

person and that of a researcher. Száz never fails to mediate, translate, and interpret the Hasidic worldview and terminology necessary for those not familiar with them, while also confidently and effortlessly commanding the relevant terms and concepts, and readily guiding readers through the maze of the world of Hasidism. Besides account-

ing for the literary-critical aspects, Száz also manages to interpret these powerful literary works as narratives of remembrance.

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JÁN JAMBOR – ZUZANA MALINOVSKÁ – JAKUB SOUČEK (eds.): Rodina ako spoločenský problém v súčasnom švajčiarskom a slovenskom kriminálnom románe [Family as a social problem in contemporary Swiss and Slovak crime fiction]
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The 2022 collected volume *Rodina ako spoločenský problém v súčasnom švajčiarskom a slovenskom kriminálnom románe* (Family as a social problem in contemporary Swiss and Slovak crime fiction), edited by Ján Jambor, Zuzana Malinová, and Jakub Souček, was preceded by two other thematic volumes, which also discuss how Swiss and Slovak authors treat current social problems in their crime fiction texts: the issue of the journal *World Literature Studies* 2/2020 focused on “The Representation of Current Social Issues in the Contemporary Crime Novel” edited by Jambor and Malinová; and the collected volume in German, French, and Slovak edited by Jambor, Souček, and Monika Zázrivcová in 2021. Starting from a chosen social phenomenon, namely the family, the authors attempt to show that “the representation of the family [...] captures diverse and explosive social problems of two concrete countries (Switzerland and Slovakia) as well as of the globalized world” (4; here and further trans. by J.T.).

At first glance, one is struck by the effort to analyze the topic from as many points of view as possible. The articles were contributed by university lecturers who work in the fields of German studies, Romance studies, English/American studies, and Slovak studies. Three authors belong to the lit-

erary and three to the linguistic orientation of the above-mentioned fields. The articles are written in Slovak and deal with a German-, French- and Slovak-language crime novel written after 1990: Swiss-German literature is represented by the novels of Hansjörg Schneider (1938), Swiss-French literature by Joseph Incardona (1969) and Marc Voltenauer (1973), and Slovak literature by Dominik Dán (1955) and Daniela Kapitáňová (1956). Although all three Swiss authors can boast of a highly appreciated and popular oeuvre in their home countries, Slovak translations are only available for the first of them, since Ján Jambor, co-editor of this volume and author of the first chapter included, has translated novels by Schneider into Slovak.

Given the multilingualism of the analyzed works, it should be positively emphasized that all direct quotations from the primary and secondary literature are placed in the running text in Slovak translation; the original versions can be found in the footnotes. Theoretical terms are also used in the original language if they refer to a specific scientific tradition and have no established counterpart in Slovak.

When a collected volume claims to examine a certain topic, supported by several philological disciplines, it is reasonable to ask

which methods are chosen to achieve this objective. Already in the introduction, one learns that “an interdisciplinary approach that responds to current impulses from the social sciences and culture (for example, sociology, historiography, political science, psychology, philosophy or media theory) is most suitable for adequate coverage of the representation of the family in the contemporary crime novel. However, this approach must reflect the specifics of the literary text as an independent statement” (5).

Ján Jambor’s article, “Rodina obeť a rodina páchatelky v kriminálnom románe Hansjörga Schneidera *Hunkeler Geheimnis* v kontexte švajčiarskej utečeneckej politiky v období národného socializmu” (The families of the victim and the perpetrator in H. Sch.’s crime novel *Hunkeler...* in the context of Swiss refugee policy during the national socialist era), draws on unpublished correspondence between Jambor and Schneider, from which he quotes passages about how Schneider wrote the novel as well as from Schneider’s biography or uses passages from promotional material from the publisher Ammann, in which Schneider comments on writing crime novels. Jambor inserts the novelist’s subjectively colored remarks into his analyses, which are based on his many years of research interest and often refers to his own previous articles, dealing for example with the reappraisal of World War II in Schneider’s crime novels. This is also anchored theoretically by recourse to the typology, genesis, and form of the crime novel genre and its analytical composition and structure. The novel *Hunkeler Geheimnis* is thus treated on a literary-historical, historical, and literary-critical level.

The following chapter by Júlia Paračková, “Jazyk a štýl v kriminálnom románe Hansjörga Schneidera *Hunkeler macht Sachen*” (Language and style in H.Sch.’s crime novel *Hunkeler...*), approaches the literary text using sociolinguistic style analysis. She draws on Jambor’s and Todorov’s definitions of the detective novel as a genre and the different types of detectives found in them.

In her textual work with the novel, she makes use of both the original and Jambor’s translation, and occasionally she addresses the choices made by the translator. Paračková asks to what extent social phenomena and problems concerning the family are reflected in the language of the novel, looking at the socio-stylistic qualities of the text and examines the lexis in relation to the linguistic register. Her analysis methodologically borrows from the work of Daniela Slančová, who outlined a linguistic process in a socio-stylistic analysis of Dán’s novel *Noc temných klamstiev* (Night of dark deceptions; 2009).

“Obraz rodiny v čiernom románe Josepha Incardonu *Derrière les panneaux il y des hommes*” (The family image in J.I.’s novel noir *Derrière...*) by Monika Zázrivcová looks at a novel that has not been translated into Slovak. The focus is on the secondary narrative level of the novel, where social problems are addressed through a family prism. According to Zázrivcová, the author creates “absent-minded, condemned, broken or non-functioning families in borderline situations that shake the foundations of family members’ existence and lead them to various pathological behaviours and actions” (81). Referring to Zuzana Malinovská’s remarks from the previous thematic volume (2021), which dealt with noir fiction by Joseph Incardona, Zázrivcová illuminates this depiction of the (non-)existing and (non-)functioning family and looks for connections between it and the causes and consequences of crimes committed (cf. 51).

Zuzana Malinovská’s article, “Rodinné tajomstvá ako jadro kriminálnej zápletky. Marc Voltenauer: *Qui a tué Heidi?* – prípadová štúdia” (Family secrets as the core of the crime story. M.V.: *Qui...?* A case study), considers the novel under analysis as a testimony to the contemporary family. She characterizes Voltenauer’s literary work and notes that he was inspired neither by the French detective novel (which has a much shorter tradition compared to the Swiss-German detective novel) nor by the noir fiction. Rather, he is seen as a successor to Charles Fer-

dinand Ramuz. The novel itself is assigned to the subgenre novel with a secret (*roman à énigme*), whose constituent features are elaborated on the basis of French-language literary studies. Particularly exciting are also the intertextual parallels with the successful novel *Perfume, the Story of a Murderer* by Patrick Süskind, which Malinovská only hinted at for lack of space.

In her chapter, “Štylistika obrazu rodiny v románe Dominika Dána *Na podpätkoch*” (Stylistics of the family image in D.D.’s novel *Na podpätkoch*), Daniela Slančová aims to explore the stylistic quality of the text with the help of interactional stylistics and stylism, using František Mikoš and Karel Hausenblas’ conceptions of style. Slančová states that “stylistic qualities of motivic and linguistic contrast” (117) are involved in the family picture. The motivic contrast is omnipresent: existing vs. non-existing family, the family of a civilian citizen vs. a soldier, etc. Linguistically, Dán creates a contrast, for example, through the statements of the main protagonist, her son, and husband, which are set at different levels of style. The style of the depiction of the family motif “underlines communicated facts, participates in the meaning of the text and points in the direction of its interpretation by readers” (118).

Jakub Souček’s essay, “Obraz rodiny v detektívnom románe Daniely Kapitáňovej *Nech to zostane v rodine!*” (The family image in the detective novel *Nech...!* by D.K.), works with the method of close reading and states that the novel [is] about “the fragile position of the individual and the family in contemporary society, (un)defined issues of loss of identity, pathological perception of reality, the stereotype of family life, the lack of impulses and the subsequent transition to virtuality/hyperreality or the anaesthetization of society” (121). Souček applies several schemas for the genre, such as the figure of the Great Detective, the investigator duo, or the locked room mystery. The author draws on Anglo-Saxon sources that explore the problems of postmodern crime literature. Edgar Allan Poe, for example, is recalled

in connection with the establishment of this genre. Furthermore, a distinction is made between popular and artistic writing, with Dán being assigned to the first category and Kapitáňová to the second. Finally, it is stated that although Kapitáňová’s novel was published 17 years ago, it has not lost any of its topicality concerning the family in a post-modern media society.

The reviewed collection lays claim to an extensive literary terrain. It does justice to the undertaking of bringing three national literatures under one hat and not allowing a fragmentary, random impression to arise for the following reasons: Firstly, all contributions follow their own methodological, subject-relevant procedures. At the same time, the essays refer to each other in a complementary way and agree on basic definitions, such as that of the detective novel. Secondly, it should be positively emphasized that a solid basis has been created by the previous two volumes. Many connecting points have been uncovered, not only on the horizontal level of this writing, but also on the vertical level, since the essays published in 2020 and 2021 proved to be germinal and were continued, extended, or deepened in this volume. One suggestion for the editors is that regarding the well thought-out and compact-looking conception, one could, in a subsequent book, analyze a single novel on a literary as well as linguistic level. In this way, an even more vivid picture of the representation of a social phenomenon could be brought to light. One minor point of criticism is that in addition to the German, French, and Slovak abstracts, it would be desirable to provide abstracts in English as well. All in all, this collection makes an important contribution to the study of Swiss-German, Swiss-French, and Slovak literature, and it can be recommended not only for specialist circles but also for the general public interested in the detective novel.

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