

ANDREJ ZAHORÁK: Intercultural Aspect in Translation and Reception of Precedent Phenomena

Berlin: Peter Lang, 2019. 132 pp. ISBN 978-3-631-78107-4 (Print), E-ISBN 978-3-631-78671-0 (E-Book)

The monograph *Intercultural Aspect in Translation and Reception of Precedent Phenomena* by Andrej Zahorák was published by the Peter Lang publishing house as the 20th volume of the Studies in Linguistics, Anglophone Literatures and Cultures series. It is a result of the author's long-term research of reception and translation of Russian literature as part of an intercultural dialogue of three cultural spaces – Russian, Slovak, and German.

While the topic of the monograph is – from the point of view of translation studies – discussed rather often, it is nonetheless still productive. Research in the area always brings new and useful findings, which lead to a deeper understanding of complex translation processes brought about by the need to address – in Lotman's terms – the tension between “we” and “them” in intercultural dialogue. This monograph can be taken as the result of modern thinking about translation, that rests in understanding the translator and the interpreter as mediators between languages, and especially as cultural mediators. Modern thinking about translation does not see linguistic and culturological aspects in opposition to each other, but rather attempts to integrate them. An integration of these approaches can be seen in A. Zahorák's monograph.

The monograph focuses on researching specifics of translation and reception of intercultural units, which the author considers to be precedent phenomena, in three linguistic and cultural spaces – Russian, Slovak, and German, with Russian culture serving as the original framework. Slovak and German cultures constitute the target cultures. The material base is comprised of postmodern Russian literature, specifically *Moscow to the End of the Line* by Venedikt Erofeev (*Moskva-Petushki*, 1973) and its translations

into Slovak: *Moskva-Petušky* (by Jaroslav Marušiak, 1989) and German: *Die Reise nach Petuschki* (by Natascha Spitz, 1987). They provided the author with a sufficient number of suitable examples for the present research – for identification and complex analysis of precedent phenomena (linguoculturemes) in the original text and its two translations.

The two opening chapters are of a theoretical nature. In the first chapter, “Culture, Interculturality, Translation as Conceptual Framework of the Research Problem”, the author focuses on defining culture and understanding interdisciplinarity, culture in relation to language and translation, the concepts of translatability and untranslatability in relation to culture, and the cultural aspect in translation studies as well. The author considers various aspects of the term “culture” while introducing in more detail the most significant theories by authors such as Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, or Hofstede, who see culture as a multi-layer model. However, the author also considers how other authors, such as Beheyt, Rakšányiová, Borofsky, Bouman, and Průcha understand the term. Special attention is paid to the relationship between culture, language and translation. The author does not take into consideration only foreign scholars, but also very aptly integrates the opinions of Slovak theorists, specifically of Peter Liba, who in his article “Kultúra a preklad” (Culture and Translation, in E. Gromová, ed., *Preklad a kultúra* – Translation and Culture, 2004, 11–30) highly inventively discusses this relationship and writes about the translation process as an intra-cultural convention, which is derived from the fact of cultural need and interest. Zahorák further quotes Liba, who considers the translation process as a “part of such a cultural activity that is in constant tension between creation

and formation (of something new), between rationality of the stability of values and the spontaneity of acquiring something new, foreign, distant and close. From the point of view of culture, literary translation is such a creative act, that is, being created. The fact of translation and translation goes on. The translator does not stand in between 'incompatible' oppositions but operates within this relationship" (2004, 15, in Zahorák 2019, 17). In this part the author proves to be highly knowledgeable about the area of research and to have excellent awareness of works discussing the cultural aspect in translation and developing culturological aspect in translation studies by foreign and Slovak authors alike, e.g. Vermeer, Holz-Mänttari, Even-Zohar, Toury, Reiss, Nord, Lefevere, Lambert, Bassnett, Baker, Hatim, Katan, Komissarov, Barchudarov, Lotman, Levý, and in Slovakia, Popovič, Vilikovský, Koli, Keníž, B. Hochel, Bednárová, Kusá, Vajdová, Žitný, Mügllová, Gromová, Djovčoš, Janecová, Fedorko, Tellinger, etc.

In the next part of the chapter the author focuses on intercultural communication, its definition, the intercultural competence of the translator, intercultural dimension (focusing especially on Geert Hofstede's intercultural comparison of value systems), and barriers in intercultural communication caused by both linguistic and cultural differences. He also stresses that the modern understanding of translation is based on perceiving translators and interpreters as cultural mediators, who overcome not only linguistic, but especially cultural barriers.

In the second chapter of the theoretical part the author focuses on the problem of precedentness from the perspective of cognition and culture. He discusses new approaches to studying language oriented toward an ethnoculture that modifies and represents language at the same time. The author states the opinions of multiple researchers, who point out the interdisciplinary focus of current linguistic research. He states that especially in Russian linguistics a new field of research – linguoculturology

– has been forming since the end of the 20th century. It researches the two-way relationship and influence of culture and language and refers to the most significant researchers in Russian (V.V. Krasnych, V.A. Maslova, V.V. Vorobiov) and Slovak (J. Sipko, I. Dulebová). Special attention is paid to Sipko's understanding of linguoculturology citing his monograph *Teoretické a sociálno-komunikačné východiská lingvokulturológie* (Theoretical and Socio-Communicational Foundations of Linguoculturology, 2011). In considering the relationship between language and culture, the author also uses the term linguistic picture of the world, which appears in works of significant thinkers from the antiquity to the present day. The author also considers the terms precedentness and precedent phenomena to be central in regards to his research, citing works of multiple Russian linguists, who elaborated it from two perspectives: communicative-pragmatic (N.S. Valgina, K. Karaulov) and cognitive (D.B. Gudkov, V.V. Krasnych, and I.V. Zacharenko). The author reaches a conclusion based on the theoretical works in the field of linguoculturology and cognitive linguistics that precedentness or precedent phenomena carry cognitive meaning for individuals and linguistic communities and are being constantly renewed in language and sign systems. The author considers them to be fundamental elements of a cognitive basis and to represent a sum of knowledge and concepts of the representatives of a particular linguistic community.

The third chapter, "Translation and Reception of Precedent Phenomena in Three Linguistic Communities and Cultural Contexts", is oriented practically. In it, the author focuses on a comparative analysis of precedent phenomena in the work *Moscow to the End of the Line* by V. Erofeev and its translations into Slovak and German. In other words, the chapter is concerned with translation and the reception of precedent phenomena in three linguistic communities and three cultural contexts. In the introduction of this chapter – referring to I. Dule-

bová's claims in her monograph *Precedentné fenomény súčasného ruského jazyka. Interkultúrny a lingvodidaktický aspekt* (Precedent Phenomena in the Contemporary Russian Language. The intercultural and Linguo-didactic Aspect, 2015, 14) – the author appropriately points out the fact that “[t]he theory of precedentness and precedent phenomena is closely related to the theory of intertextuality. Since precedentness was based on the theory of intertextuality, it helps to develop it and refine it terminologically. Precedent phenomena ultimately ‘represent’ the phenomenon of intertextuality” (47). Terminologically speaking, the two terms are rather close to each other since they refer to the same phenomena in the text. However, we respect the author's conception as it is rooted in a certain spectrum of opinions on the issue. The author examines precedent names, precedent texts, precedent testimonies, and precedent situations in the original text and how these phenomena were translated into Slovak and German and attempts to apply the theoretical knowledge established in the theoretical part of the monograph in the analysis. Based on the different historical/cultural contexts or linguistic differences, the author assumed the German translation would exhibit a greater number of losses of expression and changes on the cultural-communicative level. However, the comparative analysis showed that is not the case. On the contrary, as far as the precedent phenomena

go, it was the Slovak translation that exhibited a greater number of losses. The comparative analysis confirmed the commonly known fact that the translator must be prepared for the interpretative phase of the translation process in regard to his knowledge, but knowledge of translation studies is not sufficient – relevant knowledge of linguoculturology is also necessary. In any case, as A. Zahorák's monograph also proves, questions of culture and intercultural constitute an important part of translation studies, which currently appear to be an interdisciplinary field integrating many various fields of research, such as linguoculturology.

We consider A. Zahorák's monograph to be an interesting addition to translation studies research as it integrates multiple disciplines, uniting culture, language, and translation. His monograph draws attention to the multitude of possible approaches to translation studies research, confirming its viability. We see the merit of the monograph in the breadth of the research of the topic as well as in bridging western and eastern “concepts”. Its publication in English by Peter Lang constitutes another positive, as it contributes to highlighting less known opinions of Central and East European research and conceptions in Western Europe.

Translated from Slovak by Matej Martinkovič

EDITA GROMOVÁ

Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra
Slovak Republic

GERALD JANECEK (ed.): Staging the Image: Dmitry Prigov as Artist and Writer
Bloomington, Indiana: Slavica, 2018. 179 pp. ISBN 978-0-89357-462-8

Dmitry Prigov (1940–2007), one of the key figures of Moscow conceptualism, was a writer, artist, and performer. Since the 1990s, his oeuvre has been studied worldwide. The collective volume *Staging the Image: Dmitry Prigov as Artist and Writer*, edited by Gerald Janeczek, professor emeritus from the University of Kentucky, consists of ten studies. The volume is based on

the international workshop Prigov – Multimedia, Performative, Translingual: Dmitry Prigov's Legacy as an Artist and Writer, held in Prague in December 2014.

Prigov's oeuvre is often defined as a compact performance. Prigov himself called it the project D.A.P. (Dmitry Aleksandrovich Prigov). Prigov's total performance was concerned with the question of his own subjec-