des Pietismus, der im 17. Jahrhundert entstanden und im 18. Jahrhundert zu voller Blüte gekommenen religiösen Erneuerungsbewegung, in der Region gewesen sein muss (vgl. dazu auch Pullat 1997: 160). Es ist öfter hervorgehoben worden, dass eben gerade die Gebildeten, die an den protestantischen Universitäten studiert hatten, den Pietismus sowie den Geist der Aufklärung in die Region getragen haben (vgl. Gottzmann, Hörner Bd. 1 2007: 10). Sowohl die Werke des wichtigsten Theoretikers des Pietismus, Philipp Jacob Spener, als auch die seines Vorgängers Johann Arndt, dessen Predigtsammlung Spener edierte und mit

seinem bekannten Vorwort „*Pia desideria*“ versah, sind in Tallinn in sehr vielen Exemplaren vorhanden. In manchen Bibliotheken gibt es Dutzende von Texten dieser Autoren.

Ebenfalls stark, doch mit einer kleineren Anzahl an Büchern belegt, scheint die Tradition der Herrnhuter zu sein. Die Werke Nikolaus Ludwig Graf von Zinzendorfs vor allem in den Bibliotheken der Geistlichen. Auch die auf dem Pietismus fußende Halle-sche pädagogische Tradition im Sinne August Hermann Franckes wurde in Tallinn aktiv rezipiert – wie unter anderem die oben ausgeführten, vielfach mit der Halleschen Tradition verbundenen Lehrbücher belegen. Neben Texten von Francke gibt es in Tallinn etwa auch viele Texte vom zweiten Direktor der Halleschen Schule, Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen. Die pietistische Frömmigkeit und die progressive Pädagogik scheinen vor allem die hiesigen Lehrer beeindruckt zu haben. Im Inventarium des Lehrers Christoph Erdmann Bieck (1750, insgesamt 203 Eintragungen in der Bibliotheksliste, vgl. Pullat 2009: 17–21) gibt es beispielsweise mindestens 28 Texte, die mit den eben genannten Traditionslinien, dem Pietismus, der Herrnhuter und der Halleschen Pädagogik, in Verbindung stehen, darunter viele zentrale Texte von Spener, Zinzendorf, Arnold und Freylinghausen.

6. Viele der oben behandelten Diskurse beruhen auf früheren Entwicklungen, unter anderem aus dem 17. Jahrhundert. So ist der Anteil der Texte aus dem 17. Jahrhundert in den Bibliothekskatalogen beträchtlich. Was die schöne Literatur betrifft, so zeigt sich eine erstaunlich starke Rezeption der Gedichte des Barock (Fleming, Opitz, Gryphius usw.) auch in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts. Davon, dass die Literatur früherer Epochen weiterhin aktiv rezipiert worden ist, zeugt aber auch die Tradition der Gelegenheitsdichtung, die auch im 18. Jahrhundert im gymnasialen Kreis gepflegt wurde (Panegyrik, Epicedien usw.).

Bei den meisten angegebenen Büchern fehlen die Angaben über das Erscheinungsjahr; im modernen bibliografischen Sinne sind die Nachlasskataloge äußerst mangelhaft. Dennoch sind bei einzelnen Bibliotheken zum Teil die Erscheinungsjahre notiert. Bei der größten edierten Bibliothek von Salomo aus dem Jahre 1768 ist eine Datie-



rung bei 75 Büchern (etwa 18 % aller Einträge) notiert. Die zeitliche Verteilung dieser genauer beschriebenen Bücher sieht wie folgt aus: 3 Bücher aus dem 16. Jh. (4%); 25 aus dem 17. Jh. (33%); 45 aus der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts, und lediglich 2 Bücher sind noch jünger, d.h. sie stammen aus der 2. Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts, also aus den letzten 18 Jahren vor dem Tod des Inhabers und vor der Inventarisierung.

Bei der größten bisher gefundenen Bibliotheksliste, derjenigen Riesenkampffs, die nach dem Tod seiner Witwe 1772 notiert wurde und die den Stand vor 1750 widerspiegelt, sind nur in sehr einzelnen Fällen Angaben zur Veröffentlichungszeit des jeweiligen Buches angegeben. Bei der Systematisierung seiner Bücherliste konnten etwa 500 Verfasser festgestellt werden, bei etwa 10 % der Texte ist keine eindeutige Identifikation möglich. Dabei war der Anteil der Autoren, die im 17. Jahrhundert starben<sup>5</sup>, mit 61% mit Abstand der größte; 11% der Verfasser der Werke starben im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert, lediglich 20% der Autoren sind dem 18. Jahrhundert zuzuordnen, und weitere Teile werden vor allem von antiken Autoren eingenommen (8%). Die starke Präsenz der Werke des Barockjahrhunderts fällt auf – wenn man die kleinere Anzahl der Druckerzeugnisse aus dem 16. Jahrhundert insgesamt berücksichtigt, ist auch diese Periode sehr gut vertreten. Eine analoge zeitliche Verteilung sehen wir auch bei anderen Bibliotheken.

Die Autoren mit der größten Zahl notierter Werke unter den insgesamt etwa 2000 Autoren der Nachlassverzeichnisse in den Tallinner Bibliotheken sind einerseits das größte stilistische Vorbild der Antike, Cicero, und andererseits der Naturrechtsphilosoph und Historiker Samuel Freiherr von Pufendorff. Was die weiteren stark rezipierten Autoren betrifft (sowohl in der Edition von Pullat (2009) als auch in meinem Korpus), also Autoren, von denen es in Tallinn viele Texte gibt, so sieht die Aufteilung anders aus als oben aus-

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<sup>5</sup> Da die bibliographischen Angaben in den Nachlassverzeichnissen im modernen Sinne mangelhaft sind, können die einzelnen Werke nach der Zeit der Veröffentlichung nicht einem bestimmten Jahrhundert zugeordnet werden. Stattdessen erfolgt die Zuordnung an dieser Stelle sowie in der Folge anhand des Todesjahres des Autors.

geführt. Neben den antiken Autoren, die damals auch im Gymnasialunterricht eine wichtige Rolle spielten (Caesar, Cicero, Curtius Rufus, Livius, Cornelius Nepos, Ovid, Plinius, Tacitus, Terenz), den Reformatoren (Luther, Melanchthon), den Pietisten und den Herrnhutern (Spener, Zinzendorf) sowie Erasmus von Rotterdam und Thomas a Kempis stammen nur 14 stark rezipierte Autoren aus dem 17. Jahrhundert (Johann Arndt, Johann Brunnemann, Anton Friedrich Büsching, Johann Amos Comenius, Conrad Dieterich, Hugo Grotius, Daniel Georg Morhof, August Pfeiffer, Samuel Freiherr von Pufendorff, Johann Rhenius, Johannes Scheffer, Cornelis Schrevel, Christian Sriver). Insgesamt 30 Autoren sind dem 18. Jahrhundert zuzuordnen: neben den bereits genannten Autoren Gottfried Arnold, Siegmund Jakob Baumgarten, August Bohse bzw. Talander, Joachim Just Breithaupt, Barthold Heinrich Brockes, Franz Johann Buddeus, Anton Friedrich Büsching, Christophorus Cellarius, Jean Robert des Pepliers, Johann Konrad Dippel bzw. Christianus Democritus, August Hermann Francke, Hieronymus Freyer, Johann Anastasius Freyling(s)hausen, Johann Christoph Gottsched, Johann Gottlieb Heineccius, Ludvig Baron Holberg, Johann Hübner, Johann Daniel Intelmann, Johann Gottlob Krüger, Joachim Lange, Johann Friedrich Mayer, Georg Friedrich Meier, Johann Jakob Rambach, François Roux, Benjamin Schmolck, Jakob Philipp Spener, Christian Thomasius, Voltaire, Christian Wolff und Nikolaus Ludwig Graf von Zinzendorf.

Neben den Autoren aus sehr unterschiedlichen Fachgebieten, die auch in Deutschland eine wichtige Rolle gespielt haben, fällt Johann Daniel Intelmann, der Autor eines Rechenlehrbuchs aus Tallinn auf, dessen "Arithmetischer Wegweiser, Oder nach Ehst- und Liefländischer Handlung gründlich eingerichtetes Erstes Revalsches Rechenbuch" in vielen Bibliotheken in Tallinn vorhanden war. Diese lokale Tradition wurde in der Stadt somit hochgeschätzt.

Die Rezeption der zentral- und westeuropäischen Strömungen des 18. Jahrhunderts spielte daher im Tallinn dieser Zeit durchaus eine wichtige Rolle, wie auch die Forschungen von Indrek Jürjo (1990) gezeigt haben, doch findet sie erst mit einer gewissen Verspätung statt. Die Rezeption früherer Jahrhunderte ist vor allem breiter und konzentriert sich nicht so stark auf einige wenige Autoren.

Die Verspätung in der Rezeption der Gegenwartsliteratur zeigt sich zum Beispiel an dem Umstand, dass in den Listen der Privatbibliotheken weder Werke des Sturm und Drang noch der Klassik zu finden sind, vereinzelt aber des europäischen Sentimentalismus. Ein möglicher Grund dafür liegt in den Eigenschaften der ausgewerteten Quellen: Die in den Nachlässen notierte Literatur dokumentiert wahrscheinlich nicht den zum Zeitpunkt des Aufzeichnens bestehenden Stand der Lektüre, sondern einen früheren. Die Bibliotheken sind ja Teil der Erbmasse gewesen: Die Bücher wurden von einer Generation an die nächste weitergegeben, und wahrscheinlich ist die Anschaffung der Bücher vor allem in der Studienzeit besonders intensiv gewesen. Es fällt auf, dass in vielen Bibliotheken kaum Bücher aus den letzten Jahren vor der Inventarisierung zu finden sind. Für die genauere Einschätzung dieses Befundes sollen in der Zukunft auch die Listen der Leihbibliotheken und Lesegesellschaften ausgewertet werden.

Ohne die Berücksichtigung dieser quellenbedingten Einschränkung wäre es sehr schwer manche Phänomene zu erklären. Die Theatergeschichte weist bekanntlich darauf hin, dass in Tallinn Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts neben Voltaire und Shakespeare auch Lessing und Goethe aufgeführt worden seien (vgl. z.B. Gottzmann, Hörner d. 1 2007: 82) und der deutsche Dramatiker August von Kotzebue 1783–1795 am Revaler Liebhabertheater eine wichtige Rolle spielte (ebd.: 83). Doch kommt Kotzebue in den im 18. Jahrhundert inventierten Bibliotheken nicht vor, und auch Goethe wird in dem jetzigen Korpus nur einmal genannt (1797 in der Bibliothek des Kaufmanns Martin Heinrich Gebauer, Pullat 2009: 111).

7. Zusammenfassend kann festgehalten werden, dass die Kataloge der Privatbibliotheken die in den Literaturgeschichten dargestellten Entwicklungen nur bedingt widerspiegeln. Die niedrigere Wertschätzung der schönen Literatur im Gegensatz zu der hohen Einschätzung religiöser Texte und der berufsbezogenen Literatur scheint sich erst gegen Ende des Jahrhunderts auszugleichen. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt finden wir neben der Erbauungsliteratur bereits verstärkt philosophische Texte (z.B. Voltaire oder Rousseau). Der Durchbruch der

schöngestigen Literatur als eines wichtigen Bestandteils der privaten Bibliotheken erfolgt dagegen erst im 19. Jahrhundert.

Die Nachlassverzeichnisse des 19. Jahrhunderts enthalten in der Regel keine so ausführlichen Bücherkataloge, wie es im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert der Fall war. Nur in einzelnen Fällen finden wir gründliche Bücherlisten, wie z. B. im Falle des Titularraths Carl Johann Backmann aus dem Jahre 1831. Dieser Katalog unterscheidet sich, was die Auswahl der Bücher betrifft, grundlegend von denen des 18. Jahrhunderts. Nun ist die Belletristik stark vorhanden, Kotzebue und Goethe kommen gleichermaßen in vielen Exemplaren vor, aber auch Cooper, Walter Scott, Lichtenberg, Wieland, Lessing und Merkel finden sich.

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Alle Quellen befinden sich im Tallinner Stadtarchiv (TLA), im Bestand des Magistrats (B. 230). Es werden nur diejenigen Nachlassverzeichnisse angegeben, die explizit zitiert worden sind.

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*Weisse Flecken in der estnischen  
Literaturgeschichtsschreibung.  
Timoteus Polus und der Revaler Gymnasialkreis<sup>1</sup>*

Vor einigen Jahren begann in der estnischen Literaturwissenschaftsszene eine Diskussion, die sich mit der Frage befasste, aus welchen Teilen die estnische Literatur eigentlich besteht und welche Elemente zur estnischen nationalen Literaturgeschichtsschreibung gehören bzw. nicht gehören. Ein Ergebnis dieser Diskussion ist die These, dass hierzulande der sprachliche Faktor der entscheidendste ist: Alle literarischen Texte, die zwar in Estland entstanden sind aber von Autoren verfasst wurden, die weder aus Estland stammten noch auf Estnisch geschrieben haben, qualifizieren sich somit nicht als estnische Literatur. Deshalb betrachtet z. B. Jaan Undusk die Erforschung der estnischen Literatur als etwas einseitig, denn, so Undusk, wenn man die hiesige Literatur und Kultur nur in Bezug auf die estnische Sprache untersuche, vergesse man, dass die sprachliche Konstellation hierzulande immer multilingual angelegt war. Man könne die kulturhistorischen Prozesse, die dazu führten, dass überhaupt so etwas wie eine estnische Kultur entstand, auf diese Weise weder deuten noch verstehen. Deshalb plädiert Undusk für eine breit angelegte Untersuchung der Literatur in Estland (Undusk 2003: 1495–1496). Auch Liina Lukas beschreibt das hiesige literarische Feld im 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert als eine mehrsprachig angelegte Konstellation, die sich auf unterschiedlichen Traditionen (städtische Dichtung, geistliche Lieder etc.) gründet (Lukas 2008: 23–32). In

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<sup>1</sup> Die Arbeit an diesem Artikel wurde durch den Estnischen Wissenschaftsfonds finanziert (Grant Nr. 7824 „Kulturelle Kontakte und autobiografischer Diskurs im 17. Jahrhundert“).

dem Gesamtband *Rahvuskultuur ja tema teised* (Die nationale Kultur und ihre Anderen) (2008) werden die Anderen, d.h. die nicht-estnischsprachigen Kulturkreise auch als ein Teil der estnischen Schriftkultur rehabilitiert. Eine besondere Rolle kommt dabei der deutschsprachigen Literatur Estlands zu.

Während das Schaffen der deutschbaltischen Autoren heute gründlich erforscht ist, sind bestimmte andere Bereiche der hiesigen deutschsprachigen Literatur noch weitgehend ununtersucht geblieben. Ein solches Autorenkollektiv, das zweifellos die estnische Literatur und Kultur der Frühen Neuzeit tief beeinflusst hat, ist der Revaler Gymnasialkreis. Darunter wird diejenige Gruppe unter den Professoren am Revaler Gymnasium verstanden, die sich als „Freunde der Poesie“ bezeichneten und Gedichte verschiedener Art auf Deutsch sowie auf Latein schrieben. Dazu gehörten der Rektor Heinrich Vulpius, der Poesieprofessor Timoteus Polus, der Griechischprofessor Reiner Brockmann sowie der Rhetorikprofessor und Konrektor Heinrich Arning (der nach dem Tod von Vulpius Rektor wurde).

Im frühen 17. Jahrhundert begann im literarischen Leben Revals/Tallinns eine aktive und fruchtbare Periode, wobei das neugegründete Gymnasium und der Kreis der Gymnasiallehrer eine besondere Rolle spielten: Etwa bis 1640 sind die Gymnasialprofessoren die Gestalter der literarischen Kultur in Tallinn. Das zeigt u.a. die Tatsache, dass von den 56 Drucken, die bis 1639 in der Druckerei Reusner gedruckt wurden, 32 von Gymnasialprofessoren stammten. Danach nimmt die Zahl der Dichtungen, die von (ehemaligen) Schülern des Gymnasiums oder von Tallinner Geistlichen stammen, zu (Klöker 1998: 833). Da sich das literarische Leben im 17. Jahrhundert gemeinhin um die gelehrten Institutionen herum kristallisierte, folgte auch der Gründung des Gymnasiums in Tallinn die Blütezeit einer späthumanistischen Gelehrtenkultur (ib. 840).

Der Bekannteste im Revaler Gymnasialkreis ist Reiner Brockmann, und zwar dank seiner estnischsprachigen Gedichte. Besonders hervorzuheben ist die Gesamtausgabe seiner Werke, die im Jahr 2000 erschien (Brockmann 2000). In zahlreichen Studien wie z.B. in Marju Lepajões *Reiner Brockmann und die Anfänge der estnischen Kunstpoesie*, in der Brockmanns Gedichte als 'inspirierend für die

estnische Dichtung' (Lepajõe 2003) bezeichnet werden, ist sein Schaffen gründlich analysiert worden.

Brockmann gehörte auch zur Revaler Schäfergesellschaft. Es handelte sich dabei um die Dichtergesellschaft um den Dichter Paul Fleming. Obwohl jüngere Studien die tatsächliche Existenz dieser Gesellschaft eher bezweifeln (vgl. Orion/Viiding 2001), werden die „Schäfer von Lacksberg“ in der Forschung immer wieder thematisiert. Auch in der Literaturgeschichtsschreibung gehört ihr eine feste Stelle (vgl. jüngst etwa Hasselblatt 2006: 116). In dem Roman *Lasnamäe lamburid* von Herbert Salu (Salu 1978) wird dieses Thema literarisch bearbeitet und ein idyllisches Bild von dieser Gemeinschaft gezeichnet. Doch fokussiert man bzgl. der Schäfergesellschaft in den meisten Studien hauptsächlich auf die Person Flemings – und pflegt damit ein gängiges Bild von dem Aufenthalt Flemings in Reval, der dichterisch sehr fruchtbar gewesen sein soll. Nennen wir in diesem Kontext z.B. Klaus Garbers Analyse der Flemingschen Dichtung, die anlässlich der Hochzeit von Reiner Brockmann und Dorothea Temme entstand, in der er schreibt:

Der Dichter, im Kontakt mit dem heimischen literarischen Leben, importierte ein junges Gewächs in der ihm eigenen Manier in das ferne Reval. Initierte er dort eine Tradition, so wie sie in der Opitzschen Manier in Hamburg, in Leipzig, allen voran in Nürnberg begründet wurde, oder blieb es bei dem einen Mal? (Garber 2003: 314)

Diese Frage ist schwer zu beantworten, ebenso wie die Behauptung, Flemings Aufenthalt habe das literarische Leben in Tallinn zutiefst beeinflusst, schwer belegbar ist – es gibt nur wenige Textbezüge, die darauf hinweisen. Als tatsächlicher Beweis der Fruchtbarkeit des Fleming-Aufenthaltes kann dagegen die Sichtung der Bibliotheksverzeichnisse Revaler Bürger gelten: Flemings Gedichte wurden ein richtiger „Bestseller“, der noch 100 Jahre später viele Revaler Privatbibliotheken zierte; und außer Fleming fanden sich dort auch Werke zahlreicher anderen barocken Autoren (Pullat 1996: 239–242).

2005 erschien Martin Klöckers grundlegendes Werk *Literarisches Leben in Reval in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts*. Dort wird



neben anderen Institutionen auch der Revaler Gymnasialkreis vorgestellt. Es ist ein inspirierendes Buch, das eine Menge an Informationen liefert (besonders dankbar ist die Bibliografie der Gelegenheitsdichtung mit Verzeichnis aller Gedichte) aber auch genügend Raum für weitere Untersuchungen bietet. Manche Themen wurden von Klöker bewusst nicht behandelt und an einigen Stellen weist der Autor selbst darauf hin, dass das eine oder andere Thema noch genauer betrachtet werden soll. Jedoch ist das Werk Klökers vor allem für deutsche Leser geschrieben (so auch Reimo 2006: 910). Das heißt, dass ein Stück estnischer Literaturgeschichte hier aus deutscher Perspektive geschrieben und das literarische Leben in Reval als ein Teil der deutschen Kultur am Rande Europas dargestellt wird. Doch bleibt die Frage offen, ob der Revaler Gymnasialkreis auch ein Teil der estnischen Literaturgeschichte ist? Und falls ja, worin besteht seine Bedeutung für die estnische Literatur und Kultur?

Brockmann ist natürlich ein klarer Fall – er und seine estnischen Gelegenheitsgedichte werden in allen estnischen Literaturgeschichten behandelt. Cornelius Hasselblatt etwa widmet ihm in seiner Literaturgeschichte ein ganzes Kapitel (Hasselblatt 2006: 116–121). Vulpius wird dagegen von Hasselblatt nur einmal als Rektor des Gymnasiums genannt (ib. 116) und Arning ebenfalls einmal, als Mitglied der Schäfergesellschaft um Fleming (ib. 117). Polus wird immerhin zweimal erwähnt, als Freund von Fleming und Mitglied der besagten Schäfergesellschaft (ib. 117) und als derjenige, der das Dedikationsgedicht für die *Anführung zu der Esthnischen Sprach* von Heinrich Stahl (1637) verfasst hat (ib. 127).

Obwohl Timoteus Polus und sein Werk von der literaturwissenschaftlichen Forschung bis heute kaum mit Interesse bedacht worden sind, kann man behaupten, dass sein Beitrag für die estnische Literatur- und Kulturgeschichte sehr groß gewesen ist. Es sei übrigens erwähnt, dass Polus der erste *poeta laureatus* in Estland war und nach ihm von den hiesigen Autoren eigentlich nur Johann Sebastian Markardt diesen Titel bekam (s. Klöker 2005 I: 699).

Doch nicht nur die biografischen Details machen Timoteus Polus für die estnische Literatur- und Kulturgeschichte interessant. Polus' deutschsprachige Gedichte stellen in Reval/Tallinn ein Novum dar,

denn vor Polus wurde weder ein deutschsprachiges Gedicht in Tallinn gedruckt, noch ist ein früheres deutsches Gedicht in handschriftlicher Überlieferung bekannt (ib. 282–283). In diesen Gedichten zeigt sich außerdem die Hinwendung zum literarischen Programm von Opitz, das Polus vermutlich während seines Studiums in Straßburg kennengelernt hat (1624 erschien dort Opitz' *Buch von der deutschen Poeterey*) (Viiding 2009). In seiner Position als Poesieprofessor vermittelte Polus seinen Schülern die Opitzschen Regeln mit dem Ziel, ihnen das Dichten auf Deutsch vertraut zu machen. Es kann deshalb behauptet werden, dass die poetischen Regeln von Opitz gerade auf Polus' Initiative in Tallinn eingeführt wurden und dass damit so etwas wie „die Revaler Schule“, in der das poetische Modell von Opitz gepflegt wurde, entstand (Viiding 2008: 153).

Das heißt, das Wirken von Timoteus Polus brachte quasi eine kulturelle Explosion mit sich und bewirkte einen ganz wichtigen sprachlichen Übergang. War bis dahin hauptsächlich Latein die Sprache der Gelehrten in Reval/Tallinn gewesen, löste nunmehr die deutsche Sprache die lateinische ab. Etwas weiter ausgeholt kann man behaupten, dass dieser Wechsel womöglich auch Brockmann zum Dichten auf Estnisch inspirierte. Nach Behauptungen mancher Forscher war es der Einfluss Flemings, aufgrund dessen Brockmann zuerst auf Deutsch und dann auf Estnisch zu dichten begann (vgl. Garber 2007: 123), doch es kann auch so gewesen sein, dass Brockmann diese Inspiration sehr viel früher bekam und zwar durch die Tätigkeit von Timoteus Polus. Die literarische Reformbewegung war zu diesem Zeitpunkt im Übrigen eine weit verbreitete Modeströmung. In einer Analyse der Gedichte von Verginius stellt Jürgen Beyer fest, dass das Dichten in der Volkssprache um 1630 ‚voll im Trend‘ war, besonders an der Universität zu Dorpat/Tartu:

Er [Verginius] war zwar nicht der erste, aber einer der ersten, der Volkssprache in Gelegenheitsgedichten verwendete. Wenig später wurde daraus an der Universität Dorpat eine Mode, die uns auch frühe Gedichte in anderen Volkssprachen bescherte. Der indirekte Anlass dazu ist sicherlich in Martin Opitz' *Buch von der Deutschen Poeterey* (1624) zu suchen, das ein Programm für die Übertragung der antiken Poetik ins Hochdeutsche aufgestellt hatte. Vielen

Dichtern in Est- und Livland diente Opitz als Vorbild. 1638 war hochdeutsche Kunstdichtung bereits allgemein akzeptiert. So war es nur konsequent, das Programm auf weitere Sprachen auszudehnen. (Beyer 2009: 192–193)

Polus selbst hat keine Texte auf Estnisch verfasst, jedoch kann man nicht sagen, dass er sich aus dem hiesigen Leben ausgeklammert hat. Ganz im Gegenteil. Das wird schon an Flemings Gedicht auf Brockmann und Temme (aus dem Jahr 1635) ersichtlich. In dieser an Opitz und Vergil angelehnten Dichtung lässt Fleming mehrere bekannte Persönlichkeiten als Schäferfiguren auftreten, darunter auch Polus. Polus, der 1628 in Tallinn ankam, erscheint in diesem Gedicht auch als Verfechter und Verteidiger seiner neuen Heimat und der dortigen Kultur:

Wenn ewer Land / fuhr Olearius fort / nicht so nahe mit der  
Barbarey gränzete / so gläubte ich / daß die Musen ihren Parnass  
verlassen / und in diese Gegend sich verfügt hetten. Sey doch nicht  
so hönisch / antwortete Polus / auff das gute Lieflland / welches /  
were es ohne die fast in die hundert Jahre mit ihren Nachbarn  
geführte unerhörte Kriege / unserm Teutschlande an Künsten /  
Reichthumb und Gerüchte nicht weichen solte. (Fleming 1986: 27)

Es handelt sich bei diesem Text gewiss um eine poetische Fiktion. Doch zeugen auch einige weitere literarische wie nicht-literarische Texte von Polus von seinem Interesse an der estnischen Sprache und Kultur sowie von dem Wunsch, als Vertreter der hiesigen Kultur aufzutreten, wie im Folgenden an einigen Beispielen belegt wird.

1637 erschien ein für die estnische literarische Kultur sehr wichtiges Werk, Heinrich Stahls *Anführung zu der Esthnischen Sprach*. Den Ausführungen über die estnische Grammatik wurden zwei Dedikationsgedichte von Timoteus Polus vorangestellt.

In dem ersten Gedicht zeichnet Polus den Autor Heinrich Stahl für seine großen Verdienste aus. Es wird zuerst auf seine übersetzerische Tätigkeit eingegangen:

Was Luther Teutsch gesungen  
 Vnd drauff sein ganzes Land /  
 Das wird der Ehster Zungen  
 Durch euch / Herr Stahl / bekannt.  
 (Stahl 1637: ohne Paginierung)

Polus weist hier auf Heinrich Stahls *Hand- und Hauszbuch* hin, das als eines der ersten kirchlichen Handbücher in Estland gilt. Es war vor allem für Pfarrer gedacht und enthielt Luthers Kleinen Katechismus, gereimte Kirchenlieder, Auszüge aus dem Neuen Testament u.a. Jede Seite in diesem Buch ist zweisprachig (eine Spalte deutsch, die andere Spalte estnisch). Stahl sagt, dass die Hausväter vorher nicht die estnischen Gebete und Gesänge gekonnt hatten und auch kein Buch besaßen, aus welchem sie sie hätten lernen und vorlesen können. Daher mussten sie „wieder ihren Willen geschehen lassen, das ihr Ehstnisches Gesinde und Unterthanen ohn erkänntnuß und anruffung Gottes alß das tumme unvernünfftige Viehe gewachsen, gelebet und mannigmalh gestorben.“ (Stahl 1632: ohne pagierung) Es wird hier jedoch nicht auf die Esten geschimpft, sondern es werden Konsequenzen aus deren schlechter Lage gezogen und die Wichtigkeit der kulturellen Vermittlung unterstrichen.

Auch Polus betont in seinem Dedicationsgedicht die kulturelle Vermittlertätigkeit Stahls: Eine Kultur, die den Menschen, die eine andere Sprache sprechen und eine andere Kultur vertreten, fremd ist, wird ihnen durch das Werk Stahls nah gebracht. Doch es bleibt nicht dabei – Heinrich Stahl will auch den Deutschen die Feinheiten der estnischen Sprache näher bringen. Polus schreibt:

Dabey noch bleibt es nicht / Jhr schafft auch diesem Raht /  
 Der nicht auff Ehstnisch noch gelernet reden hat:  
 Jhr zeigt jhm die Strasse /  
 Jhr weiset jhm die Bahn /  
 Wie er in bester masse  
 Die Sprache fassen kan.  
 (Stahl 1637: ohne Paginierung)

In dem zweiten Dedicationsgedicht erwähnt Polus mehrere berühmte europäische Gelehrte wie Ronsard, Plautus, Caesar, Luther und

andere, die jeweils einen wichtigen Beitrag für die Entwicklung ihrer Muttersprache geleistet haben. Laut Polus gebührt nun auch Heinrich Stahl ein Platz in dieser Reihe, da er die estnische Sprache zu den Kultursprachen dieser Welt erhoben hat:

In dieser Sprachenmeister Zahl /  
 Auch nun gehöret Jhr / Herr Stahl /  
       Euch ewig Lob auch bleibet /  
 Daß jhr die Sprach' vns macht bekannt  
 Vnd GOTT in dieser diesem Land' /  
       In dem jhr Ehstnisch schreibet. (ib.)

Ein weiteres Beispiel zeigt uns, dass Polus sich mit der hiesigen Kultur (auch wenn es sich um die hiesige deutsche Kultur handelt), identifiziert hat und fungiert zugleich als Beweis dafür, dass wir es bei Polus mit einem Schriftsteller zu tun haben, dessen Schaffen die barocken Normen nicht verletzt, der sich aber zweifellos um einen persönlichen Bezug bemüht hat.

1639 erschien die erste Ausgabe des von Polus herausgegebenen Lexikons *Lustiger Schawplatz/ Da allerley Personen / Aempter / Stände / Künste / Händel / Gewerbe vnd Handwercke / Wie auch derselben Anfänger / Erfinder vnd Vermehrer bey einander sind*, das anhand verschiedener Lexika zusammengestellt ist. Dort werden allerlei Personen, Ämter, Stände, Künste, Gewerbe und anderes alphabetisch in kurzen Artikeln vorgestellt.

Polus' Hauptquelle beim Verfassen dieses Werkes war Tomaso Garzonis Lexikon *Piazza Universale* (1585), das in 153 Kapiteln bzw. „Diskursen“ auf unterhaltende Art die Künste, Handwerke, Stände, Tugenden und Laster der damaligen Zeit schildert. Dieses Werk verbreitete sich schnell in ganz Europa, doch wurde Garzoni in Deutschland mehr als in anderen Ländern übersetzt und gedruckt. Von 1619 bis 1659 erschienen im deutschsprachigen Raum vier verschiedene Editionen der Schriften Garzonis (Battafarano 1991: 112). Der Großteil der Artikel in Polus' Lexikon sind Übersetzungen von Garzonis Texten. Damit reiht sich Polus' Werk in die damals aktuelle Modeströmung ein.

Untersucht man die Zusammenstellung des *Lustigen Schawplatzes*, fällt auf, dass Polus die Originaltexte erheblich gekürzt hat. Außerdem baut er in seinen Artikeln, wo es möglich ist, einen lokalen Bezug ein, und folgt damit dem Prinzip der Situationsbezogenheit, das generell für die Lyrik der Barockzeit charakteristisch ist (vgl. Sturzenegger 1996). Auch in Deutschland tätige Übersetzer Garzonis gingen mit dem Originaltext relativ frei um: Albertinus etwa, der die erste Übersetzung Garzonis ins Deutsche (1636) vorlegte, hatte die Kapitel über Huren und Hexen herausgelassen (Battafarano 1991: 113). 1641 erschien das komplette Werk in Deutsch in originalgetreuer Übersetzung.

Doch wie sieht die Situationsbezogenheit in Polus' Lexikon aus, bzw. wie wird die Person des Übersetzers in dem Text sichtbar? In dem Artikel über *Akademici* zum Beispiel berichtet Polus zuerst originalgetreu über die Geschichte des Begriffs *Akademie*: „Academia ist gewesen ein lustiger Ort / nahe bey der Stadt Athen. An demselben ist geboren der weltberühmte Philosophus Plato / vnnd hat darnach auch Schule gehalten“; Polus 1639a: 10). Dann schreibt er über verschiedene Akademien (wie auch Garzoni), und geht schließlich auf eine besondere Akademie ein:

Zu vnserer Zeit werden alle die hohe Schulen / welche von Königen / Keysern / Fürsten vnd andern grossen Herren gestiftet vnd mit grossen Privilegien gezieret vnd verehret sind / Academien genennet / vnter welchen nicht die geringste ist / die der hochlöbliche König der Schweden Gustavus Adolphus zu Dörpat in Lieflland newlich angerichtet vnd mit gelehrten Männern versorget hat. (Polus 1639a: 11)

Im Originaltext wird an dieser Stelle natürlich nicht die *Academia Gustaviana*, sondern die Akademie zu Pavia gelobt; vgl. die in Deutschland gedruckte Übersetzung:

Dahero ist hernach auch dieses entstanden / nemlich daß auch biß auff vnserer Zeit alle hohe vnnd berühmte Schulen in allen Landen werden *Academiae* genennet / vnd sonderlich die / so von vornehmen Herren vnnd Potentaten auffgerichtet vnnd also begnadet / daß sie nicht allein nach Notturfft versehen / sondern sie selbst sich

auch nicht geschewet sich in jhre Register / als vnter die *claros* vnd berühmte *Academicos* einschreiben zu lassen. Wolan vnter vnsern Italienischen *Academiis*, von welchem ich mir allhie allein zu reden vorgenommen / ist wol die vornembste die *Academia Affidatorum* zu Pavia, von wegen der grossen menge dapferer vnnnd berühmter Leuchte / so sich zu allen Zeiten in derselbigen befunden. (Garzoni 1641: 187)

Einerseits ist es für Polus' Schaffen charakteristisch, dass er fast immer das vorgegebene poetische Muster beachtet, jedoch immer einen persönlichen Bezug einbaut bzw. seine momentane Situation kenntlich macht. Andererseits handelt es sich vielleicht um einen gewissen Lokalpatriotismus, der sich auch in einer Ausführung über die livländische Geschichte bemerkbar macht, und zwar in dem Artikel im *Lustigen Schawplatz* über die Deutschen:

Anno 1186. fing ein Gottfürchtiger Mann mit Namen Meynardus / an zu predigen das Evangelium in Lieffland / vnd richtete ein Bistthumb an in der Stadt Riga / er lernete die Sprache / hatte aber grossen Widerstand / biß endlich vmb das Jahr 1200. viel Leute Bilgers Weise hinein zogen vnd zwungen das Land mit Gewalt zum Christlichen Glauben. (Polus 1639a: 125)

Wir sehen, dass Polus sich hier zwar im vorgegebenen Rahmen bewegt, indem er das Original ziemlich genau übersetzt bzw. so adaptiert, dass das Original deutlich zu sehen ist. Dennoch versteht er, durch geschickte Handgriffe seine eigenen Gedanken in den zu übersetzenden Text einzubauen, so dass Polus' Person anhand dieser kleinen Indizien in Form konkreter Situationen und der Individualität des Übersetzers sichtbar wird.

Auch in seinen Gelegenheitsgedichten bezieht sich Polus fast immer auf seine momentane Situation, indem er durch kleine Hinweise den lokalen Kontext einbaut. Zum Beispiel steht in dem Hochzeitsgedicht, das Polus anlässlich der Hochzeit von Georg Saleman und Gertrud Wiebe (im Jahr 1639) verfasst hat, der harte Schicksalsschlag, der den Bräutigam einige Zeit zuvor getroffen hat, im Mittelpunkt. Der seelische Schmerz, den er nach dem Tod seiner ersten Frau und seines jüngsten Kindes gehabt haben muss, wird mit

körperlichem Leid verglichen, das schwer zu kurieren ist. Erst eine neue Liebe bringt wieder Freude in sein Leben. Dabei wird geschickt auf die örtliche Geographie hingewiesen: Laut dichterischer Aussage soll es überall genug Möglichkeiten geben, Heilung zu finden:

Zwar ewrer Wohnung wegen  
 War etwas euch gelegen  
 Zur recht' vnd lincken Hand:  
 Zur rechte ein Balbierer / (...)  
 Zur andern stund euch offen  
 Drauff sonst die Krancken hoffen  
 Das Apotheker Hauß.  
 (Polus 1639b: ohne Paginierung)

Saleman war Pastor der Heiliggeistkirche, in deren Nähe (links, wenn man mit dem Gesicht zum Turm steht) sich die Ratsapotheke befindet. Vermutlich lebte auf der anderen Seite der Straße ein Barbier. Laut Schragen ihrer Zunft waren sie in Reval/Tallinn auch als Chirurgen bzw. als Wundärzte tätig und haben in kritischen Fällen oft erste Hilfe geleistet. Da der Witwer dort keine Heilung findet, geht er zum Markt, der auch „nicht ferne lieget / Von ewrer hinter Thür /“ (ib.) (der Rathausplatz befindet sich in unmittelbarer Nähe der Heiliggeistkirche), doch „Der hatt' auch nichts zu kauffen / Für dieser Schmerzen Hauffen/“ (ib.). Die Geschichte wird einerseits allgemeingültig erzählt, andererseits werden die Kenner der lokalen Geographie hier ohne Mühe den Stadtkern von Reval/Tallinn erkennen. Auch in etliche andere Gelegenheitsgedichte baut Polus solche Hinweise ein, was insgesamt nicht nur literaturwissenschaftliches, sondern auch kulturgeschichtlich interessantes Material liefert (vgl. hierzu auch Heero 2009: 41–42).

Noch ein Gedicht sollte schließlich angesprochen werden: Am 14. Mai 1639 entstand anlässlich der Rückkehr des Dichters Paul Fleming nach Reval/Tallinn Polus' Gratulationsgedicht *An meinen hochgeehrten Herrn M. Fleming*. In dem kurzen vierstrophigen Gedicht wird Fleming in der Stadt willkommen geheißen und sein dichterisches Können gerühmt. Interessant ist, dass Fleming in Polus' Gedicht „in dein Vaterland“ (Fleming 1865 II: 625) begrüßt



wird. Es kann sein, dass hier auf Flemings Wunsch angespielt wird, sich in Reval/Tallinn, seiner Wahlheimat niederzulassen. Andererseits könnte Polus Tallinn und Estland ganz selbstverständlich als einen Teil des deutschsprachigen Kulturraums betrachten und seinen Dichterfreund somit in dem Land der vertrauten Sprache begrüßen. Für die zweite These spricht auch die Tatsache, dass in Flemings Reisegedichten aus Russland der Begriff „Vaterland“ mit dem europäischen Kulturraum in Verbindung gebracht wird (Pohl 1993: 300–301). Der Ton dieses Textes, in dem fast schon das moderne europäische Denken anklingt, zeigt uns, dass Polus als Autor vielleicht in einem lokalen Rahmen denkt, er diesen Rahmen jedoch ausweiten und in größeren, internationalen Kontext stellen kann.

Zum Schluss sei Polus' Dichterkollege Reiner Brockmann zitiert, der in seinem Dedikationsgedicht für Polus' *Lustigen Schawplatz* Folgendes geschrieben hat:

Dieses wisset besser Jhr/  
 Könts auch besser schreiben/  
 Mein Herr Pole Phoebus Zier:  
 Ewer Buch wird bleiben.  
 So lang wird ein Handwerck seyn  
 Vnd gebawt mit Kalck vnd Stein/  
 Wird Euch Fama lieben  
 Weil Jhr wol geschrieben.

(Polus 1639a: 6–7)

Brockmann sieht hier die schöpferische Tätigkeit seines Kollegen als Handwerk an, doch ist dieses Handwerk monumental. Es ist etwas, das nach dem Tod seines Schöpfers bleibt. Obwohl Polus' Oeuvre relativ schmal ist, zeugen seine Texte von dichterischem Können, Scharfsinnigkeit und von der Fähigkeit, kreativ mit der Sprache umzugehen. Dazu kommt noch die Tatsache, dass Polus über die lokalen Verhältnisse im Bilde war und dass er zweifellos Interesse an der estnischen Sprache und Kultur hatte. Deshalb kann man behaupten, dass Polus' Schaffen sicherlich zur estnischen Literatur gezählt werden kann und dass sein Name vielleicht irgendwann auch in unserer Literaturgeschichtsschreibung eine Stelle einnimmt, die ihm gebührt.

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- vnd Vornehmen H. Claus Wieben / der grossen Gilde allhier Elstens / hertzlieben Tochter / den 25. Hornungstag Hochzeit hielt / Zu Ehren geschrieben / Im Jahre / da man nach den Zahlbuchstaben sagen kan: Dle keVsChe GertrVD Wiebe WirD nVn Herr Görgens Rlebe [1639]. Revall / Gedruckt bey Heinrich Westphal / Gymnasij Typographo. Reval: Westphal.
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## Moby Dick: *The 'Great American Novel' as a Questioning of National Ideology*

Though its subject is contemporary lyric poetry, Philip Metres' recent book *Behind the Lines* begins with an observation about that ancient paradigm of the epic, Homer's *Iliad*. Metres notes that Thersites, the "only voice of dissent" in the *Iliad*, is "dispensed with quickly" (Metres 2007: 1), abused both verbally and physically by Odysseus, "much to the delight of the other soldiers" (ib. 2) and, Homer assumes, to the delight of the poem's audience. One of the key elements Metres identifies in war poetry, "the absence or ridicule of dissenting voices" (ib. 3), also characterizes national epics (such as the *Iliad* for the Greeks, the *Aeneid* for Rome, *Beowulf* for Britain, even the *Kalevala* for so peaceful a people as the Finns). Typically, a national epic is itself a war poem that features a protagonist who represents the people because of his prowess in battle. It looks, in other words, as though national epics become national epics less because they are belletristic than because they are bellicose. In any case, they seldom grant space to dissenting values. All the more interesting, then, that the "great American novel," *Moby Dick*, the closest thing the U.S. has to a national epic, can be viewed (as the *Iliad*, for instance, *cannot* plausibly be viewed) as a narrative of dissent, spoken entirely by a dissenting voice. The speaker in *Moby Dick* asks us to call him Ishmael, the name of a dissenting voice from the Pentateuch, but could have urged us just as well to call him Thersites.

Eric Havelock (also speaking of Homeric epic) reminds us that war brings out "the essential mechanisms of a culture complex" (Havelock 1963: 139). In an oral society such as the one in and for which the *Iliad* was composed, the epic was "a necessity for government and not just a means for recreation" (ib.), which entailed that

the epic poet “exercise a degree of cultural control over his community which is scarcely imaginable” today. “His epic language would constitute a kind of culture language, a frame of reference and a standard of expression to which in varying degree all members of the community were drawn” (ib. 140). If Havelock is right, then the stance toward war that Metres criticizes is a tendency of the genre: epic, “in order to do its job for the community and offer an effective paradigm of social law and custom, must deal with those acts which are conspicuous and political,” and with actors of the type we call heroes. Which makes “the heroic paradigm... in the last resort not romantic but functional and technical” (ib. 168). In consequence, epic will be conservative, depicting a myth of origins that rationalizes and validates the status quo. It will depict an original victory of the values and identity that “we” – whoever is included in the presumed audience – most transparently share in common, in preference to the values and identity affirmed by dissent, namely either those that we share in common but not transparently, or those that we do not share in common but (purportedly) ought to.

No doubt the propensity of national epics toward conservatism should not surprise us, since the effect of the social function of epic, its role in constructing culture language and custom, is complemented and magnified by the dynamics of literary reception and preservation. The voices of those empowered by a state are more likely to be heard, valued, and preserved than are the voices of that state’s poor and disenfranchised, and those empowered by a state have the greatest stake in that state’s legitimation. Those who benefit most from existing social organization will be those most authorized to tell stories, and also best able to preserve and disseminate the stories they prefer. As Thomas R. Hietala points out, “critics of national policy seldom reach generations other than their own, for history... often records only the dominant voices of the past” (Hietala 2003: 272). That combination – epic’s role in shaping culture, and the dynamics of literary preservation – means that the conservatism of national epics in general should not surprise us, but also means that the dissenting voice of *Moby Dick* should.

*Moby Dick*, published in 1851, appeared at the height of expansionist fervor in the United States. In 1840 the United States covered

approximately one quarter of the geographical area it covers today, but in the 1840s "a form of expansionism novel in name, appeal, and theory made its appearance." That form of expansionism took the name "manifest destiny," which "meant expansion, prearranged by Heaven, over an area" the limits of which were not agreed on. "In some minds it meant expansion over the region to the Pacific; in others, over the North American continent; in others, over the hemisphere... It attracted enough persons by the mid-1840's to constitute a movement" (Merk 1963: 24). John L. O'Sullivan coined the term in an 1845 editorial on the annexation of Texas, and his disdain for other nations' dissent resembles Odysseus' disdain for Thersites' dissent in the *Iliad*: other nations, O'Sullivan contends, have interfered with annexation "for the avowed object of thwarting our policy and hampering our power, limiting our greatness and checking the fulfilment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions" (O'Sullivan 1974: 28).

Manifest destiny is a "legitimizing myth of empire" that justifies American expansion and "implicitly sanction[s] the dispossession of all non-Anglo peoples on the continent" (Hietala, 255). To legitimate dispossession, though, would-be dispossessors must dehumanize those to be dispossessed. To make it plausible that a just God would decree that land be taken from "them" and awarded to "us," "we" must be fully human, fully civilized, and "they" must not be. In this regard, Melville's Ishmael takes Thersites' role, articulating an oppositional stance, dissenting from the legitimizing myth and the premises it necessitates. His narrator, Ishmael, repeatedly recounts a similar pattern: he starts with a dehumanizing view of the non-Anglo other, but after an edifying encounter with that other comes to revise his original view, recognizing the other's humanity. Melville's Ishmael is more subtle and articulate than Homer's Thersites, but he still dissents: he "shouts down" the dismissal of the non-Anglo other on which depends the legitimizing myth Melville's contemporaries called manifest destiny.

Queequeg occasions many of Ishmael's recognitions, and does so from their very first meeting. In that first encounter, Ishmael's recognition of Queequeg's humanity follows the pattern *Moby Dick's*

readers soon come to recognize. The Spouter-Inn in New Bedford, where Ishmael has stopped on his way to Nantucket to ship out, does not have a room available, so he is asked by the innkeeper, "you haint no objections to sharing a harpooneer's blanket, have ye?" (28). Ishmael reluctantly agrees, but then his fears begin to mount. The innkeeper manipulates those fears, warning Ishmael that "the harpooneer is a dark complexioned chap" who "eats nothing but steaks, and likes 'em rare" (28), characteristics that lead Ishmael to want to know from the innkeeper "who and what this harpooneer is, and whether I shall be in all respects safe" in the room with him (31). Ishmael concludes, after being told that the harpooneer is late returning to the inn because he is out trying to sell a shrunken head, that "that harpooneer is a dangerous man" (32), and is only reassured by the innkeeper that the bed is big, not that the harpooneer is civil. After Ishmael reluctantly agrees to share a bed with the harpooneer, his first sight confirms his fears: "good heavens! what a sight! Such a face! It was of a dark, purplish, yellow color, here and there stuck over with large, blackish looking squares. Yes, it's just as I thought, he's a terrible bedfellow" (33). He looks different from me; ergo, he must pose a threat. As the harpooneer undresses, Ishmael, seeing that his whole body is tattooed, considers it "now quite plain that he must be some abominable savage or other" (34), a view confirmed by his worshipping an idol, "a curious little deformed image with a hunch on its back" (35).

Once Ishmael is *interacting with* and not only *observing* Queequeg, though, he immediately recognizes Queequeg's civility. Queequeg responds calmly when the innkeeper (who had been summoned by a terrified scream from Ishmael) informs him that he will be sharing his bed with Ishmael. He motions for Ishmael to get in bed, and Ishmael concedes, "He really did this in not only a civil but a really kind and charitable way" (36). Further reflection leads Ishmael to conclude, "the man's a human being just as I am: he has just as much reason to fear me, as I have to be afraid of him. Better sleep with a sober cannibal than a drunken Christian" (36). The pattern is established: encouraged by the prejudices of his fellow Anglos, Ishmael will initially regard non-Anglos with prejudice, but then



after interaction with the person in question, Ishmael will come to recognize and acknowledge that person's humanity.

In Chapter 13, "Wheelbarrow," the pattern extends itself slightly, to include recognition by others besides Ishmael himself. "We borrowed a wheelbarrow," Ishmael tells us, "and embarking our things, including my own poor carpet-bag, and Queequeg's canvas sack and hammock," Ishmael and Queequeg, by this point bosom friends, "married" even, headed for the wharf, for the packet to Nantucket. "As we were going along," Ishmael reports, "the people stared; not at Queequeg so much – for they were used to seeing cannibals like him in their streets, – but at seeing him and me upon such confidential terms. But we heeded them not..." (61). Ishmael's acknowledgment of Queequeg's humanity has advanced far enough, and become visible enough, to incite others to begrudge it. Once on the boat, the pair suffers "the jeering glances of the passengers, a lubber-like assembly, who marvelled that two fellow beings should be so companionable" (62). Among those "boobies and bumpkins" was one that Queequeg notices "mimicking him behind his back." Ishmael continues, "I thought the bumpkin's hour of doom was come. Dropping his harpoon, the brawny savage caught him in his arms," and with an animal strength, "sent him high up bodily into the air; then slightly tapping his stern in mid-somerset, the fellow landed with bursting lungs upon his feet, while Queequeg, turning his back upon him, lighted his tomahawk pipe and passed it to me for a puff" (62–63). At this early point in Ishmael's narration of the incident, Queequeg still seems a savage who might kill over a perceived insult. But the story continues.

A complaint to the Captain leads to a confrontation between the Captain and Queequeg, but the confrontation is interrupted by an accident that spills the bumpkin overboard. With competence and valor nothing short of heroic, Queequeg rescues the bumpkin from drowning, after which "All hands voted Queequeg a noble trump" and "the captain begged his pardon" (64). Ishmael finds himself asking in wonder, "Was there ever such unconsciousness? [Queequeg] did not seem to think that he at all deserved a medal from the Humane and Magnanimous Societies." But Ishmael's report of Queequeg's behavior ("He only asked for water – fresh water –

something to wipe the brine off; that done, he put on dry clothes, lighted his pipe, and leaning against the bulwarks, and mildly eye[d] those around him") ends with an attribution to Queequeg by Ishmael of the reversal of values Ishmael himself continues to experience, and to which the others on board have been forced (at least briefly) to consent: Queequeg, Ishmael decides, "seemed to be saying to himself – 'It's a mutual, joint-stock world, in all meridians. We cannibals must help these Christians'" (64). From the dangerous other teetering at the brink of murder, Queequeg has become the noble savage who possesses all the best virtues of civilization without having to be taught them by civilization.

This type of recognition in *Moby Dick* differs from the anagnorisis of Greek tragedy, in which the recognition occurs too late to stop the fatal results, but occurs in the protagonist whose hubris brings about the tragic fall. The recognition in *Oedipus* occurs late, and in *Oedipus* himself. In *Moby Dick*, the recognition occurs early, but occurs in the speaker, whose role is much more like that of the Greek chorus than of the protagonist. It is Ishmael, not Ahab, who recognizes humanity in other humans (though it would be interesting – another paper! – to consider in this light Ahab's recognizing humanity in the whale). Ishmael's pattern of coming to recognize the humanity in non-Anglo others, and thus of portraying them as fully human despite their treatment by others, is repeated throughout: in the three harpooners, in the old cook, in Pip.

There are other ways in which Melville portrays dissent in *Moby Dick*. For example, chapter 54, "The Town-Ho's Story," makes dissenting Steelkilt its protagonist. I want to avoid conveying the impression, though, that the relevance and value of *Moby Dick's* dissent is confined to the past. Although the term "manifest destiny" is used with less frequency today, we still stand in need of the recognition *Moby Dick* provides. That recognition was timely, but is also timeless, posing a challenge not only to such of its predecessors as Homer but also to legitimizing myths as they embed themselves in culture today.

By encapsulating the sense that "it was manifest or evident that the United States was destined to expand 'from sea to shining sea,'" the concept of manifest destiny "portrayed America's expansion in

terms of destiny and fate," offering a "mythic interpretation of American expansion" that "remains widely popular," even if the term is invoked less often and even though "the facts simply do not support it" (Joy 2003: 83). The same elements that compose the concept of manifest destiny still have popular appeal: they were foregrounded, for instance, in the legitimizing myth invoked by George W. Bush in his statements leading up to the American invasion of Iraq. I will cite only one such speech as representative; in it Bush appeals to destiny, for instance: "I'm going to take our time to make sure we get the policy right, no matter what part of the world we're in. But I understand that freedom has called us into action -- I mean, history has called us into action to defend freedom. I understand where we stand now in history. We have an obligation to the future. And this great country will not shirk its obligation." He depicts the full humanity of "us": "You need to know there's a lot of people working a lot of hours to protect us. A lot of good folks that work in the federal government and the state government and local governments, doing everything they can to chase down every possible lead, every hint that somebody might be fixing to do something to the American people." He also depicts "them" as less than fully human: "And they're out there. The killers are out there. And that's all they are, by the way. They are nothing but a bunch of cold-blooded killers, who hate America because we love freedom. They hate us because we love the values of freedom of religion, freedom to speak, freedom to campaign the way you want to, freedom to assemble. They can't stand that." We must fulfil the divine purpose on earth by imposing ourselves on an ever wider area, without clear boundaries: "I believe we can achieve peace by being strong and determined in parts of the world where peace seems to be far away. I believe we can achieve peace in the Middle East. I believe we can achieve peace in South Asia. I believe this great nation, by being strong and determined and standing on principles and adhering to our universal values, can help the world achieve peace." As with an appeal to manifest destiny per se, Bush's appeal envisions peace as occurring not through reconciliation with an other regarded as one's equal, but through expansion into the other's domain, subduing or eliminating

an other regarded as less than human, managing people and places that cannot manage without us.

*Moby Dick* is consistent in its dissent from this approach. Its narrator, Ishmael, repeatedly alters his own understanding when confronted with a non-Anglo other, coming to recognize that other as fully competent and fully human. Given the long and firmly established tradition in national epics of excluding dissent, such embracing of dissent is surprising in "the Great American Novel." For those of us who value Thersites' point of view at least as much as Achilles' point of view, who finds dissent at least as patriotic a posture as jingoism, this aspect of *Moby Dick*, its acknowledgment of the non-Anglo other and its questioning of the most prevalent legitimizing myth of empire, is much to be valued.

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*Re-Inventing National Literary Histories:  
Ghosts and Cultural Memory in  
Padma Viswanathan's House of Sacred Cows and  
Velina Hasu Houston's Kokoro*

The stage reflects life, it doesn't invent it...  
[...] The theatre is made up of all of us.  
Everything we are and do and think and  
believe gets into the theatre – it is the mirror  
of life.

– Rachel Crothers (1967:133)

The idea that human identity and theatrical performance are closely interrelated is not new. Rachel Crothers' arguments in the quote opening this paper are in line with William Shakespeare's. Indeed, as Hamlet explains, the purpose of theater is "to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature" (1982: 288). Throughout history, the power of the theater to be lifelike has often played a role beyond mere entertainment. From Greek and Roman tragedies, to plays staged at royal courts, to contemporary experimental works, theater has mirrored the histories of society and the cultural values of its people.

Interestingly, the mirror of the stage does not merely *reflect* a society and its people's qualities and vices. It is a "magic mirror," John Russell Brown explains, one which reveals to an audience "the truth about themselves" (1997: 8). In other words, even though what happens onstage can look similar to ordinary life outside the theater, a theatrical performance constitutes the result of a chain of mediations. From the playwright's choice of subject material, the director's staging, the actors' interpretations to the audience's

reception, the events portrayed onstage are thus necessarily *refracted*.

If theater offers a mirror of society – however distorted the image – how does contemporary North American drama complement and/or revise historical narratives of Canada and the United States? As a platform of political debate and cultural exchange, how does dramatic literature – and more particularly multi-ethnic playwriting – re-invent the North American literary canon?

Thanks to the liberalization of immigration laws in both the U.S. and Canada in the mid-twentieth century along with the political protests initiated by the Civil Right movements of the 1960s, North American theater has become more inclusive of multi-ethnic artists than ever before. Owing to government subsidies, the activity of regional theaters in the U.S. and alternative theaters in Canada, the last four decades or so have proved particularly rich in the field of multi-ethnic dramatic literature.<sup>1</sup> Since the 1970s, a growing body of Asian, South Asian, African and indigenous playwrights have engaged with a diverse set of socio-political and aesthetic concerns on the North American stage. In their plays, these multi-ethnic authors challenge Eurocentric perspectives, explode traditional dramatic conventions, and re-inscribe their rich heritage within the fabric of U.S. and Canadian dramatic literary canons.

However, if colonialism and imperialism belonged to the past, there would no longer be cultural, national, or ethnic borders to be defended. It seems, however, that numerous ethnic and indigenous communities across North America are still fighting to move beyond an imposed image of inferiority as well as beyond discrimination and racism. As African American playwright August Wilson and others have argued, “whiteness” seems to remain at the center of aesthetic

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<sup>1</sup> For more details about Canadian and American theatre histories, the reader is advised to turn to Felicia Hardison Londré and Daniel J. Watermeier's *The History of North American Theatre*, Eugene Benson and L.W. Conolly's *English-Canadian Theatre. Perspective on Canadian Culture*, Krasner's *A Companion to Twentieth-Century American Drama*, and Bigsby's *Modern American Drama*, among others.

standards and artistic control.<sup>2</sup> Pluralism does not necessarily imply the empowerment of minority groups and cultures. Paradoxically, by encouraging cultural homogeneity, discourses of universality can prevent the development of genuine diversity.

In spite of flourishing theatrical activity across the North American stage, ethnic and indigenous dramatic productions continue to be neglected by scholarship. This in/visible presence has been translated into an interesting phenomenon in contemporary Canadian and American drama. In an increasing body of plays – from M.J. Kang's *Noran Bang: The Yellow Room*, Tomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters* and *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing*, to August Wilson's *The Piano Lesson*, or David Henry Hwang's *Golden Child*, to cite but a few examples – the stage is haunted by literary ghosts in multiple guises. Relying on Lois Parkinson Zamora's essay "Ghosts in U.S. and Latin American Fiction," this paper explores the various meanings attached to literary ghosts and their relationships to the nation's cultural memory. Written at the end of the twentieth century, Padma Viswanathan's *House of Sacred Cows* and Velina Hasu Houston's *Kokoro* provide two particularly well-suited examples to examine the performative roles played by in/visible ghosts onstage in the larger contexts of Canadian and American literary histories.

Reconfiguring the literary histories of their respective country, Padma Viswanathan and Velina Hasu Houston both turned to playwriting to expose racial discrimination and gender inequalities. From Indian ancestry, Canadian playwright and novelist Padma Viswanathan was born in Nelson, British Columbia, and raised in Edmonton, Alberta.<sup>3</sup> After living in Montreal for a few years where

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<sup>2</sup> Among others, the reader should turn to August Wilson's address to the Theater Group Communication at the National Conference of 1996 entitled "The Ground on Which I Stand," as well as Harry Elam's introduction, "Getting the Spirit," to the anthology *The Fire This Time: African American Plays for the 21st Century*.

<sup>3</sup> Viswanathan obtained her degree in sociology at the University of Alberta, where she became involved in social-action theater. One of her collective theater projects, *Acting Our Colours*, was devised for a high school anti-racist program. In addition, she co-wrote a video on family

*House of Sacred Cows* was workshopped by the Teesri Duniya Theatre,<sup>4</sup> she moved to the United States and currently resides in Fayetteville, Arkansas. In 2008, she released her debut novel, *The Toss of a Lemon*, a story taking place in South India in the first half of the twentieth century and inspired by conversations with the playwright's grandmother.

Of mixed-race ancestry, African and Blackfoot Pikuni Native American on her father's side and Japanese on her mother's, Velina Hasu Houston is an acclaimed American playwright, poet, essayist, and screenwriter.<sup>5</sup> Born on a military ship on international waters

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violence for the Indo-Canadian Women's Association, entitled *Crossing the Line*. Furthermore, as a community outreach coordinator, she began an association with Catalyst Theatre. She received an MA from the Writing Seminar at Johns Hopkins University in 2005 and an MFA from the University of Arizona in 2006. For further details on Padma Viwanathan's biography, the reader is advised to turn to Anne Nothof's introduction in *Ethnicities: Plays from the New West*, pp 6–7.

<sup>4</sup> As playwright Rahul Varma explains, Teesri Duniya Theatre, founded in 1981 in Montreal, "is a company where artists of every culture, colour, language and heritage work together" (1998: 25). The company develops and produces socially relevant productions that promote interculturalism. They work in theatrical styles that reflect the cultures and experiences of visible minority Canadians and the multicultural-multiracial reality of this country. For example, productions have included works of Aboriginal, East Asian, Middle Eastern, Quebecois, European, and many other artists (2008: <http://www.teesriduniyatheatre.com/home.htm>).

<sup>5</sup> Houston holds a Ph.D. from the School of Cinema Arts, USC; a Master of Fine Arts from UCLA's School of Theater, Film, and Television; and a Bachelor of Arts in journalism, mass communications, and theater (with a minor in philosophy) from the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications, Kansas State University. A Professor of Theater, Director of Dramatic Writing, and Resident Playwright at the School of Theater at University of Southern California, Houston has published two pivotal anthologies of Asian American drama: *The Politics of Life* (1993) and *But Still, Like Air, I'll Rise* (1997). Furthermore, Houston is the recipient of fifteen playwriting commissions from distinguished institutions. In Japan, several documentary films about her work and family have been produced by Japan's key broadcasting concerns: Nippon Hoso Kai, Mainichi Hoso,



enroute from Japan to the United States, Houston was reared in Junction City, Kansas, a small town adjacent to Fort Riley, a once-thriving Army installation. Houston's complex life story and multi-ethnic heritage inspired her acclaimed trilogy: *Asa Ga Kimashita* (*Morning Has Broken*), *American Dreams*, and *Tea*. She is currently involved in a multi-playwright commission, *The DNA Trail*, at Silk Road Theatre Project, Chicago.

From these two playwrights' vast array of works, I would wish to focus more specifically on Viswanathan's *House of Sacred Cows* and Houston's *Kokoro* (*True Heart*). Both written in the mid-nineties, these plays feature the presence of ghosts who carry a special significance with regard to their respective nation's cultural memory. Published in *Ethnicities: Plays from the New West*, edited by Anne Nothof, Viswanathan's *House of Sacred Cows* started as a twenty-minute scene in Catalyst Theatre's playwright's unit. The play then had its world premiere on 4 December 1997 at the Northern Light Theatre in Edmonton, Alberta. As stated in the playwright's Notes, *House of Sacred Cows* is carefully anchored in specific traditions. From the beginning, the playwright clearly states that "although concepts and practices are referred to as 'Indian,' the point of reference is my own – Tamil, Hindu, and specifically, Brahmin" (H 19).<sup>6</sup> With 26 official languages, numerous religions, and various casts, the subcontinent of India constitutes a complex mosaic of cultures.

Interestingly, the play's setting and characters symbolically stand for another fragmented mosaic: contemporary Canadian society. Significantly, the action of the play is set in a co-op that metaphorically represents an idealized version of Canadian society as a whole. As Anne Nothof argues in her introduction, "the co-op functions as a microcosm for Canadian society, with its social and political struggles, its shared ideals and ongoing fractiousness, its

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and Television Tokyo Channel 12. For more details about Houston's biography and awards, see the playwright's official website: <http://www.velinahasuhouston.com>.

<sup>6</sup> All my quotations are borrowed from Padma Viswanathan's *House of Sacred Cows* edited by Anne Nothof in the collection *Ethnicities: Plays from the New West* in 1999. Hereafter cited as H with page references given parenthetically in the text.

conflicts between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'" (H 3). Indeed, the co-op residents with their challenges and ideals purposefully point to the difficulties one faces to live in a multi-ethnic and socially diverse environment.

The playwright's "Notes on Setting" tell us that "the play takes place sometime in the early to mid 90s, in a Western Canadian city, in a house whose architecture is pre-70s, so that the details evoke *memory*" (H 18 emphasis added). Long time co-op resident Orwell explains to the freshly arrived Anand: "this is a co-operative living complex. We have four wings: North Wing, Blue Wing, Great Mother Wings, and Che Wing. Everyone takes equal share of cooking and cleaning, everyone participates in every decision regarding the house" (H 23). However, this "most excellent ideal of democracy" (H 23), as Anand remarks, faces numerous challenges. January, "a young Canadian woman" (H 17),<sup>7</sup> is in search of her true father. As the founder's daughter, January wishes to restore the co-op's original ideals of democracy and equality. Leaf, an unemployed single mother, faces increasing difficulties to sustain herself and her child. Absorbed with her needs, she rejects her friend's help and struggles with twin brothers Guy and Gui who both claim to be the true father of her child. Most strikingly, however, as this paper will show, the cast of characters also includes two ghosts: Anand's deceased parents, Amma and Appa. Just before their son's scheduled departure from India, Anand's parents died in a riot provoked by the death of Chief Minister Mahapsara.

While Viswanathan depicts Anand's integration process within his new co-op in particular and Canadian society in general, Houston

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<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, in the premiere production of *House of Sacred Cows* at the Northern Light Theatre, Edmonton, the character of January was performed by Asian Canadian actress Mieko Ouchi. Significantly, the director's choice subverts our assumptions of "young Canadian woman" as necessarily meaning "white woman." Viswanathan's elusive stage directions indeed do not mention any specific race. Therefore, this meaningful choice reminds us of the complexity of contemporary multi-ethnic Canada. In addition, as January is associated with the West, the playwright also forces the audience to revise their stereotyped assumptions about clear-cut divisions between East and West.

dramatizes the struggle of a Japanese family to adapt to American life in her play *Kokoro*. Premiered at Theatre Yugen, San Francisco, in June 1994, *Kokoro* – nominated for Best Original Script by San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle – centers on Yasako Yamashita, a Japanese woman in her early 30s, who wishes to retain her Japanese culture and transmit it to her young daughter, Kuniko. Yasako's husband, Hiro, decries his wife's inability to acculturate and yet expects her to conform to traditional Japanese family roles. When she discovers her husband's infidelity and must respond to his mistress' threats, Yasako believes the only way to preserve her honor would be to perform *oyako shinju* (parent-child suicide). As in *House of Sacred Cows*, *Kokoro* also features a spectral presence: Fuyo, the ghost of Yasako's mother, who accompanies the heroine in her tribulations.

In her article, Zamora offers an in-depth exploration of what she calls "literary ghosts" in magical romance/magical realist literature. While Zamora applies her arguments to U.S. and Latin American fiction, I wish to argue that her discussion of "literary ghosts" proves particularly interesting in the context of dramatic literature. Indeed, from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to contemporary postcolonial plays, theatrical performances offer challenging ways in which to embody the (in)visible presence of ghosts. Whether ghosts take the guise of human beings on the stage, or are simply represented by voices, or lighting effects, they certainly play a pivotal role in the performance.

In *House of Sacred Cows*, the ghosts of Anand's parents regularly invade the reality of the play. As the stage directions indicate, Amma and Appa are "*lit for an eerie effect and may be at ceiling level. Their feet should not be visible*" (H 17). In addition, their appearance is signaled by traditional Tamil film music, a vocal clue that also underscores these ghosts' connection with traditional Indian culture. Interestingly, even if their clothes are partly ruined from the fire accident, the playwright carefully details the ways in which Anand's parents are dressed: Amma, on the one hand, "wears a six yard sari, wrapped as a Tamil Brahmin woman, and a huge red bindi (a dot on the forehead that proves she does not consider herself a widow)" (H 17). Appa, on the other hand, "wears a dhoti (a cotton, sheet-like garment wrapped around the waist) and a polyester suit" (H 17).

These descriptions, included in the “Characters” section, constitute another visual clue that clearly links these spirits to Indian cultural memory.

In *Kokoro*, Fuyo’s spirit from the Netherworlds appears at crucial moments in the play, often accompanied by ocean sounds. The play’s prologue immediately reveals the spiritual presence of Fuyo. Emerging as a shadow lit behind the scrim, “*Fuyo enters. A spirit, the back of her kimono trails behind her in shredded strands. Her face is snowy white; her hair is wild, long, grey-streaked. She glides beneath a gossamer shroud. The lights on her are shadowy while the lights on Yasako are a bit brighter*” (K 90).<sup>8</sup> Fuyo wears a kimono reminiscent of the traditional dress of Anand’s dead parents.

Significantly, this opening scene dramatizes Yasako’s departure from Japan to the U.S.A. As she departs, “Yasako removes her kimono” (K 90) and gives it to Fuyo, in addition to the silky American flag. Yasako’s re-assuring words – “Do not fear for my child in America, Mother. Her soul is tied with mine. She will never walk alone” (K 90) – underscore the profound bond between mother and child. In this sense, from these plays’ onset, the playwrights imagine ghostly apparitions as bearers of cultural and historical legacy.

Even though *House of Sacred Cows* and *Kokoro* are anchored in a different national context – Western Canada and San Diego, USA, respectively – both plays portray individuals torn between multiple cultures, ancestral traditions and modernity. These plays’ main protagonists recently immigrated to North America, either to study (Anand), or to find better working opportunities (Hiro and Yasako). The difficulties they face – alienation and uprootedness – are reminiscent of the throes associated with the immigrant experience in general. Interestingly, in *House of Sacred Cows* and *Kokoro*, the presence of ghosts – Amma/Appa and Fuyo – emphasizes the characters’ displacement. Representing the dangers and anxieties that modernity banishes, these spirits suggest a form of trauma deeply linked to cultural memory.

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<sup>8</sup> All my quotations are borrowed from Velina Hasu Houston’s *Kokoro (True Heart)* published in *But Still, Like Air, I’ll Rise*. Hereafter cited as K with page references given parenthetically in the text.

In their essay, "Literature and the Production of Cultural Memory," Erli and Rigney explain that "cultural memory" has emerged as a useful "umbrella term" to describe the complex ways in which societies remember their past through a variety of media (2006: 111). Stories, both oral and written, images, museums, and monuments all work together in creating and sustaining "sites of memory" (ib. 123). Interestingly, as Leo Spitzer argues in *Acts of Cultural Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*, "Cultural memorization constitutes an activity occurring in the present, in which the past is continuously modified and re-inscribed even as it continues to shape the future" (1999: vii). Neither remnant, document, nor relic, the "memorial presence of the past" Spitzer claims, ranges "from conscious recall to unreflected re-emergence, from nostalgic longing for what is lost to polemical use of the past to reshape the present" (ib. vii). As Spitzer further argues, "cultural recall is not merely something of which you happen to be a bearer but something that you actually *perform* [...]" (ib. vii; emphasis mine). Thus, in this context of dramatic performances, ghosts enacting cultural memory paradoxically embody absence and presence onstage. They serve as reminders of past forgotten traditions as much as they reshape the present by recalling these ancestral values in the present.

In this regard, the notion of home/land acquires a special significance in each of the plays under discussion. A cherished theme in postcolonial literature, this intricate concept proves subject to constant redefinition. Indeed, home/land is closely tied to identity formation. Settling in a new country, whether to study or to work, inevitably raises the questions of who you are and where you are from. In *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Anderson strikingly explains that our feelings of belonging to an "imagined community" of a specific nation arose only with migration and the advent of patriotism and colonialism in general (2006: 6–7, 12, 22, 141–145). Indeed, one never feels more Japanese, American, or Canadian, as when one travels abroad. Consequently, encounters with foreign customs challenge our own cultural beliefs as these are set in parallel or contrasted with new systems of reference. Clearly, in *House of Sacred Cows* and *Kokoro*, the

ghostly apparitions serve as link to lost homelands, and, as such, they enable forgotten cultural memory to be resurrected in the present.

As the curtain rises in *House of Sacred Cows*, Leaf, a co-op resident in her late 20s, appears on the stage in the middle of a phone conversation. Leaf's first sentence – also the play's first line of dialogue – “No, Father, I cannot move back *home!*” (H 21 my emphasis) proves highly symbolic of the play's overall problematic. Indeed, the notions of home and roots are central to all the co-op's residents. In addition, Leaf's statement also subtly announces another crucial issue at the heart of the play: the divide between parents and children, two generations caught in the dilemma of progress. Anand, in particular, must face the pressure of his parents. They urge him to finish his studies and come back *home* to release them from their responsibilities. As long as Anand has not found husbands for his sisters and is himself not married, his parents cannot “go to the next life” (H 25). Therefore, Amma and Appa's first appearance is to remind their son of his responsibilities.

While Viswanathan introduces a departure from the realistic world of the play through Tamil music and blue lighting, Houston resorts to the symbolic sound of ocean waves. Significantly, the stage directions read: “YASAKO enters as lights fade in low, whirling, shaping a world around her. There is a scrim as backdrop, and ocean waves dress the floor” (K 90). The important role of the sea in connection to Japanese cultural memory comes to light in Yasako's explanation to her daughter: “In Japan, you grandmother and I lived by the inland sea. But now there is Coronado and the big Pacific Ocean. Papa found this nice apartment so I can hear the waves. I close my eyes and pretend it is the seashore of Japan” (K 90). Houston's *Kokoro* attributes a deeply symbolic meaning to the Pacific Ocean. Indeed, on several occasions, the play depicts Yasako walking on the San Diego beach contemplating the “big Pacific Ocean” (K 91) that separates and connects her family to her homeland.

As Zamora argues, an investigation of the nature of literary ghosts offers insights into “the authors' metaphysics, politics, and poetics” (497). While some ghosts embody “transcendental truths, as visible or audible signs of Spirit,” others “carry the burden of

tradition and collective memory" (497). Therefore, as Zamora continues, literary ghosts in their many guises, are deeply metaphoric: "They mirror, complement, recover, supplant, cancel, complete" (497). They dissent from "psychological assumptions about autonomous consciousness and self-constituted identity and pose instead a model of the self that is collective: subjectivity is not singular but several, not merely individual and existential but mythic, cumulative, participatory" (Zamora 498). Interestingly, each of the plays discussed in this section ties the action and characters to the spiritual world of ancestral legends. As such, the protagonists' stories echo with a deeper meaning: their experiences become emblematic of others and acquire a universal aura.

*House of Sacred Cows* opens "OUT OF TIME" (H 21), with dimming house lights during a Ganapathi invocation – "a prayer to the elephant-headed god of new undertaking" (H 20). According to Indian mythology, the elephant-headed God, Lord Ganesha, is invoked to remove obstacles in people's life. This opening scene, along with later morning sun salutations, defines Anand's identity not only as Indian, but more specifically Hindu. Consequently, it immediately ties Anand to the mythic world of Indian Gods and legends. In addition, throughout the play, Anand also constitutes a mirror image of Viswanathan herself as he constantly writes about the Mahabharata in his notebook. As the playwright's introductory notes tell us, the Mahabharata is an ancient Sanskrit epic poem, a story which contains many stories (H 19). As a writer, she became familiar with the characters and philosophy through comic book versions of the heroic and puzzling exploits of the Pandavas (H 19). Interestingly, Anand not only writes about Arjuna, the great warrior in "each and every man" that awaits God's consent to fulfill his destiny. Anand and January also later impersonate the mythic Yudisthra/Draupadi couple, as they meet in an ethereal forest, an episode that clearly that contains metatheatrical resonance. This performance within the performance is lit in blue light, which signals a departure from the realist world of the play. During this conversation, January/Draupadi attempts to convince Anand/Yudisthra to help his sister, Lakshmi, to escape from an arranged

marriage. As Lakshmi's letters make clear, her brother's consent could indeed allow her to marry the man of her choice.

In a similar mode, Houston's *Kokoko* opens with Yasako's narration of the Japanese legend of Amaterasu:

A tiny rock is cast out to sea by the great Sun Goddess Amaterasu and it grows into an island, strong and unwavering, beautiful and bright. I am a root in this soil. I grow best here, all blossoms, all fruits, always. [beat] But, one day, the gardener comes and I am transplanted. The winds, the rain, the gnawing forces of erosion transform the blossoms, scattering them into the river of time (K 90).

Yasako's legend is deeply metaphoric and closely connected to her mother's spirit, Fuyo. Through an extended nature metaphor – comprising plants rooted in the soil equated with the country's Native inhabitants, a gardener compared to fate, the predicament of immigrants likened to the seeds scattered through the wind – Yasuko expresses her attachment to Japan, its traditions and history. To pursue the metaphor further, as a Native of Japan, Yasako embodies a kind of plant that cannot adapt to the dramatically different climate of South California. There, she cannot grow and blossom. These symbolic associations inevitably announce the tragic ending of the play.

In the first scene of Act I, Yasako recounts another legend which also introduces the audience to the importance of the soul in Japanese culture: "Did you know there is a world beneath the sea? [...] The mermaids have serious business: they guide lost souls to the next world" (K 91). As Yasako explains, "a soul is ... everything a person feels and dreams, an essence that cannot be touched unless you use your heart, your true heart. *Kokoro*. Mind, heart, spirit" (K 92). This poetic explanation of the play's title underscores the unbreakable connection between mother and daughter: "You have a soul too, Kuniko. A seven-year-old soul that has been around the universe many times. And it will never be lost because I will find you easily wherever there are Japanese peaches" (K 92). This umbilical cord between Yasako and Kuniko constitutes a reflection of



Yasako's own sacred bond with her mother. Such a connection, it appears, cannot be destroyed by distance or death.

Significantly, Houston's play takes place on "a hot summer day" (K 91) during the O-bon festival. As Yasako explains to her daughter, during this Japanese summer festival, "we will dance under the lanterns and the moon, and welcome back my mother's spirit" (K 93). At that moment, as if magically, "*Fuyyo appears upstage, moving gracefully in O-bon odori (festival dance). O-bon paper lanterns gleam from behind the scrim*" (K 93). This festival is meant to express gratitude to dead ancestors. It comprises *obon dori*, a religious folk dance that comforts the spirits of the dead. Typically, people gather around a wooden platform at a temple or shrine decorated with lanterns and dance to the accompaniment of traditional drum and flute music.

In addition to legends and festivals, Viswanathan and Houston tackle sensitive issues with regard to female rights. Both plays subtly question and undermine the uncritical acceptance of one's cultural memory. For instance, the character of January in *House of Sacred Cows* makes a strong case against arranged marriage. At first, Anand succumbs to the pressure of ancestral traditions – represented in the form of his parents' spirit – and cannot bring himself to prevent his sister's arranged marriage. Even after the climactic episode in which the Anand/January couple transforms into the mythic Mahabharata figures of Yudishtra/Draupadi, a desperate January almost renounces to defeat Anand's fatalism. In the end, however, the accidental death of their Uncle saves Lakshmi from her Uncle's arrangements. In the last confrontation with his deceased parents, Anand finally stands up to them to support Lakshmi's choice. Moreover, he resists his parents' wish to marry him to "the wife [they] choose" (H 87) by announcing his decision to take January as his wife. While Amma melodramatically claims "we are set adrift to wander in darkness, lonely" (H 88), Anand forcefully retorts: "Amma! Don't talk that way!! We are still your children. We still love you. This family is not falling apart" (H 88). Therefore, ultimately, integrating one's cultural memory also means that we must adapt because, as January claims, "we progress" and evolve.

The play ends as it began: "OUT OF TIME: *January and Anand wearing crowns, appear in a chariot, with bows and arrows*" (H 90). In a celebration of the newly formed couples – Anand/January's and Laskhmi's –, the play's final scene clearly rewards hybridity. Anand asserts that India has tremendously changed as a modern democracy: "two communities who would not have let their shadows touch in the last generation, all were gathered under one canopy" (H 90) at his sister's wedding. Therefore, the play suggests, a balanced harmony between Eastern and Western values may hold the promise of reconciliation between ancestral traditions and modernity. "*Illuminating January and Anand in a supernatural shower of light*" (H 91), the chariot flies away, leaving the audience to ponder on Viswanathan's celebration of hybridity in Anand's final assertion: "the West holds our hope but the East holds our inspiration" (H 90).

In a similar mode, *Kokoro* initially portrays Yasako as a submissive and obedient wife who lovingly performs her daily tasks as a housewife. Nonetheless, one night, she meets Shizuko Mizoguchi, Hiro's mistress. Unlike Yasako, Shizuko survived America. She considers herself "a pioneer: she "was naturalized [and] married to an American before" (K 101). As in her previous play, *Tea*, Houston portrays diverse female characters who display multiple facets of the female (immigrant) experience while subverting stereotypes of Japanese womanhood.<sup>9</sup> Being a survivor/ "Godzilla" type (K 100,

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<sup>9</sup> Set in Junction City, *Tea* draws from the playwright's childhood memories as well as from interviews of over 200 hundred war brides living in this small community. As such, the play focuses on the lives of five Japanese women who lived in Junction City while their American husbands, all servicemen, are stationed at Fort Riley. Houston not only documents the lives of women she was well-acquainted with in her youth. She also pays tribute to the strength and courage of these women who had to deal with disapproval from both their Japanese families and their new American neighbors. In this tragic play, one of the women commits suicide after having killed her husband. The other four gather at her home to clean house and drink tea together. As Shimakawa states in her article, Houston invokes "abject stereotypes" in the portrayal of these five women in order to "reappropriate those positions and to focus on these women in terms of their relations to one another, rather than their differences from 'normal'

121), Shizuko allows Hiro to concretize his forbidden fantasies about American's way of life: "eat cheeseburgers and strawberry ice cream in bed and let him wear his shoes in the house" (K 101). On the other hand, Shizuko's feminist lessons prove crucial for Yasako's emancipation. She teaches Yasako: "No it isn't okay. Japanese women gotta learn that. When it isn't okey, don't say it is" (K 99). Besides, Shizuko adds, "you could use a little lipstick. No offense, but you look like you don't have a mouth. And a woman needs it to speak her mind" (K 100). In this sense, the protagonist of Shizuko also forces Yasako to reconsider her submissive attitude towards life in general.

Further, Angela Rossetti, Yasako's attorney, represents a Euro-American woman – probably from Italian ancestry, as her name suggests. In the play's second Act, the heated debates between Angela and Yasako taking place in the prison cell illuminate the cultural context of Yasako. Upon reading Shizuko's letter in which the latter announced her pregnancy with Hiro's child, Yasako decides to return to Japan with Kinuko in order to avoid disgrace. Yasako embarks on an imaginary vessel through the Pacific Ocean. As they are about to drown, tourists from the nearby hotel run to rescue them. Unfortunately, Kuniko dies while Yasako is rescued and put in jail. While Houston's *Kokoro* clearly empathizes with Yasako's situation, the play also questions Japanese cultural beliefs. Angela passionately argues: "Yasako, you say the universe is out of balance because you daughter's spirit is fragmented without you. I say this is the only universe we've got. [...] I believe too much in freedom. I believe that people have to live and let live, especially in America" (K 123). Houston shows the difficulty of understanding someone's situation in a specific cultural context. In the end, Angela seems to better grasp Yasako's motives and suggests her to plead "no contest" (K 126).

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American women" (1995: 377). As Shimakawa argues, "even as Houston's play seems to validate these stereotypes, it undermines them" (ib. 378): the play indeed points out the ways in which "those identities are infinitely more complex and internally contradictory" (ib. 379). For a detailed discussion of Houston's *Tea*, see Karen Shimakawa's article, "Swallowing the Tempest: Asian American Women on Stage," published in *Theatre Journal*.

Furthermore, Evelyn Lauderdale, Yasako's faithful friend and helpful neighbor, not only takes care of Kuniko or teaches Yasako how to take the bus. She also subverts this role by revealing her mixed ancestry: half American, half Japanese. Therefore, as Hiro argues, Miss Lauderdale "is Japanese and American. She can understand both sides of this" (K 120). While Hiro's claim may not necessarily be grounded – Evelyn herself confesses: "I understand, but then I don't understand" (K 116) – it is true that Evelyn's multi-ethnic identity gives her a privileged insight into Yasako's delicate situation. At the end of Act II, Evelyn provides Yasako with the deadly tea leaves in case she wishes to join Kuniko's soul in the Netherworld.

Finally, the fifth female protagonist, Fuyo, embodies Japanese cultural memory: she wears the traditional kimono, bows, and only speaks Japanese. Her spectral presence on stage constitutes a visual reminder of Yasako's profound in-betweenness, torn apart as she feels between Eastern and Western worlds. Interestingly, however, as in *House of Sacred Cows*, in *Kokoro*, the main protagonist must renegotiate ancestral beliefs in order to progress. Like Anand, who finally challenges his parents to accept January as his spouse, Yasako resists Fuyo's pressure to drink the deadly tea. In a moving moment of illumination, she hears the wishes of Kuniko's spirit: "Where is Papa? Make him walk on the beach with you [...] Come on, Mommy, you can do it" (K 128). Yasako ponders "[w]hether to die to live, or live in death" (K 128). Finally, she decides to contemplate life over death: "*She bows to her mother,*" and asks her "not [to] linger here. Go. Please. Your fate is blessed; mine is cursed. Kuniko needs you" (K 128). Like Viswanathan's *House of Sacred Cows* then, Houston's *Kokoro* positively suggests that, while acculturation may require sacrifice and adjustment, cultural memory will continue to re-configure our ever evolving identities.

The carriers of cultural memory, the spirits of Amma and Appa in *House of Sacred Cows* and the ghost of Fuyo in *Kokoro* do not merely "bring absence into presence," they also "foreground magical realism's most basic concern – the nature and limits of the knowable [...]" (Zamora 1995: 497–98). Therefore, as Zamora argues, their presence, "is inherently oppositional because they represent an

assault on the scientific and materialist assumptions of Western modernity: that reality is knowable, predictable, controllable" (ib. 498). In other words, their spiritual presence constitutes "agents of aesthetic effect" by offering "relief from the constraints of reason" (Zamora ib. 497). They point to the "fundamental magic realist sense that reality always exceeds our capacities to describe or understand or prove" (Zamora ib. 497). Thus, Zamora argues, these "magical realist apparitions" unsettle modernity's basis in progressive, linear history, while engaging "this excessive reality." Consequently, from a formal perspective, Viswanathan and Houston clearly transgress the limits of dramatic realism and demand that we challenge our stereotypical ideas as well as our vision of reality. In their provocative hybridized playwriting, they explore what the challenging concept of "cultural memory" may mean for different people in various cultural and national contexts.

In *House of Sacred Cows*, as Marc Maufort argues, Viswanathan resorts to "mythic magic realism" in order "to make the sacred and the ordinary merge" (2003: 119). Indeed, as Maufort continues, "[b]lurring fact and fiction along magic realist lines" (ib. 117), blending Indian myths with Western metafictional overtones (ib. 118), the play "devises an expressive and innovative stage idiom hybridizing the paradigms of traditional Western naturalism" (ib. 120).<sup>10</sup> From a formal perspective, *House of Sacred Cows* indeed displays a highly fragmented structure. While broadly divided into Act One and Act Two, the play then constitutes an assemblage of small vignettes entitled "DAY" or "NIGHT" taking place in the realistic world of the play or "OUT OF TIME." This shifting between day and night, reality-as-fiction and reality-as-legend, creates a sense of dislocation that is emphasized by the spectral apparitions within the realistic construct of the performance. Besides, the constant blending of these multiple realities also offers an interpenetration of Western and Eastern world visions, reforming a new cultural memory, enriched by both traditions.

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<sup>10</sup> For an in-depth analysis of magic realist elements in *House of Sacred Cows*, the reader should turn to Marc Maufort's section on Padma Viswanathan in *Transgressive Itineraries*, pp.116–120.

While *Kokoro*'s overall structure is clearly divided into acts and scenes, the script incorporates a hybrid mixture of songs – in English and Japanese – as well as poems. In a metadramatic stance, Yasako time and again writes in her journal: “[*creating a poem*]: The sea is... the sea is a bridge of light, leading back into the warmth of honor, away from its scant reflections in this life, the mere images, those masks of paint and clay” (K 107). Houston’s “bridge of light” formed on the ocean at twilight re-inforces the play’s theme of in-betweenness. Hybridizing genres, Houston subverts traditional dramatic realism and endows the world of *Kokoro* with legends and the presence of spirits.

By their very nature, “ghosts are liminal, metamorphic, intermediary: they exist in/between/on modernity’s boundaries of physical and spiritual, magical and real, and challenge the lines of demarcation” (Zamora 1995: 498). Through theater, Viswanathan and Houston imagine an encounter between the world of the living and that of the dead. As audience members, we must consciously suspend our disbelief. Consequently, we must be willing to engage in a dialogue with each body seen on the stage, alive or dead. This enables impossible encounters to exist. Such imaginings conjures the “bridge of light” from Yasako’s poem.<sup>11</sup> It opens up the dream of reconciliation between past and present, one or several cultural memories, East and West.

Theater and history entertain an intriguing and complex relationship. As a field wherein dominant and oppositional discourses meet, theater thus proves a particularly interesting site of constant historical (re)citation of cultural crises within multicultural societies. Re-imagining “alternative” individual and collective histories, resurrecting ghosts in the performance of the present, the playwrights discussed re-imagine new experiences of the past that complement

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<sup>11</sup> In this regard, also see the video production, “Do 2 halves really make a whole?” (1993), directed by Martha Chono-Helsley and Joe Leonardi in collaboration with Dan Kwong and Brenda Kong Aoki. In it, Velina Hasu Houston reads from one of her poems entitled “Green Tea Girl in Pekoe Orange Country” in which she pleads for more tolerance and understanding of multi-racial identity.

and expand the literary histories of the Canadian and American nation at large.

In this sense, theater indeed holds "a mirror up to nature," in Hamlet's phrase, as the social and historical contexts critically affect theatrical performances. Although Rachel Crothers asserts "[t]he stage reflects life, it doesn't invent it" (1967: 133), I wish to argue that in fact theater similarly impacts cultural, social and political struggles. Not merely a reflector of life, theater also raises awareness and triggers change. In a perpetual process of interrogation and negotiation, multi-ethnic North American plays are transforming the terminological limits of North American drama. As they engage us in a conversation about ethnic and minority rights, institutionalized racism and discrimination, old myths and ancient traditions, these plays reconfigure Canadian and American literary histories. Therefore, I contend that contemporary multi-ethnic North American drama not only reflects life, it also invents it.

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*From Centre to Periphery:  
Facing the Self in Eça de Queirós's  
The Mandarin*

In 1880 the Portuguese novelist Eça de Queirós handed the editor of the newspaper *Diário de Portugal*, his friend Lourenço Malheiro, the manuscript of the story he had written while on vacation in Angers and which came to be known as *The Mandarin*. The newspaper published this narrative in eleven episodes from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> of July, and this serialisation eventually led to its publication in book form in the same year.

Born in 1845, José Maria de Eça de Queirós studied Law at Coimbra University, eventually followed a diplomatic career and wrote widely, *The Maias* being considered his masterpiece. He was appointed consul in Havana (1872–1874), as well as in Newcastle (1874–1879), Bristol (1879–1888), and Paris, where he served from 1888 until his death in 1900. Eça de Queirós was never in the Far East; his main contact with the Orient goes as far as the Near East, Egypt in particular.<sup>1</sup> While on consular service in Havana, Eça directly dealt with Chinese immigrants who lived in miserable conditions, and this is just how close he ever was to China.

Traditionally labelled as a realist writer indebted to Proudhon's progressive ideas,<sup>2</sup> Taine's "race, milieu et moment" triad and Zola's naturalism, Eça disrupts readers' expectations in *The Mandarin*. He

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<sup>1</sup> His trip to Egypt to take part in the inauguration of the Suez Channel in 1869 resulted in the diary posthumously published as *O Egipto – Notas de viagem [Egypt – Travel Notes]* (1926).

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Joana Duarte Bernardes's 2008 article: "Quando ainda se acreditava que as ideias faziam revoluções – Manuel Emídio Garcia e Eça de Queirós" (*Revista de história das ideias* 29: 405–430).

abandons the naturalist standpoint of objectively studying human reality and offers a counter narrative to his more than acknowledged literary dependence on the French literary canon. Yet his *Mandarin* echoes intertextual links<sup>3</sup> with French literature, especially with Chateaubriand's *Génie du christianisme* (1802), since it enacts the Mandarin paradox<sup>4</sup> in a chapter entitled "Du remords et de la conscience":

... je m'interroge; je me fais cette question: "Si tu pouvais par un seul désir, tuer un homme à la Chine, et hériter de sa fortune en Europe, avec la conviction surnaturelle qu'on n'en saurait jamais rien, consentirais-tu à former ce désir?" (1966: 200, part I, book VI, chap. II)

In the Portuguese version, Teodoro, scribe at the Ministry for Internal Affairs and Education, narrates the fantastic story of his life. In spite of describing himself as a superstitious bachelor who "always took care to enter a room right foot first," "kept a lithograph of Our Lady of Sorrows," and "trembled at the mere sight of a mouse," Teodoro "aspired only to what was reasonable, tangible" (Queirós 2009: 17, 18, 19). However, one night he unexpectedly receives the strange visit of a "bulky figure, all dressed in black, a tall hat on his head and his two hands encased in black gloves resting gravely on the handle of an umbrella" (ib. 21). This bourgeois-like dark figure is the devil, which comes to tempt Teodoro to commit a crime in exchange for avaricious compensation. The only thing he has to do is to ring the bell mysteriously placed next to his bed. As soon as the bell twinkles a far-off mandarin painlessly dies and Teodoro inherits his fortune. Though enjoying a luxurious lifestyle, Teodoro grows in remorse. His guilty conscience projects itself into the vision of the bellied and pigtailed figure of the dead Mandarin who, dressed in

<sup>3</sup> António Coimbra Martins (1967) has extensively analysed these intertextual links in his *Ensaio queirosiano – O Mandarin assassinado, o incesto d' "Os Maias", imitação capital* ([n.p.]: Publicações Europa-América).

<sup>4</sup> Chateaubriand's paradox is a derivation of Kant's moral theory. Since the Kantian paradox favours human reason, it advocates suspicion towards human instincts and human nature, which are always unpredictable.

yellow silk and holding a paper kite, starts haunting him. Unable to bear such visitations, Teodoro seeks refuge abroad visiting several European capitals before deciding to find the Mandarin's family in China. Failing to fulfil his plans in that alien territory, Teodoro runs back to Lisbon with the Mandarin's fortune, thereafter haunted by the old Mandarin and leading an unhappy existence.

Narrated in a confessional tone, Teodoro's account is preceded by a theatrical prologue consisting of a dialogue between two nameless friends who put forward a reading protocol:

Friend no. 1 ...

My friend, let us ... rest a while from the harsh study of human Reality. Let us depart instead for the fields of Dreams and wander those blue, romantic hills where stands the abandoned tower of the Supernatural, where cool mosses clothe the ruins of Idealism. Let us, in short, indulge in a little fantasy!

Friend no. 2

... let us add just a pinch of Morality. (Ib. 15)

Through this metatext, readers are told they are about to venture into the unknown realms of fantasy and reverie, an overturn in Eça's realist aesthetics in favour of Romantic creative imagination. It further warns that *The Mandarin* is also embedded in some sort of morality, which obviously resonates with medieval morality plays and might be linked to the Romantic revival of an individual religiosity mediated by man's conscience.

Indeed, as previously mentioned, the mandarin *topos* is retrieved from Chateaubriand's paradox, "tuer le mandarin,"<sup>5</sup> which, as the Portuguese critic Coimbra Martins has shown in great detail<sup>6</sup> and

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<sup>5</sup> In *Génie du christianisme*, it is Chateaubriand's purpose to introduce religion as a second-order conscience synonymous with believing in soul's immortality and God's existence. He advocates that forgetting God lies at the heart of humanity's crimes.

<sup>6</sup> António Coimbra Martins traces the metaphor "to kill the mandarin" as back as to Plato and Cicero, going through the reformulations and re-adaptations of that metaphor especially by French writers, from Montaigne

Margaret Jull Costa briefly explains to the readers of her English translation of *The Mandarin*,

... means either to commit some evil act in the hope that no one will ever find out, or to harm someone whom you know you will never meet in order to gain some personal advantage and in the certain knowledge that you will never be punished. (Ib. 10)

But Teodoro's conscience does punish him, and only when he arrives to China does the figure of the dead Mandarin cease to pursue him. This event complies with the general acceptance of the Orient as place of spiritual rest and as background scenery for an exotic adventure. As Eça de Queirós will later confess in his 1894 essay entitled "Chinese and Japanese," the Far East is "a region of fantasy" (1997: 32; my translation), hence conflating the Orient with exoticism and echoing the Romantic lure for foreign or displaced settings.

Taking on the benefactor role so as to ease his conscience and anguish, Teodoro sets the following programme:

I would leave for Peking; I would search out the family of Ti Chin-Fu, marry one of the ladies of the house, thus legitimizing my possession of his millions; I would return that learned house to its old prosperity<sup>7</sup>; I would hold grand funeral ceremonies for the

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and his anthropologic exoticism to La Bruyère, Rousseau, Diderot, Balzac's *Le Père Goriot*, Chateaubriand, Alexandre Dumas father, Auguste Vitu, Albert Monnier and Edouard Martin, Louis Protat, Urbain Didier, Annie Edwards, Armand de Pontmartin (1967: 14–123).

<sup>7</sup> Teodoro mentions more than once the adjective "old" to refer to China – e.g., "in the ragged remains of *old* silk dresses," "the disappearance of Ti Chin-Fu really had proved disastrous for *old* China," "its *old* prosperity" (Queirós 2009: 40, 42, 44; my italics) –, which echoes the European curiosity over the classical oriental past: "Faced with the obvious decrepitude and political impotence of the modern Oriental, the European Orientalist found it his duty to rescue some portion of a lost, past classical Oriental grandeur in order to 'facilitate ameliorations' in the present Orient" (Said 2003: 79). From this point of view, Teodoro perfectly fits into the figure of the European orientalist whose inclination towards the Chinese Orient translates

Mandarin in order to calm his restless spirit; I would travel through poverty-stricken provinces distributing massive quantities of rice ... I would replace the vanished Ti Chin-Fu and thus restore to his country, if not the authority of his wisdom, at least the might of his gold. (2009: 43–44)

The protagonist indulges himself with the task of rescuing first the Mandarin's family and then the whole China. This brings us to Edward Said whose seminal *Orientalism* (1978), shaped by the historical process of three colonial empires, the French included, accuses the West of justifying its colonial intervention overseas on humanitarian grounds.<sup>8</sup> Teodoro thus calls upon himself the rhetoric of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century European colonizer, who would self-legitimise his action on the basis of the West's superiority over the Oriental's inferiority. The spiritual journey Teodoro undertakes to the Orient can then roughly be described as a pilgrimage towards redemption, but instead of spiritual purification he comes across a *locus horribilis*. To go further into this negative otherness, I propose a two-fold focus on one particular episode – which I have decided to call “the bestialisation of the native.”

In this episode, shifting from spectator to victim, Teodoro is assaulted in the town of Tien-Hó by an enraged “black horde” of “dogs” (Queirós 2009: 67), who had been warned about a stranger carrying along great fortune. This mob is no different from Teodoro himself, since all they want is what had led Teodoro to kill the Mandarin in the first place. The Chinese unbounded eagerness for wealth makes this mob suffer a process of *bestialisation* or animalization. But does not facing the Other retrospectively and

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the need of rescuing the Orient from its “memories, suggestive ruins, forgotten secrets, hidden correspondences” (Said 2003: 170). This focus on the exotic, traditional past is in stark contrast to the modern(ised) image the Far East was interested in conveying (the World Expositions illustrate that effort), which the West was already too familiar with.

<sup>8</sup> For a brief approach to *The Mandarin* from Edward Said's viewpoint, see Ellen Sapega's 2002 essay “O Oriente do sonho e o sonho do Oriente n' *O Mandarin*” in *Congresso de Estudos Queirosianos – Actas IV Encontro Internacional de Queirosianos*, vol. I. Coimbra: Almedina, pp. 443–450.

gnoseologically become facing the Self? Indeed otherness reads as the Self's alter ego, so it illustrates one's position towards his or her own culture (Kapor 2007: 261). Therefore, this episode serves as fertile ground for criticising the capitalist thirst for riches and the European society's hypocrisy, vileness, and shallowness.

China is depicted negatively as a terrain where the native's primitiveness and barbarism is caricaturised in opposition to the West's corrupt and corrupting soul. Leaving the Western world means entering brutality and savagery, but such behaviour is set off by the presence of western materialism as embodied in Teodoro. It is then the Western material progress which is portrayed as epidemic and corrosive of human morality. That is why *The Mandarin* provides as well an unfavourable portrait of Paris (Benjamin's capital of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) as a debauched place of bohemian life disfigured by an uncontrolled consumerism that awakes animal-like behaviours: "parties that ... in their extravagance and, at the height of this libertine frenzy, ... when bare-breasted prostitutes would be shrieking out the filthiest songs and my Bohemian guests ... raining down curses on God, then I [Teodoro], ... by a fury of bestiality, ... would hurl myself to the floor on all fours and bray loudly like a donkey" (Queirós 2009: 43). From Edward Said's vantage point,

Along with all other peoples variously designated as backward, degenerate, uncivilized, and retarded, the Orientals were viewed in a framework constructed out of biological determinism and moral-political admonishment. The Oriental was linked thus to elements in Western society (delinquents, the insane, women, the poor) having in common an identity best described as lamentably alien. (2003: 205)

The Oriental is stereotyped as backward and described in terms of "decadence," "ruined provinces, dying cities, starving peasants, plagues, rebellions, crumbling temples, the undermining of the authority of the law, the disintegration of a whole world" (Queirós 2009: 42). Again in his later essay "Chinese and Japanese" Eça de Queirós himself subtly admits that his knowledge (like Teodoro's *ad hoc* knowledge) of the peoples of the Far East was learned from

newspapers, second-hand accounts, art collections, and other indirect sources. Eça's depictions of China are based on his textual experiences and literary memory rather than on eye-witness testimony.<sup>9</sup>

It should be noted that until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century China was particularly evoked by Enlightenment philosophers as both a civilisational centre and urban model. By contrast, 19<sup>th</sup>-century China was in clear decline due to internal instability – mainly caused by the Opium Wars (1839–1842, 1856–1860), the Boxers' Revolt (1899–1901), the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864), and war with Japan (1894–1895) – and also to the inability to catch up with the European industrial development. The descriptions provided in *The Mandarin* comply with readers' expectations and prejudices. *The Mandarin* operates as overall citation of a larger 19<sup>th</sup>-century discourse on the Chinese Orient. Edward Said bases such rhetorical device on "statement[s] about [the Orient], authorizing views of it, describing it, by

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<sup>9</sup> This indirect knowledge explains the recurrence of preconceived and clichéd images on the Orient. Much inspired by the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century *chinoiserie* and oriental collecting, some of the descriptions that compose the exotic colour of Eça's narrative mirror those "made-in-Europe" tableaux. This interference is most notable in the limited range of lexical choices: "He wore a long pigtail and was dressed in yellow silk and in his arms, as if too were dead, he held a paper kite"; "The extravagant architecture of its ornate gateways stood silhouetted against a sunset of sanguine reds and purples"; "Beneath a colonnade of vermilion-painted wood hung with garlands of paper lights ... a vast porcelain tub of lilac-scented water bobbing with white sponges and thin slices of lemon"; "huge paper kites hovering in the air, some in the shape of dragons or whales, others in the shape of fabulous birds ... In the distance we saw triumphal arches made from purple-painted beams topped by an oblong roof of varnished blue tiles that gleamed like enamel. A dense, noisy crowd, dressed mainly in brown and blue tunics"; "her eyebrows ... seemed purer and blacker. ... her small, firm breasts. ... her slender ankles and her yellow silk stockings, gave her the graceful look of a figure in a seraglio. Her feet were so small I could fit only three fingers of my hand into her tiny slipper"; "It was strangely ornamented with dragons cut out of paper and suspended on strings from the roof beams" (Queirós 2009: 33, 46, 47, 53, 60, 65). Even the cities Teodoro visits stand out for their monumentality echoing the 16<sup>th</sup> century Jesuits' reports and diaries on the land of the Chins.

teaching it, settling it, ruling over it" (2003: 3), hence contributing to the dissemination as well as uncritical and continuous acceptance of the same images on alterity, the so-called *idées reçues*: "what matters is that they are there, to be repeated, echoed, and re-echoed uncritically" (Said 2003: 116).

The orientalism underlying this narrative reproduces the orientalism of the empires which Said focused upon, and at the same time it is manipulated so as to mirror the flaws and vices of Western society in general and the Portuguese people in particular. Teodoro's experience in and with the Orient falls short of being a human experience, since both the East and the West fail to achieve a successful dialogue which none seems to be truly interested in. In failing to find humanity in the oriental Other, Eça's literary treatment of radical alterity winds up bestialising it, therefore conjuring up Teodoro's own negative image of falling in lust. *The Mandarin* ends with Teodoro's return and failure to escape from the Faustian curse he put himself into. Good fails to beat Evil and to restore him to the "peace of poverty" (ib. 83); hence the impossibility of erasing one's moral consciousness (Sequeira 2002: 395).

As a fantastic equation of national identity with otherness, *The Mandarin* results in a process of self-discovery and self-awareness through the instrumental use of two kinds of otherness – the French and the Chinese that overlap via French interference. In *The Mandarin* the representation of the Chinese builds up a mirror to the Portuguese society, so it is emblematic of a "self-reflexive literature" that makes readers discover their limits by asking themselves the question: would I kill the Mandarin? To this Teodoro responds,

... "The only bread that tastes good is the bread we earn day by day with our own hands; never kill the Mandarin!"

... not one Mandarin would remain alive if you, dear reader, creature improvised by God, a poor creation shaped out of poor clay, my fellow and my brother, if you could snuff him out as easily as I did and thus inherit all his millions! (2009: 84)

*The Mandarin* becomes a morality tale since it advises humankind on how to perfect itself and society. But in order to grasp the full



significance of this advice, why not construe the aphorism “the only bread that tastes good is the bread we earn day by day with our own hands” in the light of Eça’s Proudhonian readings, which advocate work as the creative force of society and education? Should then this ending be interpreted as a return to realism even if the escape into fantasy translates a disbelief in the realist tradition (Simões 1987)? *The Mandarin* and its *chinoiserie*, though imported, are after all isomorphic with Eça’s realist goals of social criticism. To what extent did Eça actually abandon his realist French-based heritage? This question becomes all the more pressing when four years after the Portuguese edition the French translation of *The Mandarin* is published in the *Revue Universelle* (1884) alongside with a French preface specifically written for this magazine and targeting both its editor and the French audience in general. Only from 1907 onwards was this preface, duly entitled “À propos du ‘Mandarin’ – Lettre qui aurait dû être une preface,” included in Portuguese editions (cf. Appendix).

Asked by “Monsieur le rédacteur de la ‘Revue Universelle’” to describe contemporary Portuguese literature, Eça de Queirós sets out classifying *The Mandarin* as “fantastique” and “fantaisiste” so as to underline its fictionality. In this letter-preface, he expands on the prologue’s opposition between Realism and Romanticism arguing in favour of the latter:<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Nearly 25 years after writing this preface, we will find echo of the ideas there expressed of national literature in the essay “O Francesismo” or “The French Hyper-Influence” (as suggested by Frederick Nunn) (1912): “A França é um país de inteligência; nós somos um país de imaginação. A literatura da França é essencialmente crítica: nós, por temperamento, amamos sobretudo a eloquência e a imagem. A literatura da França é, desde Rabelais até Hugo, social, activa, militante. A nossa, por tradição e instinto, é idílica e contemplativa” [France is a country of intelligence; ours is a country of imagination. Literature in France is mainly critical: we, in view of our temper, particularly love eloquence and image. French literature is since Rabelais until Hugo social, active, militant. Ours, by tradition and instinct, is idyllic and contemplative] (Queirós [n.d.]: 406; my translation).

... cette œuvre appartient au rêve et non à la réalité, [qu]'elle est inventée et non observée, elle caractérise fidèlement, ce me semble, la tendance la plus naturelle, la plus spontanée de l'esprit portugais. (Queirós 2005: 7–8)

“La Lettre qui aurait dû être une préface” offers a comparatist framework opposing the Portuguese literary spirit to that of France, which Eça considers to oppress Portuguese literature through its “incommoda soumission à la vérité, la torture de l’analyse, l’impertinente tyrannie de la réalité. On est en pleine licence esthétique” (ib. 12). Such aesthetic freedom must be understood as the reverse of, and in close conjunction with, Eça’s militancy as member of the intellectual group known as the Generation of the 1870s. This *Geração de 70* not only criticised ultra-romantic excess but also embarked on a programme of social, cultural and artistic reform<sup>11</sup> to help modernise Portugal – a country plunged into political instability and social discontent – and draw it closer to European capitals such as Paris and London. Conversely, *The Mandarin* proposes as part of the key solution to the country’s decadence and identity crisis the poetical return to Romanticism, in that the genius of the Portuguese nation lies in fantasy whilst the French prefer subordination to human reality. “La Lettre qui aurait dû être une préface” provides critical ground for asserting a major rupture from the observation of human reality, and it additionally devises a programme for the development of a national literary tradition against the mainstream realist tendency imported from France, centre of the European polysystem par excellence. As José Lambert clearly puts it, “[t]he paradigm of national literature is a paradigm of the nineteenth century” (2006 [1991]: 68), throughout which Europe was an arena of expansionist nationalisms that Romanticism had greatly reinforced.

<sup>11</sup> This *Geração de 70* would from time to time face hostility from the monarchical regime. It would be interesting to consider Eça’s literary imitation of the republican France as a statement against the Portuguese monarchy (Queirós [n.d.]: 401), which was only overturned with the death of king Charles, the overthrow of Manuel II, and the implementation of the Republican regime in 1910.

Writing from the periphery of the European polysystem, Eça challenges the hierarchical structure of the polysystem by struggling for the visibility of a minor (or less influential) literature that had been living under the shadow of the more prestigious France. It is Eça's purpose to put an end to a one-sided dependence in which both national literature and culture mimic an extraneous cultural centre:

Car nous imitons ou nous faisons semblant d'imiter en tout la France, depuis l'esprit de nos lois jusqu'à la forme de nos chaus-sures; à un tel point que pour un œil étranger, notre civilisation, surtout à Lisbonne, a l'air d'être arrivée la veille de Bordeaux, dans des caisses, par le paquebot des Messageries. (Queirós 2005: 10)

Yet Eça fails to realise that for a writer from a peripheral literature such as himself to be translated into a major language is an attempt from that major system to push him into its central repertoire. Translation is, therefore, always an event of prestige and consecration.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, a culture only gains authoritative centrality when its satellite cultures<sup>13</sup> perceive it as such. When the perceiving culture imports from the central system, it means it has something to learn from it (Lefevere 1992: 118); there is a lack the perceiving culture tries to fill in through the cultural and central Other.<sup>14</sup> Once that lack is filled in and a national system is

<sup>12</sup> As stated by Pascale Casanova in *The World Republic of Letters*: "From the point of view of a major target language ... the importation of literary texts written in 'small' languages or ones belonging to neglected literatures serves as a means of *annexation*, of diverting peripheral works and adding them to the stock of *central resources*" (2004: 135; my italics).

<sup>13</sup> I borrow the phrase "satellite culture" from Maria de Fátima Outeirinho's "cultural satellite": "En fait, les dynamiques culturelles qui traversent le XIXe siècle portugais, nous renvoient, à plusieurs reprises, l'image du Portugal en tant que satellite culturel de la France" (2006: 174).

<sup>14</sup> Clem Robyns in his "Translation and Discursive Identity" describes four attitudes towards "discursive migration," one of which is the defective stand according to which one culture seeks to import external influences when in need of renewing the literary system: "Finally, a discursive practice may acknowledge that it lacks the necessary components for renewing itself, for adapting to a changing social context. It will then take a 'defective' position,

sufficiently strong to grow steadily and more or less autonomously, it will no longer need to recognise another system's centrality. Although trying to break free from the oppressive shield of French literature, Eça eventually recognises he will resignedly return to it almost in an act of vampirism or master-slave relationship. Mirroring the tensions and strains of Portuguese literature, his preface ends with this prediction: "la dernière épreuve corrigée, on quitte la rue, on reprend le trottoir, et on se remet à l'étude sévère de l'homme et de sa misère éternelle. Content? Non, Monsieur, résigné" (2005: 13). As Even-Zohar exemplified in his essay "Polysystem Theory":

Consider, for example, the reduction of the writer's creativity to vague notions such as "imagination" and "inspiration." Using them in fact is a renouncement of the possibility of disentangling the knotty complex which constitutes the conditions under which a writer works ... while part is a function of the writer's personal ability to create new conditions not imposed *on* him but *by* him. (1990: 14)

The distinction Even-Zohar draws between patient and agent, *on* and *by*, shows how French imitation is ultimately a self-imposed condition which Eça cannot simply or totally renounce to. His *Mandarin* constitutes thus a unique pause within his literary creation as well as a reaction to those who accused him of being "Frenchified" and of disfiguring the Portuguese identity (Queirós [n.d.]: 388). That is why

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turning to 'alien' discourses and importing discursive elements from them." He further adds that "[s]ince the target discourse's repertoire is seen as insufficient, the imported elements will not be transformed in accordance with target-discourse conventions. Translation, then, will be viewed positively" (1994: 420). Eça de Queirós's narrative clearly supports this defective strategy. Moreover, Eça rewrites his literary experience in his native language including disguised translations into his texts. Although this needs further research, see Santos Alves: 1988. *Presença clássica em Eça de Queirós*. In *Dicionário de Eça de Queirós*. Lisbon: Editorial Caminho; 1983. *O Legado clássico de Eça de Queirós através da cultura francesa*. In *Rapports culturels et littéraires entre le Portugal et la France, Actes du Colloque, Paris, 11-16 octobre 1982*. Paris: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian/Centro Cultural Português, pp. 393-410.

Eça's literary manifesto of the aesthetic tenets for national literature should rather be confined to the microsphere of his personal writing, which ideally tries but fails to subvert the general laws of the polysystem's *modus operandi*. According to Pascale Casanova,

The creative liberty of writers from peripheral countries *is not given to them straight away: they earn it* as a result of struggles whose reality is denied in the name of literary universality and the equality of all writers as creative artists, by inventing complex strategies that profoundly alter the universe of literary possibilities. (1999: 177; my italics)

It is our contention that Eça *could* have subverted the polysystem, which he did not, because his interest lay in challenging the historical evolution of his own literature, in putting his finger on the lack of a national literary tradition,<sup>15</sup> and proving it can survive outside the influence of a supranational model. But can it indeed?

By the same token, *The Mandarin* can be described as a paragenre; "para" because it conveys the marginal position of that literary text within not only his literary production but also within Portuguese literature. Although it manages to blend fantasy with criticism, this narrative is not usually viewed as part of Portuguese canonised repertoire, for it brought no significant innovatory change either as text or as paragenre or as model of national literature. It had no direct impact on the Portuguese literary agenda. Eça has his own

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<sup>15</sup> In the essay "The French Hyper-Influence," the gap between what Eça believes to be possible and his actual literary behaviour is again clearly underlined: "Mas, pergunto eu, este *collage* com a França, esta imitação, esta preocupação da França, é uma tendência fatal, necessária, de temperamento, de congneridade, de similitude, a que não podemos escapar, como a Dinamarca não pode escapar a imitar a Alemanha, e a Bélgica se não pode eximir a imitar a França? Não creio" [But, I ask, this *collage* to France, this imitation, this concern of France, is it a fatal, necessary tendency of temperament, of congeneracy, of similitude, from which one cannot escape, as Denmark cannot help imitating Germany, and Belgium cannot exempt itself from imitating France? I don't think so] ([n.d.]: 405; my translation).

view, however, that before his letter-preface "Portugal was a country translated into French" ([n.d.]: 398; my translation), but after its publication it became a country translating itself to France.

*The Mandarin* could serve as an example to rethink European literature and canon, as well as the peripheral position of less visible literatures against the French literary monopoly. It relies on the Romantic triad "language, literature, and nation" in combination with a literary programme geared towards social criticism and promoter of national consciousness even if grounded on the assimilation of French literary motifs and fictional ingredients. Both the novel and the preface show how Eça de Queirós manipulates French culture and language against itself and his own literary education, and how he uses the language of authority to criticise its centrality in Portugal, thus hampering for the emergence of a truly national literary voice.

## Appendix

Monsieur le Rédacteur de la «Revue Universelle»

Vous voulez, Monsieur, donner aux lecteurs de la «Revue Universelle» une idée du mouvement littéraire contemporain en Portugal, et vous me faites l'honneur de choisir le «Mandarin», un conte fantaisiste et fantastique, où l'on voit encore, comme au bon vieux temps, apparaître le diable, quoique en redingote, et où il y a encore des fantômes, quoique avec de très bonnes intentions psychologiques. Vous prenez là, Monsieur, une œuvre bien modeste et qui s'écarte considérablement du courant moderne de notre littérature devenue, dans ces dernières années, analyste et expérimentale; et cependant par cela même que cette œuvre appartient au rêve et non à la réalité, qu'elle est inventée et non observée, elle caractérise fidèlement, ce me semble, la tendance la plus naturelle, la plus spontanée de l'esprit portugais.

Car, quoique aujourd'hui toute notre jeunesse littéraire, et même quelques-uns des ancêtres échappés du romantisme, s'appliquent patiemment à étudier la nature, et font de constants efforts pour

mettre dans les livres la plus grande somme de réalité vivante, – nous sommes restés ici, dans ce coin ensoleillé du monde, très idéalistes au fond et très lyriques. Nous aimons passionnément, Monsieur, à tout envelopper dans du bleu; une belle phrase nous plaira toujours mieux qu'une notion exacte; la fabuleuse Mélusine, dévoratrice de cœurs d'hommes, charmera toujours nos imaginations incorrigibles bien plus que la très humaine M.<sup>me</sup> Marnesse; et toujours nous considérerons la fantaisie et l'éloquence comme les deux signes, et les seuls vrais, de l'homme supérieur. Si par hasard on lisait en Portugal Stendhal, on ne pourrait jamais le goûter: ce qui chez lui est exactitude, nous le considérerions stérilité. Des idées justes, exprimées dans une forme sobre, ne nous intéressent guère: ce qui nous charme, ce sont des émotions excessives traduites avec un grand faste plastique de langage.

Des esprits ainsi formés doivent ressentir nécessairement de l'éloignement pour tout ce qui est réalité, analyse, expérimentation, certitude objective. Ce qui les attire, c'est la fantaisie, sous toutes ses formes, depuis la chanson jusqu'à la caricature; aussi, en art, nous avons surtout produit des lyriques et des satiristes. Ou nous restons les yeux levés vers les étoiles, laissant monter vaguement le murmure de nos cœurs; ou, si nous laissons tomber un regard sur le monde environnant, c'est pour en rire avec amertume. Nous sommes des hommes d'émotion, pas de raisonnement.

Nous savons chanter, quelquefois railler, jamais expliquer. Voilà pourquoi il n'y a pas de critique en Portugal. Aussi le roman et le drame jusqu'à ces derniers temps n'étaient que des oeuvres de poésie et d'éloquence, quelquefois des plaidoyers philosophiques, d'autres fois des élégies sentimentales. L'action y était conçue hors de toute vérité sociale et humaine. Les personnages étaient des anges cachant leurs ailes sous leurs redingotes, ou bien des monstres symboliques, taillés sur le vieux patron de Satan: jamais des hommes. Un style riche et métaphorique couvrait tout cela de fleurs et de panaches. Les auteurs dramatiques, les romanciers, en créant leurs épisodes, n'avaient qu'à s'abandonner à cette espèce d'ivresse extatique qui fait chanter les rossignols par nos beaux soirs de pleine lune: tout de suite le public se pâmait. On jugeait alors une pièce de théâtre d'après la splendeur de la rhétorique.

Ceci ne pouvait pas continuer, surtout après que l'évolution naturaliste eut triomphé en France, et que la direction des idées, en fait d'art, semblait devoir rester aux mains de la science expérimentale. Car nous imitons ou nous faisons semblant d'imiter en tout la France, depuis l'esprit de nos lois jusqu'à la forme de nos chaussures; à un tel point que pour un œil étranger, notre civilisation, surtout à Lisbonne, a l'air d'être arrivée la veille de Bordeaux, dans des caisses, par le paquebot des Messageries. Cependant, même avant le naturalisme, déjà quelques jeunes esprits parmi nous avaient compris que la littérature d'un pays ne pouvait rester pour toujours étrangère au monde réel, qui travaillait et souffrait autour d'elle. En s'isolant dans les nuages, occupée à ciseler des préciosités de style, elle risquerait de devenir dans une société vivante, un objet de bric-à-brac. On s'est donc imposé bravement le devoir de ne plus regarder le ciel – mais la rue. Seulement, faut-il le dire?, on faisait cette noble besogne, non par une inclination naturelle de l'intelligence, mais par un sentiment de devoir littéraire – j'allais presque dire de devoir public. Pour l'honneur des modernes lettres portugaises, on tâchait de mettre dans ses œuvres beaucoup d'observation, beaucoup d'humanité; mais il arrivait qu'en étudiant consciencieusement son voisin, petit rentier ou petit employé, on regrettait les temps où il était permis, sans être démodé, de chanter les beaux cavaliers aux reluisantes armures. Les temps de flânerie idéale à travers les bois de la fantaisie étaient passés, hélas! L'art n'était plus un facile épanchement de l'âme trop chargée de rêve, mais une âpre et sévère recherche de vérité. Il fallait maintenant, pendant de grands volumes de cinq cents pages, se mêler à une humanité qui n'a plus d'ailes, qui nous semble n'avoir que des plaies, et on était forcé de remuer avec une main, habituée au duvet des nuages, toute sorte de choses attristantes et basses, la petitesse des caractères, la banalité des conversations, la misère des sentiments... La langue même, cette langue poétique et imagée qu'on se plaisait à parler ne pouvait plus servir à rendre ces choses humbles et vraies; il fallait se servir d'une langue exacte, sèche, comme celle du code civil... Eh bien, Monsieur, dans ce milieu réel, contemporain, banal, l'artiste portugais habitué aux belles chevauchées à travers l'idéal, étouffait; et s'il ne pouvait quelquefois faire une escapade vers l'azur, il mourrait bien



vite de la nostalgie de la chimère. Voilà pourquoi, même après le naturalisme, nous écrivons encore des contes fantastiques, des vrais, de ceux où il y a des fantômes et où l'on rencontre au coin des pages le diable, l'ami diable, cette délicieuse terreur de notre enfance catholique. Alors, du moins pendant tout un petit volume, on ne subit plus l'incommode soumission à la vérité, la torture de l'analyse, l'impertinente tyrannie de la réalité. On est en pleine licence esthétique. On peut mettre dans le cœur de sa concierge tout l'idéalisme d'Ophélie et faire parler les paysans de son village avec la majesté de Bossuet. On dore ses adjectifs. On fait marcher ses phrases à travers la page blanche comme à travers une place pleine de soleil avec des pompes cadencées de procession s'avancant parmi des jonchées des roses... Puis la dernière feuille écrite, la dernière épreuve corrigée, on quitte la rue, on reprend le trottoir, et on se remet à l'étude sévère de l'homme et de sa misère éternelle. Content? Non, Monsieur, résigné.

Eça de Queiroz  
Lisbonne, le 2 août 1884

(in Eça de Queirós. 2005. *O Mandarin*. Lisbon: Livros do Brasil)

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*Conceptualiser l'Histoire  
du théâtre français en Estonie:  
comment traduire le langage  
du silence?*

Le théâtre et la littérature tiennent un rapport ambigu. D'une part, nous sommes habitués à compter les œuvres dramatiques parmi les plus représentatives du patrimoine littéraire: celles de Shakespeare, de Tchekhov, de Molière, figurent dans tous les manuels scolaires; d'autre part, de nos jours, la littérarité d'un texte dramatique peut s'accompagner d'une connotation péjorative pour les praticiens du théâtre. Un texte dramatique, considéré comme étant «de la littérature»; à savoir, présentant les qualités avant tout pour la lecture, contiendrait de ce fait sur le plateau du théâtre quelque chose d'antithéâtral – mal écrit (ou au contraire «trop bien» écrit).

Il n'y a pas de fondement théorique pour ce phénomène qui nous rappelle le débat parfois aussi peu fructueux sur l'intraduisible. Tout texte peut être mis en scène, aussi bien que tout texte peut être traduisible; il suffira de se demander pourquoi et comment; autrement dit, de trouver le juste modèle de la réception. La question, comme nous disent les théoriciens de la traduction, devient plus intéressante à partir du moment où nous ne cherchons pas mécaniquement à transposer un texte d'un système sémiotique à l'autre, en utilisant naïvement les procédés habituels reconnus comme les seuls valables; mais commençons à réfléchir sur ces procédés et nos propres modèles. L'intraduisible nous semble donc un texte par rapport auquel il nous manque soit les compétences, soit une méthode. Ainsi, peut échouer le traducteur devant un texte qu'il ne comprend pas; mais ce sera également le cas quand il voit parfaite-

ment les enjeux d'un texte mais n'arrive pas à trouver dans sa propre langue ou culture les modèles correspondants (ce qu'on appelle souvent «les solutions»). Mais l'échec du traducteur ou de plusieurs traducteurs, n'est certes pas synonyme de l'intraduisible.

La littérarité d'un texte dramatique, qui répugne un certain nombre de metteurs en scène d'aujourd'hui, leur devient obstacle parce qu'ils n'ont pas envie de chercher de modèles de réception suffisamment variés ou parce que (et c'est bien sûr parfaitement justifié) ils croient que les modèles à leur disposition qu'ils privilégient, ne donnent pas de résultat satisfaisant, tout comme la traductibilité d'un texte, ne nous oblige pas automatiquement à le traduire.

Ce que nous venons de dire sur la mise en scène et la traduction peut être élargi au canon littéraire. Un texte pour lequel nous n'avons pas élaboré de mécanismes de la réception n'y figure simplement pas. En revanche, si les codes de réception dans une société donnée changent et on aura accès inouï à des textes jusqu'alors considérés comme moins attractifs, cela n'empêche aucunement que le public ne continue à aimer ceux qu'il avait auparavant préférés. Une fois la valeur d'une œuvre communément admise, il est plus aisé et plus raisonnable, avec le temps, de creuser en nous-mêmes en essayant de trouver la façon de lire qui nous paraît adéquate, au lieu de provoquer chaque fois une révolution et détrôner les idoles d'antan.

C'est aussi la raison pourquoi, comme le note Antoine Compagnon, la théorie littéraire ne va pas à l'encontre du canon:

L'étonnant est que les chefs-d'œuvre durent, qu'ils continuent d'être pertinents pour nous, hors de leur contexte d'origine. Et la théorie, tout en dénonçant l'illusion de la valeur, n'a pas bouleversé le canon. Bien au contraire, elle l'a consolidé en faisant relire les mêmes textes, mais pour d'autres raisons, des raisons nouvelles, censément meilleures. (Compagnon 1998: 273)

Le théâtre rend cette tension encore plus forte car les œuvres de Shakespeare, Tchekhov et Molière, les plus jouées dans le monde aujourd'hui, nous procurent également les mises en scène les plus variées; ce qui montre, certes, la qualité de ces auteurs, mais pas moins la volonté de chercher toujours les nouveaux mécanismes de

réception et de faire évoluer les anciens avec le temps. On peut dire en suivant Pierre Bayard que, si un professeur de littérature peut faire un cours sur un auteur sans l'avoir lu aux étudiants qui ne l'ont pas lu non plus<sup>1</sup> et de cette manière garantir plus facilement à cet auteur un statut éminent dans la mémoire collective, un metteur en scène ne peut pas facilement dupliquer d'anciennes méthodes déjà existantes. Et si le professeur ne doit pas nécessairement prouver la valeur d'un auteur, le metteur en scène, en revanche, doit mettre l'œuvre directement à l'épreuve. Enfin, pour reprendre donc la terminologie proposée par Pierre Bayard, on peut dire que si le canon littéraire peut bien contenir des livres évoqués, feuilletés, inconnus et oubliés – des livres fantômes (voir des auteurs fantômes) – le théâtre, si nous parlons de la mise en scène contemporaine, ne peut pas se payer ce luxe.

Ainsi l'histoire du théâtre fonctionne comme un laboratoire car – même si le choix du répertoire est fortement influencé par des contraintes économiques, sociales, politiques, etc. – les choix du metteur en scène qui le font s'arrêter sur un texte précis, montrent qu'il s'estime être capable pour l'actualiser dans le contexte historico-politique où il se trouve et ainsi créer un lien avec le contexte de la production d'origine. Cela devient encore plus intéressant et beaucoup plus complexe, si nous avons affaire non seulement au canon littéraire d'une culture spécifique délimitée par exemple par une langue commune, mais aussi au canon qui provient en partie d'une autre culture.

Une des questions récurrentes que mes étudiants me posent porte sur les traductions. Faudra-t-il lire, demandent-ils, les textes originaux, au risque de rater un certain nombre d'éléments importants faute de connaissance limitée de la langue, ou préférer les traductions, plus accessibles de ce point de vue, mais présentant déjà une déformation inévitable? En bon enseignant, je leur réponds qu'il faudra bien évidemment faire les deux; mais en tant que traducteur, j'ajoute qu'il ne faut surtout pas avoir peur de la traduction car c'est

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<sup>1</sup> Ce qui arrive, si on croit Pierre Bayard, plus souvent qu'on a coutume de le croire. (Bayard 2006)

justement la tâche du traducteur que de proposer cette ouverture à l'œuvre que les étudiants ont peur de ne pas trouver tous seuls.

Nous savons que les relations interculturelles sont traversées par de diverses lectures, et de divers lecteurs: par ceux qui parlent bien une langue étrangère et par ceux qui la parlent moins bien, par ceux qui se limitent à des traductions dans leur langue maternelle et par ceux qui passent par une langue tierce; par des lecteurs qui ont fait des études, lisent les journaux, regardent la télévision, utilisent l'internet, se parlent, consultent les encyclopédies etc. Les lecteurs se font l'idée d'une autre culture qui est la leur mais celle-ci n'est aucunement délimitée ni par une langue donnée ni par les frontières politiques.

Et voici que le caractère de laboratoire du théâtre se manifeste puisqu'ici nous avons affaire à deux contraintes incontournables. Premièrement, comme nous l'avons dit plus haut, une œuvre doit faire ses preuves effectives: pour qu'une mise en scène ait lieu, il ne suffira pas qu'une pièce soit enseignée dans les manuels scolaires du monde entier; il faut que cette pièce trouve une actualisation dans la culture cible. Deuxièmement, il faut que cette œuvre, par sa procédure d'actualisation, manifeste une sorte d'étrangeté dans le contexte d'arrivée, sinon pourquoi aller chercher chez les autres ce que l'on trouve bien chez soi.

J'aimerais à ce propos donner un exemple de mon expérience personnelle qui résume ces deux axes. À la demande d'un metteur en scène estonien, Andres Noormets, j'avais traduit la pièce de *Roberto Zucco* de Bernard-Marie Koltès en 1992. Pendant les trois années qui suivirent, le travail de la mise en scène a été chaque fois programmé mais jamais entamé définitivement et le projet a finalement été abandonné, pour être repris successivement par trois metteurs en scène différents dans trois théâtres différents; chaque fois avec le même enthousiasme au début et avec le même résultat déplorable. Finalement, la quatrième tentative a été couronnée, dix ans plus tard, en 2002,<sup>2</sup> avec un succès indéniable, certes, mais qui s'évaporait tout de même assez rapidement. À la première du spectacle, le metteur en scène qui avait été à l'initiative de cette traduction et qui avait fort

<sup>2</sup> Par Tiit Ojasoo, dans le théâtre Vanemuine de Tartu.

apprécié la mise en scène de son collègue, m'a confié que d'une part, à l'époque, il n'avait pas la certitude que le public estonien soit prêt pour cette pièce, et que d'autre part, dix ans plus tard, il trouvait que la pièce n'avait plus cette vigueur et fraîcheur que si cette mise en scène avait été faite plus tôt.

Nous voyons ici un cas typique de la réception théâtrale: pour qu'une mise en scène (que ce soit d'une pièce étrangère ou non) crée un choc qui marque l'Histoire du théâtre, il faudra un concours de circonstances qui feraient qu'une œuvre se trouve au bon moment au bon endroit; arrivée trop tôt ou trop tard, elle risque de passer inaperçue. À l'encontre de la politique éditoriale – un livre peut attendre plusieurs années pour être «découvert» par le grand public – le spectacle, à cause de son caractère éphémère, doit bien faire mouche.

Si nous souhaitons étudier la réception du théâtre français en Estonie, il faudra tenir compte de trois cas de figure importants. Premièrement, le contexte socio-historique. Un peu plus de cent ans de l'Histoire du théâtre national est une période relativement courte mais extrêmement variée, s'étalant des premières tentatives populaires jusqu'à l'avènement du théâtre d'art et professionnel en traversant des situations idéologiques très diverses: réveil national à la fin du dix-neuvième siècle, l'indépendance et la mise en place des structures de l'État dans les années vingt et trente, occupation soviétique depuis 1940 avec ses régimes plus ou moins oppresseurs (dégel de Khrouchtchev dans les années soixante), une nouvelle indépendance en 1991, suivie d'une période très mouvementée et instable de la démocratisation, mais aussi de la commercialisation de la société qui dure jusqu'à aujourd'hui. Il est évident que si nous voulons poser la question pourquoi telle ou telle pièce a été ou n'a pas été traduite, les explications socio-historiques nous donnent les premières informations incontournables.

Le deuxième cas de figure à ne pas sous-estimer, c'est le contexte artistique qui est aussi complexe que politique. La France et l'Estonie ne sont pas deux îles dans un vaste océan, mais ce que les Estoniens connaissent de la France, provient principalement d'un réseau très entremêlé d'autres cultures (scandinave, allemande, russe) qui nous sont plus proches; d'autant plus que le nombre de

médiateurs directs (par exemple, traducteurs ou metteurs en scène maîtrisant le français) a toujours été plutôt restreint; ce qui fait entre autres que l'importance du simple hasard et des préférences individuelles est plus marquée. Ainsi, la première pièce de Molière jouée en Estonie (*l'Avare*) a été traduite non pas du français mais du russe; le metteur en scène Lembit Peterson a un penchant particulier quant à la dramaturgie française; en revanche, un certain nombre de pièces françaises contemporaines ont été montées chez nous, parce qu'elles ont eu du succès en Suède et en Allemagne – dans les pays que nos metteurs en scène fréquentent régulièrement.

Le troisième cas de figure, néanmoins, c'est ce qui nous intéresse ici le plus. Sans forcément vouloir contredire les conclusions que nous pourrions faire à partir de deux premiers – mais que nous n'allons pas faire ici systématiquement – il nous importe tout de même de savoir, s'il est possible de délimiter un certain nombre de propriétés intrinsèques des œuvres grâce auxquelles une œuvre passe mieux ou pas du tout d'une culture à l'autre. Ou pour demander autrement, avec Jean-Luis Jeannelle, si la théorie littéraire est en mesure d'apporter quelque chose de mieux de ce que proposent l'Histoire et la sociologie?

De droit et, progressivement, de fait, l'histoire littéraire se voit peu à peu dépouillée non seulement de la question des valeurs (sociales, politiques et culturelles) mais aussi de celle de la valeur esthétique elle-même, qui lui apparaissait jusqu'alors comme sa chasse gardée: mieux préparées à rassembler puis à analyser tout ce qui s'écrit et se lit à une époque, l'histoire culturelle et la sociologie peuvent légitimement prétendre battre leur concurrente sur ce terrain. (Jeannelle: 2005)

Dans ce qui suit, nous essaierons de mettre en valeur un certain nombre de caractéristiques qui, à notre avis, sont suffisamment régulières et manifestes pour dépasser le contexte socio-historique de la réception. Ces caractéristiques ne contredisent pas les raisons contextuelles, mais les exemplifient. Et, c'est justement grâce à une relative distance culturelle qui sépare l'Estonie de la France, que nous pouvons remarquer non seulement comment le théâtre



fonctionne dans une culture, mais aussi les particularités textuelles inscrites dans la culture source. Pour revenir brièvement à ce que nous avons affirmé plus haut: le canon littéraire dans le domaine du théâtre ne peut pas être transféré mécaniquement, par le seul prétexte qu'on a affaire à des œuvres reconnues, mais le *ici et maintenant* propre au théâtre relève d'une relecture approfondie des œuvres dans le contexte de la réception. Il s'agit donc de deux démarches, bien explicites et distinctes, et c'est l'analyse textuelle qui permet, à côté des études socio-historiques, d'apporter un regard différent et ainsi justifier, si besoin est, le rôle de la théorie littéraire sur une échelle temporelle.

Il est relativement aisé de parcourir la totalité des traductions du théâtre français en estonien. De nombre qui dépasse de peu deux cent pièces de théâtre, nous pouvons, au premier abord, laisser de côté une trentaine de pièce du théâtre de boulevard qui forment un groupe homogène, traduites principalement à la fin du dix-neuvième siècle et au début du vingtième. Il n'est pas difficile non plus de survoler l'Histoire du théâtre français des origines jusqu'à la fin du dix-neuvième siècle, pour constater que ce panorama qui contient des milliers de pièces variées est représenté en Estonie d'une façon assez polarisé: du théâtre du Moyen-âge et baroque, nous ne trouvons presque rien; le dix-septième siècle est représenté par l'œuvre de Molière (traduite quasi-intégralement), en même temps que la tragédie classique est totalement absente; le dix-huitième siècle est représenté par Beaumarchais, secondé modestement par Marivaux; le dix-neuvième brille avec ses auteurs de boulevard parmi lesquels Victor Hugo fait une légère apparition. La plupart des auteurs traduits sont du vingtième siècle, par rapport auquel le paysage se complexifie bien évidemment.

Pour y voir plus clair, nous pouvons nous soumettre à une petite expérimentation qui assez rapidement devient révélatrice. Prenons au hasard deux anthologies du théâtre français: celle de Georges Pillement (1946) pour la première moitié du siècle et celle de Michel Azama (2004) pour la seconde. La question, si les deux anthologies sont représentatives, ne nous intéresse guère dans la mesure où nous découvrons rapidement que les noms que nous avons sur notre liste des traductions, se trouvent bien dans les deux anthologies. Remar-

quons tout de même deux divergences. Georges Pillement divise son anthologie en trois parties «Théâtre de boulevard»; «Théâtre d'avant-garde» et «Romaniers et poètes». Ce sont principalement les deux premiers volumes qui correspondent à notre liste, surtout la seconde où se trouvent classés les auteurs comme Anouilh, Cocteau, Giraudoux, Vitrac, Jarry, Claudel. La troisième partie, en revanche, ne prête pas beaucoup à des convergences, à part Camus (surtout) et Sartre (moins connu). En ce qui concerne la seconde moitié du siècle dernier, notre tâche s'avère encore plus facile, puisque les traductions sont très rares. Relevons ici, certes d'une façon un peu simplificatrice, trois groupes: un premier (avec Genet, Beckett et Ionesco) représentant ce qu'un peu abusivement on classe sous le théâtre de l'absurde; un deuxième groupe qui se compose des auteurs que nous aurions tenté de caractériser par une prétention artistique forte (comme Lagarce, Koltès, Grumberg) et le troisième groupe qui se prête à une lecture plutôt facile (Schmitt, Reza).

S'il n'est pas fort étonnant qu'à partir du moment où le nombre de traductions est restreint, les auteurs joués en Estonie sont tous représentés dans des anthologies françaises; les premiers groupements provisoires nous permettent pourtant d'aboutir à un certain nombre de conclusions: en effet, ce n'est pas par les noms individuellement qui sont présents que nous pouvons continuer notre réflexion, mais c'est par les rapports qu'ils entretiennent entre eux malgré les époques et les courants. Et surtout, ce que le petit nombre d'auteurs et leur polarisation manifeste nous révèle, ce n'est pas juste quelques auteurs isolément absents, mais des groupes entiers, dont nous pouvons dessiner déjà quelques esquisses.

En mélangeant maintenant plus audacieusement toutes nos cartes, nous pouvons attester, au premier abord, que le théâtre ne fait rien de ce que fait un professeur à l'école: si les cours et les anthologies cherchent à mettre en place un panorama plus ou moins complet, en ne pouvant pas s'échapper de la question de valeur littéraire, le théâtre ne ressent pas la nécessité de «combler des lacunes». Si dans les années vingt l'œuvre de Molière est déjà bien représentée, on continue au fil des années à en refaire régulièrement les traductions (ainsi, nous avons, par exemple, trois traductions de *l'Avare*), alors que personne ne se soucie de Racine ou de Corneille. Le deuxième

phénomène qui en découle se manifeste sur l'échelle temporelle. Le théâtre cherche la contemporanéité: le décalage idéal entre la date d'écriture d'une pièce en France et sa mise en scène en Estonie, semble-t-il se trouver entre dix et vingt ans. On ne traduit pas les pièces très récentes, tout comme on ne se penche que rarement et exceptionnellement vers des périodes plus anciennes. Il faudra qu'une pièce «mûrisse» quelque temps et qu'on n'ose la toucher qu'à partir du moment où on est sûr de sa valeur. On aura envie d'expliquer ce phénomène par le nombre restreint de médiateurs; néanmoins, comme nous l'avons attesté par rapport à *Roberto Zucco* et que l'on pourrait bien démontrer à propos de plusieurs autres pièces, ce n'est pas toujours l'ignorance de l'existence d'une œuvre dramatique qui attarde sa mise en scène. Finalement, nous risquons de proposer aussi une conclusion thématique. Il n'est pas difficile de voir que le nombre de traductions à partir de la langue française diminue dans la deuxième moitié du vingtième siècle. Certes, nous pouvons avancer assez rapidement deux arguments socio-historiques et très forts: à savoir que d'une part, le théâtre français lui-même se plaignait du manque de textes - rappelons le bilan assez triste de Michel Vinaver encore en 1987 (Vinaver 1987) - et que d'autre part, la soviétisation de l'Estonie amenait tout simplement l'obligation de monter des pièces soviétiques et/ou russes<sup>3</sup>; pression qui durait en s'adoucissant tout de même jusqu'à la fin du régime. Malgré cela, nous pouvons avancer qu'une autre tendance, souterraine, est repérable: l'éclatement des formes, l'émergence du monologue intérieur, le caractère polyphonique de la dramaturgie française qui se rend de plus en plus manifeste à la fin du siècle dernier et qui dépasse ce qui pourrait sembler au premier abord la simple constatation de l'absurdité du monde; fait que l'on se détourne de ces procédés novatrices pour s'accrocher à des textes que l'on pourrait appeler «résumables» et qui représentent une «idée». Si nous pouvons nous permettre encore une simplification peut-être un peu extrême, mais qui reste tout de même vraie: ce qui frappe en étudiant

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<sup>3</sup> Ainsi par exemple le décret du Comité Central du Parti Communiste (des bolchéviks) de l'Union soviétique, daté du 1946, intitulé «De la répertoire des théâtres dramatiques et des mesures à entreprendre pour l'améliorer».

la liste des traductions, c'est que l'on peut les diviser assez facilement en deux grandes parties. Premièrement, les comédies et deuxièmement, les pièces d'un message moraliste ou philosophique explicite. En revanche, le concept du théâtre en tant que poésie lyrique, semble être bien étranger aux Estoniens.

Nous pouvons maintenant mieux voir les raisons pour lesquelles l'œuvre de Racine est absente du paysage théâtral estonien. Premièrement, parce que la renommée mondiale incontestable n'est pas du tout suffisante pour que l'on veuille mettre en scène un auteur; deuxièmement, parce qu'une distance historique importante nous sépare et, troisièmement parce que, à l'encontre des pièces de Molière où la langue (malgré l'alexandrin) sert plutôt de l'effet comique, la poéticité tragique du vers racinien pose un obstacle insurmontable. À ce titre, il n'est pas étonnant que l'œuvre d'Éric-Emmanuel Schmitt qui regroupe les tendances opposées puisqu'elle est lisible, comique et moralisant, soit la plus représentée dans le paysage théâtral en Estonie.

Après cette brève analyse de corpus des traductions du théâtre français en estonien, nous pouvons constater que le théâtre estonien qui n'a connu ni la tragédie classique ni le théâtre symboliste, souffre actuellement des moyens de lecture d'un certain nombre d'œuvres dramatiques françaises. Quand un texte est centré non pas sur le dire, mais sur la lutte avec la langue ou l'image, quand elle cherche à transmettre non pas ce que l'on peut voir, mais surtout ce qui est invisible et irréprésentable, nous sommes devant un problème beaucoup plus grave que peuvent poser les compétences des traducteurs et de traductibilité d'un texte. Une œuvre, comme dit Roland Barthes dans son *Sur Racine* «est essentiellement paradoxale, [...] à la fois signe d'une histoire et résistance à cette histoire». (Barthes 1993: 1090) Il est vrai que si une œuvre nous dit des choses sur son histoire, surtout si ce qu'elle dit est de caractère universel, nous pouvons l'intégrer facilement dans notre culture; en revanche, si cette résistance à sa propre histoire est marquée par le silence que contient tout texte poétique et que les mots ne sont pas là pour représenter ce silence mais pour le faire sentir à travers la parole, la tâche de traducteur et de metteur en scène devient beaucoup plus compliquée. Ils auront affaire non pas à un problème socio-

historique, mais à un problème linguistique. Comme nous le rappelle Maurice Merleau-Ponty: «L'absence de signe peut être un signe et l'expression n'est pas l'ajustage à chaque élément du sens d'un élément du discours, mais une opération du langage sur le langage qui soudain décentre vers son sens. Dire, ce n'est pas mettre un mot sous chaque pensée: si nous le faisons, rien ne serait jamais dit.» (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 55–56)

Nous comprenons maintenant mieux le malaise qu'un metteur en scène peut avoir devant un texte étranger. D'une part, elle découle du fait que le langage peut être comme qui dirait trop «présent», trop significatif, – tel dans *Huis clos* de Sartre – ne laissant pas suffisamment de place pour le silence; d'autre part, face à une œuvre comme celle de Olivier Py, pour juste donner un exemple, il pourrait paraître trop abondant, trop vertigineux, trop ancré dans la culture source afin de relever rapidement les blessures dans la culture cible auquel il pourra répondre.

Nous nous retrouvons ici face à la question que pose Luule Epner par rapport au terme de théâtre postdramatique. En effet, elle se demande dans quelle mesure pouvons-nous, à partir du moment où un certain nombre de textes basiques et de débats qui caractérisent le théâtre occidental sont totalement absents, reprendre une terminologie élaborée ailleurs ou faudra-t-il créer nos propres termes et concepts pour parler des processus qui ont lieu chez nous? Et elle répond: «Il faudra certes éviter les extrêmes – néanmoins la question, jusqu'à quelle limite nous pouvons homologuer la terminologie, sans malmener nos pratiques artistiques particulières, reste pertinente.» (Epner 2007: 4)

Nous aimerions ajouter de notre part que la même question est cruciale aussi, non pas seulement pour les théoriciens du théâtre, mais aussi pour des praticiens, à savoir les traducteurs et les metteurs en scène. Même si l'usage de tel ou tel terme précis n'est pas pour eux de première importance, la question de savoir, lors du transfert culturel, si un concept qui fait du sens ailleurs s'adapte dans notre propre culture et comment, fait partie de leur travail quotidien, qu'il s'agisse d'une grande pièce de Shakespeare ou d'un jeune auteur peu connu.

À ce titre, l'existence du canon littéraire que certains répugnent, s'avère doublement utile pour l'étude. D'abord, parce qu'il nous révèle un certain nombre d'œuvres qui pour une raison ou pour une autre sont absentes dans notre culture, mais figurent bel et bien dans une autre; et puis, parce qu'il nous indique en même temps plus généralement un manque ou une absence que nous pouvons conceptualiser. Loin de nous de suggérer aux traducteurs, aux directeurs de théâtre, aux metteurs en scène, aux universitaires de s'emparer des pièces isolées pour remplir cette absence; au contraire, il est peut être mieux pour la culture estonienne de *ne pas* avoir traduit et représenté les tragédies de Racine. Mais il est absolument nécessaire de réfléchir sur les raisons de cette absence, puisque grâce à cela nous pouvons comprendre qu'une absence y est. Chaque culture a besoin non pas seulement de la parole, mais aussi du silence. La poésie elle-même naît sur la frontière du dit et du non-dit, du plein et du vide; c'est de là où elle puise sa force créatrice. Le silence de Racine pourrait ainsi donner la parole aux autres auteurs, français, estoniens ou autres, qui à leur tour, révéleraient le silence qui se trouve dans leurs sociétés respectives et dans le public. C'est comme cela qu'on arrive à traduire le langage du silence.

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## *Socialist Realism as Anti-Canonical Art<sup>1</sup>*

### Introduction

Soviet culture is sometimes described as a ‘text-based’ one, oriented towards regulated, or canonical texts and regulated expression (Lepik 2000). The same has been said about Socialist Realism, one of the most (in)famous phenomena of Soviet culture. In this paper, I try to argue for an alternative view, according to which Socialist realism can be described as anti-canonical – as a system that instead of asserting itself as a canon different from others, actively denies and demolishes other canons –, and outline the mechanisms that create and organize it.

What is Socialist Realism? Since the adoption of the term ‘Socialist Realism’ in 1932, literary critics, and scholars have been trying to give a positive definition or description of Socialist Realist aesthetics. While an official definition of the term was given in the Statute of the Union of Soviet Writers – which stated that Socialist Realism (for short, SR) was “the basic method of Soviet literature and literary criticism. It demands of the artist the truthful, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development” – the fact that it required interpretation by a number of scholars, would make one doubt that there was any method after all.

One common – and usually quite sufficient – definition of SR states that it was an extremely simple aesthetic canon. It had to be simple, so that it could be easy to digest and adopt. It should thus be possible to summarize the main principles of SR in a few sentences

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<sup>1</sup> This research was supported by the EU through the Estonian Science Foundation grant ETF7988, “The Power of Nomination in the Society and in the Culture”.



(Sarapik 2002: 469). From this, it follows that there was no Socialist Realist literature: there were only writers who implemented the principles of SR in their works to a greater or lesser extent. After Stalin's death, there was no reason to hold on to these principles anymore, so they were simply discarded. Yet, if we take a closer look at some moments in literary history, it turns out that the situation was not quite that simple. As an example here, we can take the situation of Estonian literature following the June coup of 1940 and the Soviet annexion of Estonia. Incorporating Estonia into the Soviet Union also meant the assimilation of Estonian culture and literature. Among other things, this included demands that Estonian writers adopt the SR "method". However, while a number of writers were willing to cooperate with the new regime, the adoption of the new "artistic method" proved to be difficult. While a number of "socialist realist" texts were written, these went mostly unnoticed by the official literary criticism – the highest authority in these matters (Pern 2008). Even after the war, when many "cultural workers" (writers, painters, musicians etc), who had been evacuated to behind the Soviet lines, had gained more experience with the demands of the Soviet powers, the situation remained largely the same. Even those writers, who had spent the war in the Soviet Union, could not quite grasp the new demands and would be reproached for their "mistakes".

## Towards defining Socialist Realism

It can thus be accepted that SR is not quite as simple a thing as it may seem at first sight. For an explanation of how it "worked", let us now turn next to some accounts of SR or Socialist Realist canon. The latter can have many different definitions, depending on the definition of Socialist Realism. First of all, SR can be seen as simply a set of literary works; in this case, the SR canon would be the set of "canonized" works. Secondly, it can be described as a certain literary discourse that includes both literary works and literary criticism; its canon would consist of a set of canonical rules to be followed, or "aesthetic or philosophical model set by Socialist Realism" (Gottlieb

2001: 117). A third definition would be similar to the second one, except it would include all forms of 'Socialist Realist' art – painting, sculpture, architecture, music, cinema and so on. Another possible definition would be a generalization of the previous one; according to this, SR is a 'cultural type' or cultural paradigm. In this case, the 'canon' would be made up of the norms that form the centre of this cultural paradigm. In the following sections, I will try and cover accounts of Socialist Realism ranging from the narrowest to the broadest sense of the term.

### *Socialist Realism – a literary canon?*

Let us start with Katherine Clark's *The Soviet Novel*. According to Clark, the SR canon is created by literary practice, and the essence of this canon should be searched for not in theoretical pronouncements, but in SR works. Socialist Realism

is not, first of all, a *single* doctrine [...] Even if Socialist Realism is confined to the meaning "officially sponsored Soviet literature," it soon becomes apparent that among the various canonical accounts of it there is no *one* that is incontrovertible or in any sense comprehensive. Some official pronouncements on the theory of Socialist Realism have been important...but they are too general to have guided such a distinctive practice [...] Consequently, instead of going into the Byzantine arguments surrounding the question What is Socialist Realism?, I shall use a strictly pragmatic approach and define Soviet Socialist Realism as a canonical doctrine defined by its patristic texts (2000: 3).

Two different kinds of SR meet in Clark's account. The first of these is the "historical reality" with many different paradigms and authors craving official recognition; the other one is a "construction set" created in 1932–34, from the pieces or conventions of which a writer can compose a socialist realist work (ib. 35). The most conventional was the Soviet novel. The sources of the clichés used were not, however, theoretical writings on Socialist Realism, but official "exemplars" or model novels. The core of this canon was not always constant, but it generally consisted of Maxim Gorky's *Mother* and *Klim Sangin*, Dmitri Furmanov's *Chapaev*, Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How*

*the Steel Was Tempered*, Mikhail Sholokhov's *Quiet Flows the Don* and *Virgin Soil Uplturned*, and a series of other novels, from which not only isolated tropes and characters were copied, but the entire plot structures of SR novels were based on those of exemplary novels (ib. 4). According to Clark, starting from the mid-1930s, most novels followed the same "master plot" that controls the beginning, climax, and ending of the novel (ib. 5). The majority of Soviet novels follow this master plot to a greater or lesser extent. Many of these novels belonging to the SR "tradition" have, however, a dual identity according to Clark. On one hand, they contain elements that are copied by later novels; on the other hand, however, many of their features were ignored in SR:

In each novel, there is much the author intended to be an important contribution to the quest for the kind of writing adequate to the new age, but the "contribution" was never adopted for Socialist Realism. When these novels were pronounced exemplars, the number of possible features a model Soviet novel might have become more finite, and in each novel those aspects not envisaged in the canon became incidental, not germane to its quality of being Socialist Realist (ib. 30).

While Clark tries, and to some extent manages to demonstrate the existence of a common plot in many Soviet novels, she never really attempts to find a canonical core common to all Soviet literature; indeed, she admits that "Socialist Realism is essentially *a name* [emphasis mine – T.P.] applied to Soviet culture's literary system rather than to a way of writing that is particularly "socialist" or "realist"." (Ib. 9) But while the name 'Socialist Realism' remained constant, it should not be taken for granted that the plot of the Soviet (or SR) novel remained the same, or that the same aspects of the "exemplary" novels were always actualized in later SR novels.

It is also difficult to agree with Clark's proposition that literary theoretical or critical pronouncements did little to guide SR. A different position is held by Hans Gunther, who sees SR as a canon of self-description. The SR canon is defined by norms belonging to

different levels. Thus, Gunther distinguishes between four different discursive levels in the SR canon: 1) the level of general ideological discourse, or the level of Marxist-Leninist ideology; 2) literary political discourse, which contains certain ideological postulates, such as party-mindedness (*partiinosť*), idea-mindedness (*ideinosť*), typicality, revolutionary romanticism, etc.; 3) meta-literary discourse, primarily literary criticism, which concretizes the “artistic method” of SR, applying it to literary texts; 4) literary discourse, formulating the stylistic norms and regulations (2000: 281). “Correct” texts were, thus, not created spontaneously, but their creation was guided by different levels of norms. Furthermore, SR texts were Socialist Realist not by themselves, but only in relation to the different levels of the SR canon. Chronologically, Gunther distinguishes between following stages in the evolution of the canon: 1) Proto-canon, the preparatory stage of the real canon and its reservoir of texts; 2) the stage of canonization, during which the canon is formulated as a more or less systematic whole compared to other traditions; 3) mature canon, complete expression of its mechanisms; 4) decanonization, during which the canon expands and loses its obligatory status; 5) post-canonical stage following its collapse (2000: 281–282).

While Gunther’s theory of Socialist Realist canon is different from Clark’s, the criticisms that can be made here are quite similar. Finding and completely describing a “mature” canon of SR proves to be quite difficult, if not impossible, as the demands keep shifting. For instance, different ideological postulates were activated at different times, sometimes contradicting each other (for instance, “class-mindedness” with “Soviet patriotism”)<sup>2</sup>.

### *Socialist Realism – a cultural canon?*

Some theories of SR try to find its origins and its canonical core in the rules of a general cultural paradigm. One (and perhaps the best known) such account of SR is Boris Groys’ study of “Stalin-style” (Groys 1998). What Groys attempts to prove there is that SR was a

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<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of these postulates and the function they fulfilled at a specific moment, see, for instance, Balina 2000 and Powelstock 2006.

child of the Russian avant-garde. Even though a deep chasm separates them on the level of stylistic norms and restrictions, the utopian pathos of creating a “new man” in SR comes from the avant-garde paradigm, according to Groys. Thus, the avant-garde is a part of the SR “proto-canon”. Furthermore, he claims that the avant-garde could have just as well been instituted as the “official art, as SR was just as foreign to the masses as Malevich’s famous “Black Square”:

the taste preferences of the masses without a doubt tended...towards anything else but Socialist Realism, which was called to educate the masses and by this alone intimidated them with its schoolmaster tone, lack of entertainment, and a complete detachment from real life that in its radicality was a match for Malevich’s “Black Square [...] There is no doubt that whatever Stalin had said at the time, it would have been received with the same enthusiasm, even if it be phonetic *zaum*-poetry in the spirit of Khlebnikov and Kruchenykh. (Groys 1998: 423)

Groys’ theory has later been expanded by Irina Gutkin, who finds that Groys was right in principle: the aesthetics of SR comes from the avant-garde. The latter term does not, however, signify only the “left art” of the 1920s, but a whole period in Russian culture; not just radical artistic experiments, but experiments guided by ideological ambitions. Namely these ambitions were the common denominator for the artistic and political (Bolshevik) avant-garde (Gutkin 1999: 12).

The main principles of Socialist Realist aesthetics were born in the revolutionary period between the 1890s and 1930s, which was the climax in the Russian intelligentsia’s search for a real understanding and organization of life (ib. 8). This meant searching for a new everyday life, a new man, and a new love as the means for realizing the ideal of a future world (ib. 15); These three principles later became important in SR: the futurological character of aesthetic ambitions and “ultrarealism” became the demand to represent “life in its revolutionary development”; the artist as the creator of a new man became an “engineer of the human soul” (Gutkin 1994: 195).

It is difficult to agree with Groys' position that anything, including *zaum*-poetry and Malevich's "Black Square" could have been institutionalized as official Soviet art. The similarities between SR and avant-garde literature (in the broader sense) should not, however, be ignored; let us not forget that many of the SR "exemplars" that Katherine Clark talks about belong to this era.

The cultural theory of SR is also represented in the works of Evgeny Dobrenko. He shows in his works how the canonized "high Socialist Realism" was only a fraction of the vast sea of literature and the well-known SR authors only a part of the "army of authors" (Dobrenko 1999). SR texts no longer express the individuality of the author, but are anonymous; their only real author is power (Dobrenko 1993: 35).

SR is seen here as the core of Soviet culture and expanded to the whole cultural space, for instance, in the formula "Socialist Realism is real Socialism"; it becomes a metaphor for the whole Soviet culture and society. Stalinist or SR art is the materialization of Soviet ideology. For this reason, Malevich's "Black Square" could never have fulfilled the role of SR:

Avant-garde aesthetics was unacceptable in the Stalinist culture not only because of complete ignorance of mass tastes, but also because the "black square" is an embodiment of conventionality, whereas Socialist Realism demonstrates Socialism not as conventional but namely as reality. (Dobrenko 2007: 38)

SR, then, is the "institution for producing Socialism". This includes not only literature and cinema, but also Soviet advertising, biological doctrines, etc. All this imitated art, fulfilled the social role of art (ib. 6). In the case of SR, its primary function was an aesthetic, not propagandistic one: it produced reality through aestheticizing it. SR was the only reality in Socialism; without it, there would not have been real Socialism:

Whatever Soviet reality was [...] it demanded art to turn *this* reality into Socialism. It is namely in art – through Socialist Realism – that

Soviet reality is transformed and turned into Socialism [...] Socialist Realism must thus be seen as not only the production of certain symbols, but also the production of visual and verbal representations. That is why the function of Socialist Realism in the politico-aesthetical project of "real Socialism" is to fill the space of "Socialism" with images of reality (ib. 30).

One important thing that Dobrenko demonstrates in his works is the importance of political power. The "principle of power" remains true even when ideological doctrines are transformed or changed for new ones that are cardinally different from old ones, like happened during and after the war (Dobrenko 1999: 128). Soviet culture as a whole still represents the "voice of the power". "Power" does not stand for any particular leader (be it Stalin, Lenin, or Zhdanov), but an abstraction of power, a principle.

Another interesting account of SR as a cultural type is Vladimir Paperny's *Culture Two*. Paperny sees the whole cultural history of Russia as a recurrent alternation of two "cultures", which he calls, aptly enough, Culture One and Culture Two. Whereas Culture One can be related to the avant-garde of the 1920s, the model of Culture Two is built on the material of Stalinist architecture. They are described through a number of binary oppositions: horizontal-vertical, egalitarian-hierarchical, collective-individual, improvisation-notes, rational-artistic, and so on. The main focus of Paperny's study is on the processes that took place in Soviet architecture in late 1920s-early 1930s. Yet what he ventures to prove is that similar processes are also at work in the whole culture. Thus, for instance, the whole period called Culture Two is characterized by logocentricity. A peculiar hierarchy of arts is formed, based on their verbal capabilities. The first place in this hierarchy is taken by literature, but architecture, music, cinema, and other arts also strive towards creating works that can be unequivocally narrated in words (2006: 222). In this respect, Culture Two is directly opposed to avant-garde culture, which stressed the autonomy of each form and the individuality of their languages (ib. 217).

An interesting aspect of Culture Two is its so-called mythological character (ib. 230). Mythological character of the culture is related to

the status of the (either spoken or written) word: a word stands for something that can be perceived, yet not spoken; not an object, a quality, a relation, or an action, but a combination of all of these – the name of the object determines its qualities, the relations with it, and the actions to be taken. The meaning of a text does not, in this case, depend on the meaning of its component signs, but is derived from the level of “collective mythological conceptions” (ib.). The term ‘Socialist Realism’ can be seen as having similar character: it does not stand for a particular object or quality, yet everyone “knows” it the moment they see it.

While Paperny’s thesis of two cultures has been often criticized, at least some of the aspects of his work have found further development and verification in the works of Dmitrii Hmelnitsky. Hmelnitsky’s account of Soviet architecture in the 1930s shows that the processes that took place there were quite similar to what happened in Soviet literature. In the 1920s, different schools fought for the title of “proletarian” architecture, but in the end, none of them could claim the position of the “true” Soviet style. Instead, a new “official style” was declared – “realist architecture”. And while the architecture of antiquity was found to be the most “realistic” in history, copying it – or any other style – as a formal system in itself, not just as a collection of stylistic elements, was considered a deadly sin (Hmelnitsky 2007b: 139). Stylistic elements had to be used “creatively”, yet the main thesis of SR – “creative use of the classical heritage” – offered no working recipes or methods. It only defined the extent of stylistic loans and architects’ artistic interests; in practical work, example had to be taken from exemplary buildings, which became the embodiment of “Socialist Realism” in architecture, after they had been approved by the authorities (Hmelnitski 2007a: 211). The loss of a right for serious artistic thought was “compensated” with the right to infinitely play with and combine the elements that fell within the approved borders (ib. 285).



## Anti-canoncity: Socialist Realism as a discursively constructed object

### *Socialist Realism as an 'empty signifier'*

I find that the “mythological” aspect of SR – that there were no real working recipes offered, yet everyone “knew” it when they saw it – can be described through the concept of *empty signifier* coined by the Essex school of discourse analysis. Use of concepts originating from political theory is justified here, since, as we have seen, SR could be considered a problem of literary politics, rather than literary criticism. An empty signifier is, in a certain sense, an impossible object, like a unicorn: “An empty signifier is, strictly speaking, a signifier without a signified” (Laclau 1996: 36). Such signifiers can only exist thanks to the existence of a system that supports them: “[T]here can be empty signifiers within the field of signification because any system of signification is structured around an empty place resulting from the impossibility of producing an object which, none the less, is required by the systematicity of the system.” (Ib. 40) Socialist Realism, then, can be described as an empty place, around which a certain picture or model of what “Socialist Realism” is, is constructed. Such constructions, as we have seen, can be of different kinds: either “Socialist Realist” novels, or literary critical texts, or other works of art, like works of architecture. This relation can be called a *hegemonic relationship* (ib. 42)

We can then agree here with Clark when she says that SR is a name applied to a mode of writing that is neither Socialist nor Realist. The relation between the empty signifier and the discourse it represents is not a conceptual relation; it does not represent a common core in the discourse – the hegemonic relationship is the relationship between a name and an object (Ventsel, Selg 2008: 175). It is not, however, a *mere* name – according to Laclau, the unity of the object is the result of naming it; objects are created through naming (ib.). Thus, we can argue that no “canonical” common core existed in SR – SR only gained its existence through the act of naming.

*The construction of "Socialist Realism"*

The unity of an object is created through antagonistic exclusion: "You have to exclude 'them' radically or antagonistically in order to fully form 'us' as a coherent system." (Ventsel, Selg forthcoming) The same is true for SR; its canonicity is in fact anti-canonicity, as it needs to actively antagonize other canons in order to prove its own coherence. We saw this above in the example brought by Hmelnitsky; yet the same kind of "creative use of the classical heritage" is also common to Socialist Realist literature. Anti-canonicity in this sense does not allow one "correct" mode of writing or style to dominate. We can agree here with Hmelnitsky, who sees behind this situation a need to create an atmosphere of uncertainty:

It was important for Stalin to create an atmosphere of uncertainty in the professional sphere... No one, not even an architect with the highest position could feel themselves safe, neither could any director or writer. This attitude was characteristic to the whole state. This kind of atmosphere was stimulated by the lack of canonized models and the impossibility to predict for certain the reaction of the authorities (2007a: 169)

This uncertainty can be seen at work, for instance, in an article by Soviet Estonian People's Commissar of Education, Johannes Semper, where he reproaches writers for not giving enough attention to "current" themes in their plans for the future and sticking to the "past":

Only one novel would depict our oil shale industry. Three would deal with problems related to land reform. Books dealing with the past are meanwhile more abundant. Thus, writers are interested in the era of serfdom, life in old Tallinn at the end of the 18th century, underground life under the bourgeoisie, country life at the turn of the century ... the Patriotic War ... the life of workers at the beginning of the century and during the bourgeois republic ... No matter how well and how correctly these topics are discussed, the themes our writers use still remain a bit poor and one-sided. (Semper 1946: 788)

Naming is, however, but one hegemonic relationship. Another important hegemonic operation is *translation*. We can refer here back to Paperny's concept of the mythological character of Culture Two. The term 'Socialist Realism' can be seen as having mythological character: it does not stand for a particular object or quality, yet everyone "knows" it the moment they see it. The same is true of hegemonic translation: "In the political discourse there prevails the non-discrete strategy of translation. It means that discrete and clearly differentiated signs are translated into non-discrete totality." (Selg & Ventsel 2008: 178) We can thus say that individual texts that may have very little in common with each other are "translated" into a single discourse – SR literature or its canon – through the concept of SR, assigning them a similarity that may not be as clear or as primary outside this discourse – as we saw earlier in Katherine Clark's discussion of SR "tradition". And vice-versa: SR could be "perceived" through these texts:

[I]f Socialist Realism had not been created in the early thirties, many of the official paradigms from the twenties would always have been seen as representing rival modes of writing [...] Once the tradition of the Socialist Realist novel was "created" in the thirties, then ... it could be "perceived" in the official precursors because the tradition *was* these works (Clark 2000: 29).

We can agree, then, with Gunther, that SR is a discursively constructed object. As such, SR can always be re-created, renewed. But in order that such "renewal" could take place, there can be no canonical core, which would at some point inevitably become incompatible with new demands, like it would have happened if a strict class-mindedness had collided with "Soviet patriotism". SR as a symbol (in Paperny's terms) or an empty signifier (Laclau), however, allows these to be translated into a single, non-discrete totality.

## Conclusion: "Socialist Realism" and literary history

The name Socialist Realism not only represents a certain subset of the whole domain of Soviet literature, but *becomes* Soviet literature, with all non-SR works and authors being labelled as non-Soviet or anti-Soviet, and read and studied as independent of the Soviet system. All SR texts can equally represent the non-literary or non-artistic nature of Socialist Realism. In this respect, these texts are opposed to the artistic texts of non-Soviet (or anti-Soviet) literature. If we want to specify, what these texts have in common, the broader the area we try to cover, the more distinguishing features of each of the texts will have to be dropped in order to keep alive what these texts attempt to express. In this way, SR as a theoretical concept has continued to lose its particularity, signifying an ever broadening range of phenomena. The longer the equivalential chain, the less concrete the "Socialist Realist" nature of its links becomes. In the end, SR as a totality can only exist as a horizon that fuses together different practices that are called "Socialist Realist".

From the point of view of literary history it would perhaps be fruitful to pay less attention to what "Socialist Realist" works have in common and more attention to how all these rather dissimilar texts were "homologized" and assimilated into SR. This, however, is the subject of a further study.

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## *Romanticism as a Literary-historiographical Project: Romantic Prose Fiction*

*Romantic Prose Fiction*. Eds. Gerald Gillespie, Manfred Engel, Bernard Dieterle. (A Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages, Volume XXIII). Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company. 733 pp. ISBN 978-90-272-3456.

*Romantic Prose Fiction* volume is a part of the Romanticism sub-series, pertaining to the huge project "Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages". The sub-series consists of five volumes: *Romantic Irony*, *Romantic Drama*, *Romantic Poetry*, *Non-fictional Romantic Prose: Expanding Borders*, and *Romantic Prose Fiction*.

The decision to devote to Romanticism more attention than to any other literary epoch or movement, treated in the CHLEL up till now (Expressionism, Symbolism, Avant-gardes, Enlightenment, Post-modernism, Modernism), seems to be well grounded in the fact that Romanticism is not only one of the most important artistic epochs so far (if we may allow for any hierarchies in this respect), which most efficiently succeeded to conceptualize the importance of art for an individual as well as for society; moreover, at the same time it also gave birth to the literary history and literary theory proper and is regarded in many respects as the most characteristic forerunner of our own epoch in the fields of societal life, sciences, ideas, philosophical concepts, and literary culture.<sup>1</sup> The division of the sub-

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<sup>1</sup> How far-reaching this influence is can be demonstrated by many examples. Let me point to only one: "Most twentieth-century modes of literary criticism and history, our immediate heritage, exhibit deep Romantic

series on five volumes also seems to be justified. In so far as Romanticism has been extremely widespread and influential, and equally important in all genres and forms of literary expression, it seems perfectly adequate to treat prose fiction, drama and poetry in separate volumes. The fact that the Romanticism project starts with the *Romantic Irony* volume, is also more than reasonable. Romantic irony namely expresses in most condensed way the very nucleus of the Romantic self-consciousness (particularly in the cradle of Romanticism, in the work of German Romantic authors), the sense of unlimited subjectivity, which – in Schelling's, but also Hegel's philosophy, in fragments of Friedrich Schlegel, or in the skilful narrative manoeuvres in Hoffmann's *The Life And Opinions Of the Tomcat Murr* –, feeling itself as absolutely free, lifts itself in a total ironical distance from everything, even from itself. Finally, perfectly justifiable seems to be also the decision to devote a separate volume apart from Romantic prose fiction also to the nonfictional prose; one should not forget that the philosophical or theoretical writings of Schelling, Novalis, young Hölderlin, Chateaubriand, the Schlegel brothers, Schiller, Coleridge, Goethe etc. are extremely important part of the Romantic literary culture, often transgressing strict borders between theoretical and fictional discourses.

To devote in what follows the attention to the *RPF* volume (the last in the row), one may say that it distinguishes itself for its reasonable structuredness, characteristic of the Romanticism project as a whole. The volume has (besides the editors' Preface, displaying some editorial principles) an explanatory Introduction that presents the history and rationale of the Romanticism sub-series, and a summarizing Conclusion. It is divided into three major parts. Part One concentrates on the "Characteristic themes". The authors contributing to this section deal with the French Revolution, wertherism, idealisation of the artist, sister arts, music, nature and landscape, particularly mountain landscape, the "Wanderer", madness and dream, all kinds of duplicities, images of childhood, monsters, artificial life, Romantic brides, and, finally, also a chapter on

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traces. Notable examples would be humanistic idealism, dialectical materialism, or linguistic structuralism ..." (Gillespie 2004: 18).

“Romantic gender and sexuality” is included. No important Romantic theme seems to be missing and the authors try to treat their topics as completely and extensively as possible and to explain them on the background of the Romantic *Weltanschauung*. (As a matter of fact, this holds true of the majority of contributions to this volume.) Part Two deals with the “Paradigms of Romantic fiction” and is further divided into two sections. “Generic types and representative texts” treat the most characteristic Romantic genres such as the Gothic novel, *Bildungsroman*, the “artist novel”, historical novel and historical romance, the fairy-tale and the fantastic tale, the detective story and novel, various types of short fiction, the literary idyll, while the section “Modes of discourse and narrative structures” discusses the address-relation-community complex as narrative sequence, the dialectics of homophony and polyphony, the fragment as structuring force, mirroring, abymization, potentiation, the distinction and relation between the novel and romance, the role of myth, the dialectics of historical narrative and fiction, and “the shaping of social discourse in Spanish America” (the latter being a quite informative article on Spanish American Romantic fiction and its social dimensions, but on the other hand seemingly loosely connected to the section’s title-theme). Part Three presents “Contributions of Romanticism to 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century writing and thought” with articles on Spanish and Latin American novel in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Romantic thought and style in 19<sup>th</sup> century realism and Naturalism, *fin-de-siècle* and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, C. J. L. Almquist and Romantic irony, Romanticism, occultism and the fantastic in Spain and Latin America, Romantic prose fiction in modern Japan, ludic prose from Sterne to Fuentes, and screen adaptations of Romantic works. As we can see, the volume thus combines the “aesthetic” approach with the “contextual” one and tends to contextualize the Romantic prose fiction horizontally as well as vertically within the framework, indicated in the *Introduction*.<sup>2</sup> Particularly important

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<sup>2</sup> The methodological framework here really is merely indicated and not really extensively elaborated, contrary to the framework, for instance, of the Literary Cultures sub-series, explained and reflected not only in extensive



in this regard seems to be Part III, which – in accordance with counter-essentialism, constructivism and, last, but not least, also the hermeneutic premises (the issue Gillespie in his work often deals with) that are all for some time now<sup>3</sup> the indispensable part of literary-historical consciousness – quite instructively demonstrates the necessity to grasp the literary epoch as a dynamic process that is not only cross-cultural but in many respects also transcending firm historical limits and therefore inevitably demands the comparative and (to use Gadamer's or Iser's term) *Wirkungsgeschichte* approach.

The volume with its 733 pages is quite an impressive achievement and it would be of little use if one attempted to present and evaluate all of 38 contributions individually.<sup>4</sup> The projects of such extensiveness and complexity evoke in the reader – with a good reason – *a priori* respect and admiration, and confront a reviewer, who wants to do justice to them, with unsolvable dilemmas. For instance, it would be too unpretentious to limit oneself to merely summarizing the contributions; on the other hand, however, it would be much too pretentious even just to try to evaluate critically every single one of them, since it is virtually impossible to be an expert in such a variety of issues as treated in this volume (and this is why such a project can best be accomplished as a team work); yet again, to point out just some of them would be unfair. In this way the reviewer is confronted with the alternatives, none of which is ideal. Every choice is (pace Derrida) a wrong choice, yet the choice has to be made. Therefore, my decision is to focus mainly on the articles, theses or conclusions that particularly provoked my response, which is to say, a (hopefully fruitful) discussion and not only passive registration.

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introductions to each volume but also in previous publications, mostly by John Neubauer, but also by Mario Valdés.

<sup>3</sup> At least since the birth of the Reception Aesthetics; however we should not forget the fact that similar ideas already appeared in the late Russian formalism (Tynyanov) and Prague Structuralism, yet without the "global" resonance at the time.

<sup>4</sup> As a matter of fact, to certain extent this has already been done by Angela Esterhammer.

The volume contains several contributions that due to their excellence, analytical skilfulness, comparative approach, innovativeness, or opening of new horizons deserve a reader's close attention. Such are for example "Night-sides of existence: Madness, dream etc." by Monica Schmitz-Emans, or "Doubling, doubles, duplicity, bipolarity" by Ernst Grabovszki, which are both very persuasive articles that in the best comparative manner present two typical Romantic topics. The same holds true for Sabine Roszbach's "Mirroring, abymization, potentiation (involution)" with an extremely interesting exposure of the connection between Novalis' idea of the infinitely progressing novel and mathematics, or for Gerald Gillespie's "The detective story and novel", analytically disclosing the history and pre-history of crime in the (Romantic) literature. Further on, Manfred Engel's "Variants of the Romantic 'Bildungsroman' (with a short note on the 'artist novel')" deserves attention not only due to its clear structuredness, but also due to the fact that it is an extensive, analytical article, introducing a new, interesting thesis that "the Romantic *Bildungsroman* in its radical version – the transcendental novel or the *Bildungsroman* in the High Romantic mode, as I have called it – is a result of the attempt to 'romanticise' the novel-form by turning it as completely as possible into a romance" (290). It seems particularly important that attention is paid also to "literatures in European languages" outside Europe and the United States, especially those of Latin America. Jüri Talvet in his very informative contribution on Spanish and Latin American novel during Romanticism rightly observes that "[t]he three epicentres of the Romantic 'explosion' – German, English, French culture – have subsequently been thoroughly described, their multiple characteristics delineated and their canon firmly established," while the "peripheral' areas of Romanticism [...] still look much more vague and unexplored" (559). One has to welcome the decision that there are two more articles dedicated to the Spanish/Latin American subject, one of them being José Ricardo Chaves' article on occultism and fantastic in Spain and Latin America. Here the author rightly argues for the difference between the magic realism and fantastic (the distinction most clearly revealed in A. B. Chanady's useful study *Magical Realism and the Fantastic. Resolved Versus Unresolved*

*Antinomy*<sup>5</sup>) and again rightly draws the conclusion that J. L. Borges is often wrongly regarded as a magic realist writer. Another valuable contribution is "The fragment as structuring force" by Remo Ceserani and Paolo Zanotti with a clear introductory philosophical-theoretical reflection on the dialectics of organic unity and fragmentation. Finally, the last contribution in the volume – with the exception of *Conclusion* –, Elaine Martin's "Rewrites and remakes: Screen adaptations of Romantic works", offers a very interesting and useful overview and rounds up the impressive image of the volume as a whole. In fact, it would hardly be an exaggeration to state that in general, all articles are valuable studies, written by distinguished researchers, bringing many new insights or at least offering useful overviews.

However, it would also be odd and even rather unproductive if such a volume had not provoked also a reader's response, a desire to enter into a discussion here and there. After all, the dialogic nature of comparative literature – in other words, its "permanent crisis" – necessarily includes also an intradisciplinary dialogue. A comparatist work without such an effect ought to be viewed as unsuccessful. Therefore, in the following lines I will concentrate on some issues that attracted my critically, or better, dialogically-oriented attention.

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To begin with, it seems to be disputable whether the French Revolution really plays such a distinguished and obvious role in Goethe's *Novelle* as argued in the article of Gerhart Hoffmeister. All other works analyzed in this context do exhibit *explicit* allusions to the French revolution. In *Novelle*, however, the explicit connection is missing. It is established only *a posteriori*, due to the "allegorical" or better, "metaphorical" (18) interpretation, which is but only one of

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<sup>5</sup> Which would deserve to be mentioned in Chaves' contribution, along with some other important authors, dealing with the same subject, such as Theo D'haen's "Postmodernisms: From Fantastic to Magic realist" (in *International Postmodernism*, CHLEL series).

the possible interpretations, as a matter of fact not a very persuasive one.<sup>6</sup> Goethe himself in his conversations with Eckermann, when discussing *Novelle*, drew attention to some other issues.

It goes without saying that Hoffmeister's interpretation is interesting, yet the theme of the French Revolution in the *Novelle* seems to be more his invention than Goethe's, and *Novelle*, in my view, would deserve treatment in some other respects. For instance, it would be probably better to pay it due attention in the interesting article by Dorothy Figueira, dealing among other also with the presence of supernatural in the Romantic prose, for *Novelle* presents the intrusion of what Goethe called *das Demonische* in our real world, i.e. of this *unheimlich* dimension, which Rudolf Otto (*The Holy*) and Karl Jaspers (*The Philosophical Faith*) precisely in connection with Goethe designated as the religious. Furthermore, this could be also applied to Guerrero-Strachan's contribution, attributing "the uncanny" in the short story merely to Tieck and Hoffmann, but not to Goethe. A detailed analysis of *Novelle* in his article, dealing with the Romantic terminology issues, would be justified also due to the fact that this was the text Goethe used – in his conversations with Eckermann – to launch and also demonstrate his definition of novella ("unerhörtes Ereignis").

Guerrero-Strachan's article calls for attention also due to some other reasons. For instance, an attentive reader might ask herself or himself how exactly to understand the claim that the "crucial generic term" novella (*Novelle*) in German-speaking countries "is first mentioned in Friedrich Schlegel's 'Nachricht von den poetischen Werken des Johannes Boccaccio' (Notice about Boccaccio's Poetic Works 1801)" (366). Namely, if we consult Friedrich Schlegel's work, the term "Novelle" is definitely "first mentioned" already in some earlier and also more important writings, such as *The critical fragments* (*Kritische Fragmente*, 1797) and the *Athenäum fragments* (1789), here at least twice: once in connection with Goethe's collection of short stories *Conversations of German Refugees* (*Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten*, 1795), and one more time in the way that completely corresponds to the established contemporary

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<sup>6</sup> However, it attracts our attention due to its extensiveness.

definitions of the novella. Before 1801, Schlegel used the term or even extensively discussed novella in several other works, for instance in *On the Study of Greek Poetry* (*Über das Studium der griechischen Poesie*, 1797, written in 1795), or in *Dialogue on Poesy* (*Gespräch über die Poesie*, 1800).

In addition to this one could also discuss some terminological solutions offered by Guerrero-Strachan. He uses in his contribution the term "the modern short story", and traces its beginnings as early as in the German Romanticism and in the work of Nathaniel Hawthorne. However, the extent and the range of the term "modern" in this context remain unclear and several possible objections arise. Regarding the fact that Guerrero-Strachan's discussion is devoted among other to the terminological issues and that the term "short story" was launched by Poe, one asks oneself whether the short story before Poe can justifiably be called "modern". Following Charles May, quoted also in Guerrero-Strachan's article,<sup>7</sup> the term "*modern short story*" applies to the short story after Chekhov and Joyce, who reformed the traditional short story with some revolutionary novelties, reflecting the sense of "modernity". It is true, May's definition, even if offering the most persuasive argumentation, is not the only one possible. There are also some others, and one of the reasons for the different uses of the term "modern short story"<sup>8</sup> seems to be its broad English usage that in contrast to, for instance, the German usage,<sup>9</sup> collects under its heading the entire short fiction, in any case

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<sup>7</sup> However, the subtitle of his book *The Short Story: The Reality of Artifice* is in Bibliography at the end of Guerrero-Strachan's article wrongly quoted as "The Artifice of Reality" (381).

<sup>8</sup> Let me quote Frank Myszor here, an author who didn't regard it necessary to clear the dilemma, despite the fact that the title of his book is *The Modern Short Story*: "The phrase 'the modern short story' generally refers to works written after about 1849 to the present time, although there is some argument for choosing the later date of 1880" (Myszor 8).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. for example seminal works of Ruth Kilchenmann and Erna Kritsch Neuse. English terminology exposes its shortcomings here. In Romanticism, on the field of short fiction appeared a new *formbildende* tendency, and consequently next to novella the short story evolved. Some national literary terminologies (like German, Croatian, Serbian, Slovene etc.) tend to

also novella. Thus Guerrero-Strachan cannot be reproached with his usage of the term “the modern short story” as illegitimate. However, his article would only gain in clarity if his terminological choice would be at least briefly commented upon.

Finally, our attention is attracted by one more author’s claim. Guerrero-Strachan correctly argues that at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (according to May, the time of the rise of “the modern short story”), a structural change takes place in the form of the “lack of plot” (381). In addition, however, he surprisingly concludes that “forms such as the sketch [...] because of their lack of plot [...] lost their pre-eminence and, at the end of the nineteenth century, [...] came to be considered as an outdated form” (381). Not only many examples from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Chekhov, Cankar, Joyce, Lawson, Saki, or a bit later Borges) deny such a statement. It would also be useful to confront this viewpoint with the findings of many researchers who maintain that the characteristic feature of “the modern short story” in the 20<sup>th</sup> century is exactly the turn from the outer into the inner world, and that consequently short story adopts the characteristic structure of the sketch, which in this way becomes one of the central genres in metafictional or minimalist fiction (for instance in Carver’s) of the last three decades, far from being “an outdated form”.

In many respects provocative and inspiring is also the article of Monica Spiridon “Torn halves: Romantic narrative fiction between homophony and polyphony”. According to her, “Bakhtin’s hypothesis that Dostoevskii founded the modern novel and deconstructed the monologue-oriented narrative (Bakhtin 1970)” is wrong, since polyphony can be detected already in many Romantic novels, “which demonstrate the interplay between homophony and polyphony”, (435) such as for example Romantic irony, viewed as “splitting of narrative voices and levels” (436). She concludes that Romantic authors already used polyphony since they “seem less interested in showing *what* happened than in *how* to communicate it to the reader. The dramatic split of the *narrative levels*, the ‘constructive irony’,

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preserve the terminological differentiation, dismissed in English by the general term “short story”. Cf. Virk 2004.

the emphasis laid on the generic function of poetry, etc. end up by stimulating a *diegetic crisis* which expresses itself as a discursive polyphony" (450).

Spiridon's article seems to be interesting at least in two respects. First, it is a good example of the approach that does not analyse the Romantic phenomena merely from the point of view of the Romantic episteme but reads Romantic prose fiction also in a transhistorical perspective. This, of course, makes possible new, even surprising insights. Spiridon's claims, for example, that the typical Romantic "manoeuvres end up by distracting the reader from the story, switching his interest towards the discourse itself" (443) or, that "Romantic fictional prose deliberately and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality" (446), do for instance read as the established and more or less accepted definitions of Postmodernist fiction. Spiridon's article enables us to see the continuity between Romanticism and Postmodernism that more explicitly than in any other post-Romantic period displays itself in taking over the characteristic narrative techniques and devices. The question remains, however, whether the use of these techniques in the work of German Romanticists really can be interpreted as "postmodern" as in Spiridon's reading. To avoid a detailed discussion here<sup>10</sup> let us just mention that this would blur any clear distinction between Romanticism and Postmodernism – which, of course, is one of the possible views.

The second interesting aspect of Spiridon's article is her re-interpretation of Bakhtin's polyphony in terms of semiotics, discourse theory, and narratology. In any case Spiridon deals with a very important issue here, reflecting the Romantic novel in terms of Bakhtin's theory. Bakhtin's understanding of the novel as a protean

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<sup>10</sup> Just in short: It seems to me that "the relationship between fiction and reality" in Romanticism is connected with the belief that art is a synthesis of life, therefore the Romantic writers – also with the help of the narrative techniques, correctly analyzed by Spiridon – tend to bring the art into life as the highest truth that as such remains unproblematized. Not so in Postmodernism: every truth here is absent. Literature is merely fiction, also reality is just fiction.

genre, transgressing all limits, posed by traditional canons, being in a constant development, exhibiting syncretism of all kinds, is extremely close to the Romantic conceptualizations of the novel as unlimited, absolute form, embracing all other literary forms, such as defined in Friedrich Schlegel's famous fragment. There can be no doubt that such an understanding adequately reflected also in the Romantic novels themselves. The question, however, is whether the "discursive polyphony" Spiridon involves here really is what Bakhtin had in mind discussing polyphony in the novels of Dostoevskii. Spiridon does not actually closely analyze Bakhtin's views, and consequently it remains unclear in what way exactly she understands them. Does she, for instance, by "polyphony" refers to what Bakhtin calls "dialogism" and what, also in his view, emerged long before Dostoevskii? Or has she really in mind the very specific feature Bakhtin discovers only as late as in the work of the great Russian classic? To be sure, more precise illumination of Bakhtin's view would in no regard change or supplement this excellent treatise on narrative techniques of Romantic fiction; it would, however, help to clarify whether the term "polyphony" is really used in Bakhtinian sense, which would then better justify the critique of the Russian theorist.

Such a carefully prepared project with a wide variety of themes studied could hardly be accused of neglecting some particular, possibly interesting topics. The three editors in their *Conclusion* rightly remark, that there are principally no limits to the research of Romanticism and that of course also many other points of interest could be included in the volume; if this is not so, it is, one can infer, mostly due to the practical reasons – sooner or later, the project has to be concluded. Therefore it does not make much sense to discuss the eventual omissions of the project. In this regard, as already pointed above, it deserves all praise, since Romanticism in all five volumes together, as well as separately the Romantic fiction in the last volume, are elaborated quite extensively. Let me only add that an article dealing with the Romantic legacy in Postmodernism would perfectly well fit into the Third part of the *RPF*, since this legacy has been extremely rich, particularly in prose fiction. It is traceable not only in the works of Italo Calvino or Vladimir Nabokov, as



parenthetically mentioned in the Joel Black's contribution (p. 596), or in Fuentes' fiction, as one could infer from Aldridge's article, but in short stories and novels of many other postmodernists as well. Patrick Süskind, for example, imitates in his novel *Perfume* the typical Romantic form of the artist-novel; the same can be claimed for Robert Schneider's novel *Schlafesbruder*. Also Andrei Bitov in his novel *Pushkin house*, or Umberto Eco in *The Name of the Rose*, inspired among other by the tradition of the gothic romance, disclose the close connection to Romanticism. Many other authors could be enumerated here; let us only add instead that the Romantic irony is clearly the most important predecessor of the characteristic post-modernist narrative devices such as metafiction and intertextuality, as follows also from the above discussed contribution of Spiridon.

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If my attention so far has been focused more or less on the separate contributions to the *RPF* volume, in what follows it will extend not only beneath its borders, or beneath the borders of the Romanticism sub-series, but it will embrace also the series CHLEL as a whole and to some extent even the issues regarding literary historiography in general. Let me begin this discussion with the question that nowadays seems to have become obsolete – terminology.

It seems to be important for a literary historical project that according to some general idea should aim at a relatively consensual, integral, transnationally coordinated presentation of certain periods and epochs in the history of literatures in European languages, to operate within a relatively confirmed, established literary-historical terminology.<sup>11</sup> In *RPF*, however, sometimes more specific terminological uses appear, which seem to be taken for granted, even if they are not. This can lead to unnecessary confusions and ambiguities. Let me give two examples.

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<sup>11</sup> After all the coordinated terminology as a minimal common framework seems to be a *conditio sine qua non* for a project like this one to be a team work rather than just a collection of various contributions to the same theme.

My first example regards the use of the term Realism. In his article, Markus Bernauer treats the novels of Sir Walter Scott as predominantly realist. His main reference in this respect is Lukács. Such a treatment is of course possible and also legitimate. Yet without additional terminological explanation it is nevertheless misleading. It employs without warning, within the framework of a periodization project that *per definitionem* ought to treat Romanticism as a historical entity, an ahistorical, typological concept of Realism as a distinct “approach toward reality”. The author’s conclusion therefore is as follows: “Romanticism and Realism can no longer be understood as successive epochs of the history of literature as still proclaimed in the textbooks. Rather, they are poetic approaches toward reality that turn in phases in the 19th century” (305). Applying the term “realism” in such manner is, of course, nothing new. It is, as a matter of fact, quite common, for instance in typological approaches discussing “Realism”, for instance, in the ancient Rome (Petronius), Renaissance (*Lazarillo de Tormes*), Enlightenment etc., actually, as demonstrated in Erich Auerbach’s *Mimesis*, in many epochs of Western literature. Such an application is not only possible, it can also give good results. However, it might be questionable in the clearly historically oriented periodization project, particularly if not reflected upon, and if it differs from the (historical) use of the term in the majority of volume’s contributions.<sup>12</sup> At this point, one would expect the editor’s intervention, coordinating or at least explaining various levels of application of periodization terms. It seems, however, that the omission of such an intervention is deliberate. It is reasonable to believe that the editorial standpoint is expressed in the editor’s (Gillespie’s) *Introduction*, explaining that the “contributors [...] sought to avoid replicating any rigid concept of a single-minded stylistic period or dominant intellectual coding” (xiv) – a standpoint to which we shall return later.

My second terminological remark regards the issue of pre-Romanticism (in substantive or adjective form), a term, used in several articles in *RPF* (for instance Gillespie’s [significantly in

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<sup>12</sup> Yet not in all of them; one of the exceptions in this regard is for instance Guerrero-Strachan’s article.

quotation marks], Dieterle's, Lorant's, Kümmerling-Meibauer's, van Gorp's, Bernauer's, Steigerwald's), but without the necessary explanation remaining somehow unclear. It seems to be quite obvious that the term, perhaps first introduced in 1909 by Daniel Mornet, yet more powerfully engaged in the writings of Paul Van Tieghem some decade later, for comparative literature still presents a difficulty, and that in some national literary critical traditions is more established than in others.<sup>13</sup> To be sure, the CHLEL series devoted two separate volumes to the epoch, regarded by some as pre-Romanticism, yet under the neutral heading "Le tournant du siècle des Lumières 1760–1820: Les genres en vers des Lumières au Romantisme" or "Die Wende von der Aufklärung zur Romantik 1760–1820)", indicating the avoidance regarding the use of the term pre-Romanticism as the confirmed, well established literary historical designation. The reason for this could lie in the circumstance that "pre-Romanticism is predominantly characteristic of smaller European literatures"<sup>14</sup> and not of the "central" ones. Yet the fact remains that the term pre-Romanticism for several decades inflamed comparativist debates, and since it is also used by several contributors in the *RPF*, the reader has a good reason to expect to find at least a brief comment explaining the relation between the terms pre-Romanticism and Romanticism in the Introduction.

Unfortunately this is not the case; moreover, even at least a brief sketch of which concept of Romanticism is taken as the starting point seems to be missing. (In this regard, *RPF* continues the practice of preceding volumes in the Romanticism sub-series.) There is of course a fine editor's introduction – or, looking back to *Nonfictional Romantic Prose* volume, a surveying introductory essay of Virgil Nemoianu, but both of them avoid giving definite borders of Romanticism.

To be sure, expecting or even demanding a firm terminological definitions nowadays looks old-fashioned and outdated. It seems to be generally accepted – and in accordance with the contemporary epistemologies – that nobody is authorized to do such authoritative

<sup>13</sup> To some extent this is also evident in *RPF*.

<sup>14</sup> Kos 33; here Kos refers to the study of Karl Krejčí.

definitions. Not only is Romanticism, as often referred to, a border-crossing phenomenon; also our methodologies, cultural backgrounds etc. are different, and consequently there is no single, unanimous, definite concept of Romanticism. There are only (this consequence has been, if I remember correctly, carried out in *International Postmodernism*) Romanticisms. Besides, when we attempt to define a certain phenomenon, like a literary period or epoch, for instance, we are always involved in a hermeneutic circle. If we define in advance, what our research object is, we already determine the outcome of the research, etc. – All these are objections that the main editor Gillespie is very well aware of. In his *Introduction*, he even mentions some of them in favour of the decision that the *RPF* volume, as well as the Romantic project as a whole, deliberately refuses to offer an integral image of Romanticism.

Yet such epistemological attitude – which is admittedly difficult to avoid nowadays – brings also some deficiencies with it. It goes without saying that the reader, consulting the *RPF* volume, expects to get some information about various understandings of Romanticism. But at the same time, he or she also expects its “non-pluralist” conceptualization, in the same way as he or she expects from a dictionary or encyclopaedia entry a short and clear definition. In short, the reader nevertheless expects such volume to be a part of a synthesis, of a relatively clear concept, despite the above mentioned risks involved. A volume with pretensions to be *representative* – and all volumes of CHLEL are of this kind – simply has to take such a risk. After all, an “idiomatic”, uncoordinated conception of Romanticism is no more credible and reliable than the compromised “coordinated” one. When we replace one incomplete understanding of Romanticism with many of them, we gain nothing; on the contrary, we lose the heuristic advantage of the “coordinated” one. Besides, it would be difficult to find good arguments for claiming such “idiomatic” understandings as representative. And representative they should be, else why would they – and not any arbitrary other – be included in a *representative* volume on Romanticism? And if *RPF* does not want to be representative, what then is the *differentia specifica* of volumes in the CHLEL series? How does *RPF* then differs from many other volumes on Romanticism that also want to

illuminate it from different points of view and in different perspectives?

When Henry H. H. Remak wrote the "General preface to all volumes published as a part of the 'comparative history'", he maintained that such a history "coordinates related or comparable phenomena from an international point of view" and that it aims at "truly international syntheses" (Remak 5). To me, such an idea still sounds reasonable. It is certainly not impossible to imagine that, for instance, the Romanticism project would collect information on all Romanticisms in literatures in European languages, discuss some major theories of Romanticism, try to coordinate and correct them according to the new information obtained, and in this way offer a "truly international synthesis" along with the varieties and deviations that resist a coordination and prefer to remain idiomatic.<sup>15</sup> Such a "synthesis", simultaneously involving also resistances, would in my view be the optimal reference and starting point for any comparativist research in Romanticism. After all, I can imagine no authority being more competent to do this job than ICLA/AILC with the CHLEL.

But regarding the prosperity of the initial concept of CHLEL, something obviously went wrong. It is indicative that Remak's thoughts prefaced only few volumes and then vanished. In the last decades, many methodological shifts happened, also in the field of literary historiography. The traditional literary historical model, which seemed reasonable at the time when the series started, became problematic. New methodological models appeared that were only loosely connected to the original conception, until such revolutionary new concept emerged that a new sub-series had to be launched, the *Literary Cultures* sub-series.

It became obvious – even if this remained unadmitted – that the CHLEL project had been in many respects too optimistically projected. Regarding the methodological issues, the original conception of this huge, long-term project obviously did not consider enough the possibility, that the idea of the team work in a traditional sense of the

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<sup>15</sup> *International Postmodernism* proves that such idea is realisable.

word<sup>16</sup> – i. e. the idea of a group of people, each of them researching one part of vast material, sharing their methodological points of departure and aiming at a common, unified, coordinated result with the help of harmonized, coordinated research tools – would not be acceptable any more two or three decades later. At the same time, the idea of historiography became problematic, observing in the history (of literature) mere continuities that can be linked together in a convincing historical Grand narrative. In short, CHLEL experienced a constant methodological crisis and each volume tried to overcome it in its own way. The unity, implied in the series' title, dissolved.

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Yet CHLEL is not burdened only with the methodological problems. From the very beginning it has also been subject to some practical and organizational troubles that sometimes might even prove as (latent) ideological. When Remak wrote his “General preface to all volumes published as part of the ‘comparative history’”, of all disturbing centrisms he was most aware of Eurocentrism. Therefore he correctly predicted that CHLEL would try to avoid it.<sup>17</sup> Yet it seems to remain unnoticed – or at least not deconstructed enough – “Eurocentrism within Eurocentrism”, namely Westerneurocentrism,<sup>18</sup> displaying itself in several ways. First, all contributions to the entire series are written in three “big” west-European languages, English, German and French (but not in some others just as big, like,

<sup>16</sup> One could also say: team work as characteristic in natural sciences.

<sup>17</sup> Many efforts have been undertaken in this respect so far: two volumes on Sub-Saharan Africa, three volumes on literature in Carribean, and also other volumes devote some of their attention to the non-European literatures. *International Postmodernism* is probably the best example here since it deals in separate articles with Postmodernism in the majority of world literatures. *RPF* also devotes enough attention to the Romanticism and its resonances in non-European literatures, even in Japanese literature, which is, of course, not a “literature in European language”.

<sup>18</sup> It is worth mentioning that already Markiewicz, Zhirmunskij, and Etiemble recognized Eurocentrism as Westerneurocentrism (cf. Juvan 2004: 138).

for instance, Spanish or Russian), in *RPF* even only in English. To be sure, there are pragmatical reasons for such a decision that must not be underestimated, and I am not able to offer a good alternative here. Yet the problem is that one centrism seems to lead automatically and imperceptibly to another. For instance, the opinion obviously still prevails that everything important and valuable in the literary field happened exclusively in some west-European – and perhaps sometimes also in Russian – literatures. With the exception of the *International Postmodernism* volume<sup>19</sup> this holds true for all volumes in the series that, aiming at “truly international syntheses”, treat a particular epoch, such as the Romanticism sub-series. The large majority of articles in *RPF* treat mainly the literary activities in German, French, and English literatures, some of them including also Russian, Italian, Spanish, and Latin-American literature, all other literatures, however, as a rule remain more or less unnoticed as if they never existed. To be honest, there are few exceptions to this rule, for instance in the articles of Dieterle, Klinkert, Kümmerling-Meibauer, Isbell, and Bernauer,<sup>20</sup> and in few contributions by the authors who do not come from the “core” literary cultures and who devote (quite often unproportionally a lot of) attention to their own national literatures. Szegedy-Maszák extensively treats Hungarian authors, Guerrero-Strachan Spanish, Halse Scandinavian (or, inspecting the previous volume in the sub-series, *Nonfictional Romantic Prose*, co-edited by the Romanian scholar:<sup>21</sup> Nemoianu, Angheliescu, Spiridon Romanian, Angheliescu also Polish and Russian authors).

As long as ICLA/AILC does not change the title of the series to, for instance, “A Comparative History of Literatures in *some major* European Languages”, there is absolutely no excuse for ignoring such a large number of “marginal” European literatures, for which in

<sup>19</sup> And, of course, volumes devoted to particular geographical areas.

<sup>20</sup> However, even here there is no equal treatment of these other literatures; usually they are so to say mentioned in passing.

<sup>21</sup> Quite obviously, this was the only way for valuable scholars from the “margin” to be included as collaborators in one of the CHLEL volumes. It is namely quite indicative that as many as four contributors to this volume are Romanians.

many cases Romanticism has even been the most important period in their literary histories. The editors of the *RPF* seemed to be very well aware of this fact, since they drew attention to it already in their Introduction, and returned to it later in the *Conclusion* as follows: "As explained in the Introduction, in general our volume has ceded any more extensive work on the literatures of East and Southeast Europe to a separate project in the CHLEL series" (697). Yet this explanation cannot serve as a very good argument. First, we are obviously not dealing with a consistent, coordinated, controlled principle, since, as already mentioned above, some articles in *RPF* nevertheless touch upon these literary regions. Secondly, this "separate project" due to its "revolutionary" methodology cannot adequately – at least not coordinated with the *RPF* volume – capture the Romanticism subject.<sup>22</sup> And thirdly, Neubauer's and Cornis-Pope's project does reveal the same deficiencies in this regard as all other CHLEL volumes.<sup>23</sup> – The logical conclusion – at least for the observer from the "margin" – is that also to the editors of the Romanticism project, whether they admit it or not, European Romanticism above all means the literatures of "the golden triangle" – and occasionally some other literatures, the rest is but not really worth mentioning.

This extremely unfortunate condition is partly due to another centrism already touched upon earlier, namely the obvious conviction that good comparatists can be found first of all at the West-European or North-American universities, and consequently a large majority of contributors, with the telling exception of two, were recruited from these universities.<sup>24</sup> Here I do not want to lament this

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<sup>22</sup> Besides, there was no such "explanation" in the preceding three volumes, although the omission was the same.

<sup>23</sup> For a criticism of HLCECE from the Slovene point of view cf. Dovič 2008, Koron 2008.

<sup>24</sup> It is quite interesting to observe how the perception of this is subject to ideological overdeterminance even if at first sight it looks as a matter of neutral objective statistics. My (critical) view is a view from the "margin"; an (apologetic) view from the "centre" looks quite different. For instance, regarding the "statistics" in question, Angela Esterhammer in her review of the *RPF* observes: "While roughly a third of the contributors are based in



state of affairs, also not call the attention to the important achievements of Eastern literary scholars, to the detriment of literary studies “discovered” (by the West, of course) only decades later. I only want to demonstrate some consequences that are not in favour of the project. The editors and contributors wanted to be correct; therefore in several cases they tried at least to some extent to alleviate the Westerneurocentrism, by including some information about the “minor” literatures, which they probably gained from the secondary sources.<sup>25</sup> Let me give only one example, particularly unheard-of for a Slovene reader,<sup>26</sup> taken from the otherwise very interesting, convincing, cleverly written and in many respects also “politically correct” Isbell’s article on “Romantic novel and verse romance”. It seems a bit odd to read in the same paragraph within the same line of argument that, for instance, “Estonia has Kreutzwald’s folk epic *Kalevipoeg* [...], Greece’s Solomos is mainly a lyric poet [...] Ukraine has Shevchenko’s nationalistic Cossack verse. Serbo-Croatian has at least two folk epics [...]” (510), “Czech has Ján Kollár’s expanding sonnet cycle *Slávy dcera* [...], narrating love and national sentiments [...] and Karel Hynek Mácha’s *Máj* [...], a Byronic verse romance [...] Hungarian has folk epics” (511) – on the other hand, however, “Latvia and Lithuania, Rumania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Macedonia and Albania have national stirrings in the period but no romances” (510). I do not intend to go into a detailed demonstration of all “curiosities” included in this paragraph. Rather, I shall limit myself to what disturbs the most a reader appertaining to my own,

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the United States and another third in German-speaking Europe, the team as a whole is thoroughly international« (51). From my point of view this is not at all such a good score. Let me just mention that the entire Eastern Europe (from Russia to the Balkans, thus the region that “contributed” to our discipline such distinguished scholars as – and schools as – the Russian Formalism, Prague Structuralism, Ingarden, Bakhtin, Lotman, Konstantinovič, Āurišin, Zhirmunskij, Lukács, even Wellek, to mention just some classics) is represented by only two (sic!) contributors located in this area!

<sup>25</sup> My following examples demonstrate the limits of Moretti’s proposal to study world literature on the basis of secondary sources.

<sup>26</sup> And I’m quite positive that readers, coming from other “minor” literary cultures, could find similar objections.

Slovene literary culture. Namely, why do all the above mentioned national literatures have either “folk epic” or “verse romance” or “sonnet cycle” or “nationalistic verse” or authors that are “lyric poets”, while Slovenia (and other nations cited in the same line, sharing their marginality) only has “national stirrings [...] but no romances”, and, obviously, nothing else – even though Slovene literature, for instance, in the epoch of Romanticism that is of crucial importance in Slovene literary history, also had “a lyrical poet, a sonnet cycle, a folk epic or verse romance”, all this not in some marginal appearance but in the person of the most important national poet France Prešern, who did not deserve even to be mentioned, let alone to be treated in any of the five volumes of the *Romantic project*, although, of course, entries on him can be found in every decent (English, German, French, Italian etc.) reference book (including an extensive article on easily accessible Wikipedia), and although it goes without saying that, regarding his verse epic *Krst pri Savici*, “... Prešeren, dem größten Dichter der Slowenen und Schöpfer der slowenischen Literatursprache, ist mit dieser formvollendeten Verserzählung der Anschluss an die europäische romantische Literatur gelungen” (Kindlers Literaturlexikon IV 803).

I must admit that I am not adherent of these radical “postmodern” interventions in literary historiography<sup>27</sup> that tend to minimize or completely annihilate each difference between the “centre” and the “margin”. There can be no doubt about the fact that in some literatures, Romanticism appeared earlier, while in some others (much) later, and that (whether this seems to us justly or not) the “central” literatures most often exhibited immediate influence on the “marginal” ones. Therefore I do accept as a necessary evil that in accordance with this, the “major” literatures have the lion’s share in a volume, aimed at a presentation of the Romanticism within the frame of the CHLEL. Yet at the same time we should not forget that “smaller” literatures are in the same extent the irremovable part of the phenomenon called Romanticism as the “bigger” ones and that in

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<sup>27</sup> Here, I believe, I share my views with Gillespie who in this context in one of his brilliant essays discusses the “postmodern revisionists” (Gillespie 2004: 56).

the literary histories of the former, Romanticism sometimes played an even more decisive role than in the literary histories of the latter. Even more, very often “smaller” literatures developed authentic versions of Romanticism that enriched and extended its merely “western” image. In other words: Romanticism is Romanticism of the “central” as well as “peripheral” literatures.<sup>28</sup> Without the later, its image is incomplete, especially if we understand literary history in terms of *intertextuality* and *interliterarity*, and not as colonialism. And it seems to be quite reasonable to expect that such a literary history would be the most important aim of CHLEL. Yet somehow these expectations do not fulfil.

Of course, it is easy to imagine that many of deficiencies mentioned above are due to pragmatic or organizational problems. I shall return to this a bit later. Right now I want to stress that I am quite aware of the fact that from the viewpoint of the “centre” such observations look exaggerated and unnecessary. But exactly this is the point I am trying to make here: from the perspective of the “margin”, the things look different,<sup>29</sup> yet this different perspective is

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<sup>28</sup> After all, if the editors found interesting the resonance of Romanticism in Japan, why did they not find it even more interesting to explore the Romanticism in “smaller” European literatures; namely, the volume I review here is entitled “Romantic Prose Fiction”, without the additional subtitle (for instance: “in great” or “Western” or both “literatures”), and, as already mentioned, is a part of the series “Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages”, and not “in Great European” or “in West-European Languages”.

<sup>29</sup> For instance – to give one more example, admittedly not taken from the *RPF*, but tightly connected to it, which I use here for the sake of its demonstrative clarity – Angela Esterhammer in her review of *RPF* observes that “dozens of national literatures are represented in the volume” (51), which in itself sounds quite reasonable and not subject to any doubt, while in reality is simply an overstatement, unfortunately disclosing the still prevailing westeurocentrism. “Latvia and Lithuania, Rumania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Macedonia and Albania have national stirrings in the period but no romances” (510) – the only passage in the volume where most of these literatures appear – can hardly be called a “representation”; at the utmost one could say that “dozens of national literatures are *mentioned* in the volume”; the only ones “represented” are English, German, French, Latin American, Spanish, to some extend also Italian, Russian, Hungarian, Romanian.

completely absent in the entire project "Romanticism". There exists only the perspective of "centre". One simply has to agree with Marijan Dović, who in his review of Neubauer's project states that there is a "tradition of European comparative literature that is only seemingly supra-national, while in reality its latent motive is tracing the circles of influence of big cultures and drawing the lines of their expansions, only passively recorded by the smaller cultures, which with greater or smaller delay join to it" (Dović 167).

Such a statement does not imply that we should simply invert such a condition. It does not intend to violently equalize the "central" and "marginal" literatures in the sense of value levelling. According to Ivo Pospišil, the "idea of a priori equality of all national literatures, represented by their best works" (141), is wrong. Yet on the other hand, one also "has to simultaneously reject the desire to unify the value system of the literary field in the way that one model is favoured as a sample, worth of imitation" (141). This centralist perspective, this out-of-date and incorrect tradition is, unfortunately, still persistent, and even the newest projects of CHLEL are not completely immune against it.

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I am aware of the fact that it is much easier to criticise than to be constructive, and that, when the battle is over, everyone is a general. It is therefore right to show a more constructive attitude in the conclusion. Despite the above mentioned deficiencies I still believe that *RPF* is a valuable, in many respects quite informative, carefully conceived and serious monograph that – despite the objections raised – importantly enriches our image of Romanticism. The majority of my objections actually derive from the fact that the volume is a part of a larger whole, consequently put into a particular context, the concept of CHLEL, which in many respects proved to be problematic. In my view the difficulties connected to this huge project are mainly on two levels: on the conceptual and on the "executional", "organizational" one. None of these difficulties is irremediable.

There is not much to say about the organizational-executional deficiencies. Particularly the criticism, coming from non-Western

scholars, points to the circumstance that many of these problems are actually due to the (not yet overcome) westerneurocentrism, still prevalent in the results of this important project. Once this will change, it should not be too difficult to organize a competent, internationally more balanced teams of collaborators, or, if this is not possible, at least an international system of reviewers, who would check, each for its own geographical or cultural region, the proposed contributions.<sup>30</sup> In this way the editors (“the centre”) would hopefully get rid of their obvious mistrust of collaborators from the “periphery”, which would result in broadening the circle of potential collaborators as well as the areas of research involved.

The consolidation of the conceptual problems seems to present much more difficulties. The fact that the CHLEL volumes for some time now lack the general editorial foreword probably denotes that the initial unitary concept gradually evaporated. Here, comparative literary historiography pays the tribute to never-ending process of fast paradigm shifts that present huge problems for long-term projects (particularly for the team-work). Comparative literature has to continue to take part in the ongoing debates on literary-historiographic methodology and to propose new approaches, which would help us to understand literary cultures, literature’s textuality and contextuality better than we do now. In short, the pluralism in the field of literary historiography is a necessity nowadays. Yet such pluralism does not exclude traditional literary-historical syntheses as planned by the pioneers of the CHLEL series. They are as much irreplaceable as the emerging alternative literary histories. In fact, they ought to be – they ought to take the burden and responsibility for being – this central reference that instead of incompatibilities would seek for a consensus and thus create a point of reference for every discussion, also, of course, for an alternative or critical one. The consolidation of terminological discrepancies would not be an unimportant task of such literary history. This sort of project would

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<sup>30</sup> Despite some hesitations, in the age of the Internet this really should not present too big a problem. Examples of a very well coordinated international cooperation already exist, for instance the series “Reception of British Authors in Europe”.

indeed be subject to various policies of power, but so are even the recent critical revisionist proposals. One of the most unpleasant objections to the treatment I propose would be that such a concept is out-of-date, which, of course, is not very difficult to argue. Yet as already mentioned, moderate conservativeness would do no harm at least to the long-term projects and to projects aimed at “truly international synthesis”. The question, however, is, whether there is enough courage for such an enterprise in contemporary comparative literary historiography.

Compared to the “Literary Cultures” sub-series, which in my view fulfils some other, no less important mission, the *RPF* can be understood as a moderate move into this direction, a step that I certainly welcome.

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*Rewriting an Older Genre:  
The Example of Norman Tutorow's Addendum  
to the New*

Norman E. Tutorow. *The Encounter of Jesus and the Atheist as Told by the Centurion Cornelius Nepos IV: A Tale of Everyman; Roman*. Half Moon Bay, California: Chadwick House Publishers, 2010. xviii + 697 pages. ISBN 0-9674-3533-1.

Norman Tutorow is highly esteemed as a meticulous researcher in the history of the American West; indeed, his work in certain special areas such as the succession of land titles is considered to have forensic value. He is probably best known today for his two-volume classic, *The Governor: The Life and Legacy of Leland Stanford, a California Colossus* (2004). What then should literary scholars make of this massively learned book, set in antiquity, whose title openly flaunts its status as fiction, given that it is written by a "pure" historian, our contemporary, yet engages in an elaborate play of irony. Right at the start this challenge is embodied in the blatantly pseudo-documentary term "autobiography" as well as in the German or French term *roman*, which straddles English "novel" and "romance." On the one hand, Tutorow carries out a kind of Cervantine game by qualifying the chapters through a rich assortment of anachronistic epigraphs and by bracketing them between the historical and terminological data of the "Preface" and a more argumentative "Postlegomenon" when the outer editorial voice returns in firm command to recapitulate the larger history down to our times. On the other hand, as we read forward in the inner tale – about meetings between Jesus and the intellectual centurion Cornelius at an Essene establishment in July of 68 C.E., a momentous year in the struggle of the Jews against Roman power – we recognize that Tutorow has marshaled an impressive apparatus of historical lore, with a maximum effort to



calibrate his fiction and its ancient context as precisely as feasible. Sometimes he employs Jesus, sometimes the centurion as an internal narrator to relate historical subject matters or to characterize various philosophic and religious views and practices from all around the ancient world and more particularly those connected with Judaism.

It is an impressive repertory, and in the religious leader and the cultured military officer Tutorow has invented spiritually capacious, forceful discussants to represent the contest of themes and choices as these existed in the first century of the Common Era – of course, filtered inevitably in retrospect by the outer author. This is not a Dan Brown mystery steeped in Gnostic hysteria which purports to unravel the secret of a controlling cabal rooted in the past; rather, it is openly a fiction that seeks to support a philosophic perspective. Paramount, in Tutorow's view, is a still unfulfilled need to emerge from the religious story, however noble some of its attributes, and to accept something like a humane moral atheism (as distinct from any nihilism). The standpoint is akin to the sort of Enlightenment deism which the reformist rationalist Voltaire propounded in many guises in philosophic tales (e.g., *Zadig* [1747], *Memnon* [1750], *Micro-mégas* [1752]) and in lengthy open criticism of Judaism and Christianity in his huge *Dictionnaire Philosophique* (1764). Voltaire's earlier *Le fanatisme, ou Mahomet le prophète* (1741) was immediately suspected of being an attack on the baleful aspects of the Judeo-Christian legacy of Europe. The vitalist D. H. Lawrence, whom Tutorow cites, counts among the more immediate predecessors who were more daring in presenting an unorthodox Jesus. The *Autobiography* reaffirms the assertion that natural human love is a high value, but it avoids the exotic *sensualism* of Lawrence's *The Man Who Died* (originally titled *The Escaped Cock*, 1929), which exploits the Egyptian craze of the twenties and thirties.

Tutorow's background includes undergraduate training in the ancient classics, including biblical studies, and advanced degrees in philosophy, history, Spanish, and German. He happily takes advantage of certain recently popularized topics, most notably materials come to light in the Dead Sea scrolls, the resurfacing and new discoveries of apocryphal "sacred" books, and speculation about the status of Mary Magdalene and Jesus's family relationships. In

*Autobiography*, Jesus, who has survived the Crucifixion, is a gentle, matured, reflective leader and father, inseparable from his wife Mary. He resembles the protagonist of a *Bildungsroman* who – thanks to Tutorow’s intricately crafted reconstructions of biblical and other exegetical lore – has the opportunity of relating his whole life’s course in a coherent narrative to an appreciative non-believer, a worthy rationalist. Romantic and early modernist writers (e.g., Jean Paul Richter, Vigny, Nerval, Rilke, Jeffers) sometimes pictured Jesus as a suffering spiritual hero in intimate close-ups, and he was accorded respect as a protagonist of values by many nineteenth-century philosophers of culture and religion, albeit usually classified as a particular anthropological phenotype (e.g., Schopenhauer, Feuerbach, Renan, Strauss). Tutorow radically humanizes Jesus by showing him not only as an honorable evaluator of his own past, but as a thoughtful discussant who is quite able to hold his own in an extensive discourse with Cornelius on fundamental questions regarding the nature and purpose of life and the drama of history.

The pairing of voices in an examination of “our” human estate is familiar in modern literature. Thomas Mann’s use of the far-ranging debates between Settembrini and Naphta in *Der Zauberberg* (1924) comes readily to mind as an example of this device when it is internalized as a substructure. The split between the commentating narrator Zeitblom and the narrated story of his artist friend Leverkühn in Mann’s *Dr. Faustus* (1947) exhibits one of numerous variants of the mirroring practiced in *Autobiography*. Furthermore, there is a long tradition which antedates the role both of Jesus and of Cornelius as correlated, yet contrastive educational protagonists in Tutorow’s *roman*. While Flaubert follows the (in many respects obtuse) “hero” Frédéric Moreau more of the time in *L’éducation sentimentale* (1869), he pairs Moreau principally with his old school chum Charles Deslauriers, and their lives reflect directly and indirectly the shiftings of French society. Tutorow’s Cornelius seeks out Jesus more in the manner of the explicit educational pilgrim or quester whom we know from a long string of European novels and romances. In this way, not Jesus as the object of the search, but Cornelius turns out to be the “stealth” figure whose investigation or discovery more adequately prefigures the hoped-for modern mind.

It is helpful to recall a few educational romances set in antiquity in order to appreciate just how Tutorow inserts his fiction into this long line of works constituting an accommodating flexible genre. John Lyly's *Euphues, or the Anatomy of Wit* (1579) represents more or less the standard core in the late Renaissance. In it we follow a young man of the Athenian golden age as he explores the societies and repertory of his times, including dangerous or negative aspects as in corrupt Naples. In Baltasar Gracián's *El Criticón* (1619), a tutor (Minerva in disguise) guides a sometimes erring prince Telemachus through a variety of societies and philosophies toward a higher standard embodied in Roman civilization, a stand-in for later Christianity. François Fénelon's *Les aventures de Télémaque* (1695) employs this same basic model, exploring various politics and cultural choices behind which we recognize allusions to the author's contemporary world. In *Die Geschichte des Agathon* (1766 ff.), Christoph Martin Wieland expands the encounters of his protagonist with the variety of societies and philosophies of the ancient Greek world into a psychological novel that simultaneously reflects the problematics of Enlightenment sensibility. Skipping over an abundance of illustrations, we can recognize that, in the pseudo-futuristic novel *Giles Goat-Boy; or, the Revised New Syllabus* (1966), John Barth uses the educational pathway of his protagonist also to comment on the dilemmas and choices which humanity faces in the second half of the twentieth century.

Two further examples will serve to highlight that the passion of the historian long ago found a compatible vehicle in the romance of education transposed onto antiquity. Daniel Casper von Lohenstein's compendious novel *Arminius* (1689–90), an elaborate *roman à clef*, is set in the axial first century C.E. and uses a rich mixture of real and invented figures to display in extraordinary and complex detail the nature of the doomed Roman empire, the history and character of various peoples of Europe, Asia, and Africa, and the contending philosophies and religions at the threshold of what will become the Christian era. Weaving his way through the many cultures as a first-hand explorer is the Persian prince Zeno who encounters other exceptional spiritual seekers such as the Brahmin priest Zarmar and learns important, virtually buried facts about great figures of the yet

remoter past such as Prometheus. What makes the *Arminius* even more challenging is that Lohenstein expected his contemporaries to detect sometimes multiple later and modern identities implied behind the novel's actual or fictional characters and to discern behind the ancient contest of ideas and politics the cultural evolution and current state of things in modern Europe. An analogous vast project in ancient history is Jean-Jacques Barthélemy's erudite, encyclopedic *Les voyages du jeune Anarcharsis en Grèce* (1788), set in the age of Pericles and Alexander. In a new edition of *Arminius* (1731), Lohenstein's admiring editors appended a huge index to aid readers in deciphering the modern import of its referential system. Barthélemy did his readers the favor of footnoting the ancient dating, monetary values, names, and other information page by page.

In effect, Tutorow organizes the most relevant supporting information – as known or conjectured in the light of hindsight around 2000 C.E. – and puts this in the “Preface” and “Postlegomenon.” That allows him to telescope together the contest of ideas in the encounter between Jesus and Cornelius in the chapters and to focus intensively on the dramatic convergence of historical forces and impulses in the struggle between the Jews and Romans in the late first century C.E. (The rough analogy in Lohenstein's *Arminius* is the struggle between the Germanic peoples and the Romans to be the legitimate inheritors of a future mandate of civilization.) Naturally, in ostensibly “adding” to, and “correcting,” the New Testament he is confronting an enormous textual edifice which over time has grown exponentially through midrashic accretion – a proliferation beyond the “doubling” of scripture in the movement out of the foundations of the Judaic Old Testament to the (eventually) Christian New Testament as a refounding. Thus the *Autobiography* is proudly a miniaturized “newer” testament that attempts to point the way toward superseding many aspects of the enormous inheritance of textual habits which the bible tradition has imprinted on Eurocentric cultures – a subject treated in major studies such as Northrop Frye's *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* (1981). In “rewriting” Scripture, in no small measure against untold generations of preceding exegetes, but also in selective agreement with more recent biblical scholarship, Tutorow is in fact aligning himself with

one of the most traditional modes of authorship. For many readers, this act of attempting to claim “authority” under the license of ludic irony will amount to hubris. But the interchange between Jesus and Cornelius will strike others – including believers whom Erasmus, Rabelais, and writers down to Mann have taught the art of humanizing irony – as a welcome heightening of awareness of important issues.

Not a negligible percentage of readers will close *Autobiography* with the thought: This ought to be converted into a movie. The reasons are obvious. In “rewriting” tradition, *Autobiography* – with its skillful blending of history, philosophy, religion, and literature – engages probably the major plot line in the grand narrative of Western civilization. Because of the wealth of very accessible motifs and themes, most educated persons will keenly sense that Tutorow is drawing them into the great conversation over the centuries, even though relatively few will possess the breadth of expertise needed for evaluating in any detail the significance of the novel’s multifarious references. (Unlike the novelist, most of his readers today lack, for example, training in the “sacred” languages – Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.) Hence here we see how, once again, “rewriting” is a winning strategy by which an author of our day can succeed in marrying popular literature and serious scholarship. The question, how a screen writer might extract a specific outline of such a rich book, should remind us of the “Preface” and “Postlegomenon” in which Tutorow has, in essence, faced the ultimate issue: What is “my” interpretation of this great heritage. Each reader can have the pleasure of reaching his or her conclusion.

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*Boletín Galego de Literatura*. Dir. Anxo Tarrío Varela. Universidade de Santiago de Compostela. 41–42/ 2009. 369 pp. ISSN 0214–9117. The issue, mainly in Galician and Spanish, gathers a great number of „auto-poetics” by a variety of writers, published in previous issues of the journal.

*Cuadernos Americanos*. Dir. Adalberto Santana Hernández, Ed. María Elena Rodríguez Ozán. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. 129/ 2009. 226 pp. ISSN 0185–156X. From the area of literary and cultural research, it contains the following articles: B. Colombi, Jorge Luis Borges y el arte narrativo; W. C. Costa, Las traducciones de la *Antología de La literatura fantástica* de Borges, Bioy Casares y Silvina Ocampo; L. Weinberg, Borges y Martínez Estrada: diferencias y semejanzas.

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*Recherche Littéraire / Literary Research*. Vol. 25, 2009. ISSN 0849-0570. (Ed. John Burt Foster, Jr.) The journal in its new phase of

publication includes a great variety of reviews about recent collective and individual works in the field of comparative literature.

*Rilce*. 25.2. Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 2009. ISSN 0213–2370. (Dir. Víctor García Ruiz). From the area of literary research, it contains the following articles: M. A. Arancet Ruda, Poesía actual de Buenos Aires. Opuestos semejantes: Mairal y Gútiz; V. Calmes, Alienación cultural y dislocación de la subjetividad en *El amante bilingüe* de Juan Marsé; A. Casas, Lo maravilloso y lo fantástico frente a la hegemonía realista: las formas no miméticas en los cuentistas del Mediosiglo (años 50 y 60); E. Diez, La escritura cinematográfica y el *leitmotiv*; G. Insausti, ¿Revolucionario y burgués?: el teatro de Cernuda; J. M. Soldevilla Albertí, Pedro Víctor Debrigode y la novela popular española; M. L. Suárez, Despojo, desnudo y yo: Julia Álvarez frente a las marcas de la memoria.

*Rilce*. 26.1. Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 2010. ISSN 0213–2370. (Dir. Víctor García Ruiz). It is a special edition under the title “Rompa con dulces números el canto: homenaje a Antonio Carreño (eds. C. J. Leahy, A. Sánchez Jiménez) with articles in Spanish and English dedicated to the “Golden Age” literature by J. Amor y Vázquez, I. Arellano, L. F. Avilés, S. Fernández Mosquera, E. García Santo-Tomás, L. Iglesias Feijoo, J. Lara Garrido, Y. Novo, G. Ribbans, E. del Río Parra, J. Roses, V. Ryjik, L. Schwartz, J. Vélez-Sainz, W. Worden.

*The Atlantic Literary Review*. (Ed. Rama Kundu). Volume 9, Number 4, 2008. ISBN 978–81.269–0836–3. It contains articles (mainly on English and Indian English) literature by S. Maji, P. Roy, Z. Fonioková, S. R. Moosavinia, N. Sahu, B. Mishra, M. Madhusudhana Rao, D. Chakravarti & G. A. Ghanshyam, S. Haldar, R. Phutela.

*The Atlantic Literary Review*. (Ed. Rama Kundu). Volume 9, Number 3, 2008. ISBN 978–81.269–0836–3. It contains articles (mainly on English and Indian English) literature by H. D. Raviya, R. Nandi, S. K. Padhy, B. Mishra, N. Sahu, M. D. Herrero, B. Pourgharib, Y. Somalantha, P. Roy.

- The Atlantic Literary Review*. (Ed. Rama Kundu). Volume 10, Number 1, 2009. ISBN 978-81.269-0836-3. It contains articles (mainly on English and Indian English) literature by P. Mishra, S. Moitra-Mukherjee, A. Bhattacharya, U. Sumathy, S. Tiwari, S. Hasan, A. Baul, P. C. Pradhan, A. Choubey, B. Mahanta, K. Bhat, R. Thakur.
- The Atlantic Literary Review*. (Ed. Rama Kundu). Volume 10, Number 2, 2009. ISBN 978-81.269-0836-3. It contains articles (mainly on English and Indian English) literature by C. J. George, I. Chattopadhyay, R. Saraswathi, J. S. R. Savarimuttu, B. Naikar, G. D. Savio, R. M. Patil, B. Mishra, S. Sinha & V. Singh, M. Bhattacharya, P. M. Singh.
- Tópicos del Seminario*. 21. Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. 2009. ISSN 165-1200. (Dir. María Isabel Filinich). Under the title „Dialogismo, monologismo y polifonía“ it contains articles in Spanish by F. Akcelrud Durão, V. Ivanovici, B. Pulido Herráez, P. O. Arán, M. Pino, A. L. Carrillo, F. Perus.
- Tópicos del Seminario*. 22. Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. 2009. ISSN 165-1200. (Dir. María Isabel Filinich). Under the title “Los límites del texto sagrado“ it contains articles in Spanish by R. Dorra, L. Panier, U. Volli, M. Constantini, L. Báez-Rubí, I. Cabrera, Z. Yébenes Escardó.
- Urbes europaeae. Modelos e imaginarios urbanos para el siglo XXI*. Javier Gómez-Montero and Christina Johanna Bischoff, Eds. Kiel: Verlag Ludwig, 2009. 206 pp. ISBN 978-3-86935-007-3. It contains articles in Spanish and French about the topic of town in European culture, by A. Abuín, J. A. Aldrey Vázquez, U. Apalategi, A.-M. Autissier, C. J. Bischoff, J. Gómez-Montero, M. del Río and E. Sánchez García.
- Vega, Lope de. *La Gatomaquia*. Versión libre de Pedro Villora y José Padilla. Edición de Sol Montoya. Madrid: Editorial Fundamentos, 2009. 234 pp. ISBN 978-84-245-1190-6. (It contains a number of articles about theatrical adaptation of classical works in our days, as well as a modern adaptation of *La Gatomaquia*).
- Verae Lectiones. *Estudios de crítica textual y edición de textos Griegis*. Eds. M. Sanz Morales M. Librán Moreno. Universidad de Huelva, 2009. 414 pp., ISBN 978-94-92679-14-0.

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