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Modernism in Translation. International Translation Conference in Lubliniec, 2022

The conference *Modernism in Translation* took place on 28–30 September 2022 in Lubliniec. It was organized by the University of Silesia in Katowice and supported by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education within the Excellence Science program. It was initially supposed to take place in 2020, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic it was postponed for two years. As the conference organizers, Tamara Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz (Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences) and Leszek Małczak (University of Silesia in Katowice) emphasized, the conference was intended to "confront various ways of understanding and theorizing 'modernity in translation' as well as to investigate various modernist translation practices" and, as a part of this, "to revise the current Anglo-American characteristics of 'modernist translation'

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from the perspective of Eastern, Central and Southern European literatures" (Brzostowska & Małczak, 2022).

On the first day of the conference, the participants were invited to an open screening of *Ribanje i ribarsko prigovaranje* (*Fishing and Fishermen's Talk*), a Croatian film directed by Milan Trenc that is based on the homonymous renaissance eclogue written by Petar Hektorović (1487–1572). The Polish subtitles for the film were created by students of the University of Silesia. The event was held in the Karolinka Cinema, with the special participation of Milan Trenc. The screening was followed by a discussion panel led by Leszek Małczak that included the director himself, Nikica Gilić (a film scholar from the University of Zagreb), and Ivan Lupić (a renaissance literature scholar from the University of Rijeka). This motion picture, which is panoramic in its Adriatic landscapes yet intimate in its narrative layer, evoked an absorbing debate that, among other things, raised questions related to the fact that is was strongly inspired by European painting traditions, the translatability of Hektorović's oeuvre into film language, and the cooperation with Rade Šerbedžija, an award-winning Croatian actor and singer who played the main role in *Ribanje i ribarsko prigovaranje*.

The second day started in Zamek Hotel with the official inauguration of the conference, led by Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz and Małczak, and six plenary sessions. The first began with a lecture, *Media and Cinema Translations of Modernism – Literature, Film, Culture*, delivered by the aforementioned Nikica Gilić. This session mainly examined ties between Polish and Croatian films. Examples were discussed, the most important being Andrzej Wajda's *Siberian Lady Makbet* (1962), shot in Yugoslavia, and Zrinko Ogresta's *Isprani* (*Washed Out*, 1995), an adaptation of Marek Hłasko's novel *Ósmy dzień tygodnia* (*The Eighth Day of the Week*) in which the story has been moved from Warsaw to Zagreb. Furthermore, Gilić mentioned Yugoslav musical references to Polish history that can be found in the rock group Azra's songs: *Poljska u mom srcu* (*Poland in my heart*, 1981, inspired by the birth of "Solidarity") and *Proljeće je 13. u decembru* (*Spring comes on December 13*, 1982, dealing with the imposition of martial law in Poland).

Leo Rafolt from Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek was the author of the second speech, entitled *Intersemiotic Modernism: Between Poetry and its Embodiment*. However, he could not attend the conference himself, hence his paper was read out by Marta Kaźmierczak. The eponymous embodiment of modernist poetry turned out to be literal, as the paper examined

a choreographic and recitative (far from dance-like and theatre-like though) performance by Matija Ferlin, *Sad Sam Lucky*. This solo performance was part of a conceptual project called Sad Sam that started in 2004, and it was meant as a *physical response* to the Slovenian poet Srečko Kosovel's (1904–1926) avant-garde oeuvre. The spoken layer of the performance is also something new for Kosovel's work, since his poems are recited in several different languages.

The last speaker of the first session was Sanja Knežević from the University of Zadar. In *Croatian Second Wave Modernism: Blossoming of Romance Language Literature Translations*, she looked at the *krugovaši* generation, one of the first Croatian literary groups after World War II. Centered around the magazine *Krug* (The Ring), they attempted to revive national literature by drawing inspiration from interwar period first-wave modernist poets. A significant part of *Krug's* activity involved translating foreign literature and Romance language literature, mainly French, Spanish and Italian. Even though Spanish and (especially) Italian works were not well received by the government in communist Yugoslavia because of the political situation, the *krugovaši* managed to publish them. As the most important Romance language translators from this group, Knežević singled out Drago Ivanišević, Jure Kaštelan, Zvonimir Golob, Joja Ricov and Nikola Milićević.

The next session began with *Wild about Wilde – The Translation of Oscar Wilde's Salomé in Croatian Literature of the Early 20th Century*, by Igor Medić of Zagreb's Gymnasium Classicum. The talk was devoted to the impressionable impact this play had on the literature of Croatian modernism. It is interesting that the local edition of *Salome* was based not on the French language original but on the German version by Hedwig Lachmann, therefore we are dealing with an indirect translation. The Croatian edition, translated by Julije Benešić and Nikola Andrić in 1905, shares some characteristic features with Lachmann's version, although they are absent in the original one. The most crucial of them are the use of the second-person singular in the dialogues by *dramatis personae* (which reduces the distance between the characters) and the minimizing of Jokanaan's influence on Salome's execution (since in the German translation he only prophesizes her killing instead of ordering it). The Croatian translation of *Salome*, as well as the theatrical performances based on this version in Zagreb, strongly influenced the early oeuvre of Fran Galović and Miroslav Krleža, as they both wrote works with the same title (Galović created a poem, while Krleža wrote a drama).

Miroslav Krleža's literary activity was also the subject of a speech by Tea Rogić Musa (Miroslav Krleža Institute of Lexicography, Zagreb). In Nałkowska and Krleža – the Metaphor of the "Evil Love" Between Polish and Croatian Literature, she proposed a comparative analysis of the significant phenomena that occurred in both countries' interwar culture. The speaker noted that both writers had much more in common than solely being some of the most outstanding novelists in their interwar homelands. Nałkowska has translated Krleža's play *In Agony* into Polish (well received, it was staged many times in the 1930s as *Baronowa Lenbach* at the theatre *Mały Teatr* in Warsaw); she is also the author of the essay *Miroslav Krleža* from 1933. Not only that, but these writers were also acquainted with each other, and Krleža has been an artistically inspiring and motivating conversationalist for his colleague. Even though *Evil Love* is the only of Nałkowska's works that Miroslav Krleža read, he praised it. Tea Rogić pointed out many common features between this novel and Miroslav Krleža's *The Return of Philip Latinowicz*, ranging from a similar attempt to diagnose the human moral and psychological condition in the first years after World War I, to establishing *femmes fatales* as the significant heroines in both works.

The session closed with the paper of Mario Kolar from the University of Rijeka: *Translations of Arthur Conan Doyle's Works and the Beginnings of Croatian Crime Prose in the period of modernism*. Unlike the other contributors, this researcher shed light on popular literature. Arthur Conan Doyle's works were widely read in Croatia, being translated and repeatedly published there in the first decade of the twentieth century. His books, especially those describing the adventures of Sherlock Holmes, inspired Marija Jurić Zagorka (1873–1957) to write the first Croatian criminal novel, *The Princess of Petrinjska Street* (*Kneginja iz Petrinjske ulice*). Zagorka, a famous author, journalist and important precursor of local feminism, published her work in 1910 in Zagreb's *Hrvatske novosti* newspaper. Thus, the part of the conference dedicated mainly to Croatian culture ended.

The third session started with two speeches by scholars from the Institute for Literature and Art in Belgrade. The first to speak was Bojana Aćamović, with the paper *Under the Winged Sign of "Albatross": Translations of Poe and Whitman and the Development of Serbian Avant-garde*. Founded in 1921 by Serbian avant-garde authors, "Albatross" was intended to be a long-term book series that would familiarize readers with valuable yet non-canonical titles. Eventually, only five works were published, with Edgar Allan Poe's *A Book*

of Mystery and Imagination (1922) being the last and the only foreign one. It was translated by Svetislav Stefanović, known for his previous editions of Poe's works. It gained critical acclaim, partially because the American author himself was a commonly appreciated figure in Serbian literary life. The reception was slightly different in case of his compatriot, Walt Whitman, whose works were also translated by Svetislav Stefanović in the early 20s. The non-metrical, non-rhymed style of Whitman's poetry was not only harder to translate (which Stefanović successfully overcame) but was also much harder for readers to absorb. Bojana Aćamović underlined the fact that some conservative literary critics even doubted whether it was appropriate to classify his works as poems, although members of avant-garde circles, like Boško Tokin or Stanislav Vinaver, considered him as a forerunner of expressionism.

Bojan Jović offered a presentation called *The One (and Only) Polish Contribution in Zenit: Poème by Ary Justman*, which not only describes Justman's presence in the pages of "Zenit", but also brings the forgotten Polish poet, a friend of Guillaume Apollinaire and the husband of Chana Orloff (the prominent École de Paris sculptor), into better focus. This short French-language *Poème* was printed in "Zenit" in 1921, two years after Ary Justman died at the age of 30 during the Great Influenza epidemic.

The last to speak in the session was Andrij Saweneć from John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin; he deliberated on *Modernist Obscenity in Translation: Ukrainian and Russian Translations of Lady Chatterley's Lover by D. H. Lawrence in the late USSR*. Written in the early 1930s and highly controversial due to its explicit erotic language, the novel was banned in the Soviet Union until the late 1980s. The Perestroika period resulted in a considerable mitigation of censorship, enabling two literary monthlies to finally publish *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The Ukrainian translation was by Solomiia Pavlichko and was printed in "Vsevit" in 1989, while Marina Litvinova and Igor Bagrov created the Russian-language version, published in "Inostrannaya Literatura" in 1990. Saweneć showed that these translations vary considerably: Pavlichko (1958–1999), a Ukrainian pioneer of feminist studies and an important figure in the new generation of local intellectuals, attempted to make an accurate translation. Litvinova and Bagrov though, as representatives of a much older generation, seemed to be very inspired by the so-called "Soviet school of translation", which, for example, would delete or rewrite obscene elements of translated works.

The final two sessions were delivered in Polish. The first began with the presentation *„Biblia w przekładzie". Bułgarska narracja o św. Klemensie z Ochrydy w okresie międzywojennym a problem transferu idei w warunkach modernizacji kultury* (*"Bible Translation". Bulgarian Narrative of St. Clement of Ohrid in the Interwar Period and the Issue of the Transfer of Ideas in the Process of Cultural Modernization*), by Ewelina Drzewiecka (Cyrillo-Methodian Research Centre, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences). It was devoted to interpretations of medieval hagiographies that can be found in interwar Bulgarian literature, with special emphasis on St. Clement of Ohrid. As a prominent disciple of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, St. Clement was a crucial figure in forming the local religious and national identity. The speaker focused on the meeting between Clement and Tsar Simeon I the Great, since this motif was particularly popular among Bulgarian writers in the 1920s and 1930s. Pondering over the *belles-lettres* works of Dencho Marchevski, Nikola Stanev and Nikola Nikitov, she highlighted that the eponymous "Bible in translation" formula was intended to indicate differences in perceptions of the Biblical tradition in the process of ideological and cultural changes. Examining these works, Drzewiecka proposed two hypothetical explanations of the popularity of the encounter between Clement and Simeon. The first is based on the perennial problem of the relationships between spiritual and secular authority – problems that were still present and important in interwar Bulgaria. The second reaches even further back in history, referring to the Old Testament's *King vs Prophet* motif. The interwar figure of St. Clement of Ohrid seems to share important characteristics with Israeli prophets because he appeals not to the God's will but to the welfare of the people.

The next speaker was Katarzyna Lukas from the University of Gdańsk. Her paper was titled *Tako rzecze Zaratustra Wacława Berenta: młodopolska maniera czy nowatorski eksperyment?* (*Wacław Berent's* Tako rzecze Zaratustra: *Young-Poland Mannerism or an Innovative Experiment?*). Out of four Polish translations of Nietzsche's famous masterwork, Berent's *Tako rzecze Zaratustra* has become the canonical one. Printed in 1905, this was the first full Polish version of *Also sprach Zarathustra*. Wacław Berent's translation happens to be far from the original though; for example, he did not convey the sense of many Nietzschean terms. Nevertheless, it is still the most popular Polish edition of the work. Lukas pointed out three linguistic-literary codes she finds decisive for its success: the Young-Poland style, Berent's individual poetics, and the language of the Bible. The speaker also underlined stylistic parallels between *Tako rzecze Zaratustra* and the two most important novels of Wacław Berent: *Rotten Wood* (*Próchno*, 1901) and *Winter Crop* (*Ozimina*, 1911).

Piotr Misztela (Institute of Literary Research, Polish Academy of Sciences) focused on Polish–Bulgarian literary relations. In his lecture *Ile Przybyszewskiego w Przybyszewskim? Pomiędzy „zbułgaryzowanym przekładem" a mistyfikacją literacką* (*How Much of Przybyszewski is in Przybyszewski? Between "the Bulgarized Translation" and the Literary Mystification*), he examined the issue of a one-act Bulgarian play, *Around the Woman Question*. Published in 1910, it was signed as a "Bulgarized translation" of Stanisław Przybyszewski's work by Alexander Simeonov. "Bulgarization" was an important term for Bulgarian culture of the 19th century; it consisted of adapting the plot of foreign works in order to suit the tastes of local readers and the surrounding reality (e.g., changing the protagonists' names for native ones; transposing stories to the national reality and infusing them with patriotic and religious elements). However, in *Around the Woman Question* there is no mention of the original version's title, and the play hardly seems to be inspired by any of Przybyszewski's plots. The woman question itself is limited to seeing both female emancipation and relaxation of sexual morality through a distorting lens. Indeed, Simeonov used a decadent costume to mock Bulgarian and European modernists, yet he shared with many of them his fear of the decomposition of patriarchal patterns. Misztela suggested two possible explanations for why *Around the Woman Question* was signed as a "Bulgarized translation" of Stanisław Przybyszewski's work: it could have been intended either to deceive and captivate a potential audience, or to prepare a more conscious recipient for a play with conventions.

The last session started with a presentation by Barbara Bibik from Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. She talked about *Potrzeba tłumacza* (*The Need for a Translator*), referring to Jan Kasprowicz's translation of *Oresteia* by Aeschylus. The speaker identified it as a domesticated translation, since the Polish version varies significantly from the original one. Not only did Kasprowicz change the title from *Oresteia* to *The Story of Orestes* (he changed the names of its parts as well), but he also introduced phrases taken from Polish and Christian culture into the text. The most striking difference, however, takes place at the beginning of the second part of the work. Only twenty-one lines of the original manuscript version have survived, although in Kasprowicz's translation this part is extended to forty-six lines. The explanation can be found in the German translation of *Oresteia* by Ulrich Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, one of the most established classical philologists at the turn of the 20th century. Despite Kasprowicz's assertion that he remained faithful to the Greek original, it is clearly visible that the German edition inspired him, as in Wilamowitz's translation the beginning of the second part is

also lengthened to forty-six lines. Moreover, the stage directions that this Polish poet included in the text turned out to be literally translated from Wilamowitz's version (no stage directions were used in the original Greek tragedies).

Marta Kaźmierczak from the University of Warsaw presented a paper *Polski modernizm w podwójnym transferze: Leśmian po rosyjsku i wybory ilustracyjno-edytorskie Andrieja Bazilewskiego* (*Polish Modernism in a double transfer: Leśmian in Russian translation and Andrey Bazilevsky's illustrative and editorial choices*). *Uninhabited Ballad or Words to a Song without Words* appeared on the Russian publishing market in 2006 and provides an extensive selection of Bolesław Leśmian's poetical, theatrical and prose works, and its textual layer has been illustrated with paintings by Polish artists such as Eugeniusz Zak, Edward Okuń and Stanisław Wyspiański. Kaźmierczak examined the relations between the texts and their visual equivalents and considered whether reading a collection of translations actually enables a double-layered reception of Polish modernism. This author presumed that Andrey Bazilevsky did not realize the full potential of his concept, but she appreciated the editorial device that put Zak's 1920s painting *Wędrowiec* (*Wanderer*) on the cover of the aforementioned book, as it corresponded with the motif of the wandering hero, which is highly represented in Leśmian's literary output.

The second day of the conference ended with a presentation by Tamara Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz, who pondered over *Przekład modernistyczny i czas* (*Modernist Translation and Time*). The main point of her considerations was Adam Pomorski's Polish translation of Velimir Khlebnikov's short poem *Smertich', Smertich', ne smeshi!…* Khlebnikov, one of the most prominent members of the Russian Futurist movement, combines references to both Baroque heritage (exploiting *danse macabre* topos) and folklore (fusing metrical measures like trochaic foot and *dolnik*, as well as introducing lexical archaisms). Such a technique, which brings together different cultural spaces and times and refers to the idea of perceiving reality in an asynchronous way (also known as the concept of 'spacialized time'), requires the translator to find and recollect elements from various literary traditions. In this particular case, Adam Pomorski evoked both Renaissance and nineteenth-century borderland Polish language to depict the archaization of the original version, and he enriched his translation with the poetical techniques of the Polish Baroque to reflect the metrical composition of *Smertich'*, *Smertich'*, *ne smeshi!…* Thus, the main day of the *Modernism in Translation* conference closed with a reminder of how intricate and palimpsestic the process of translation often is.

The final day of the conference, 30th September, consisted of two popular science lectures in Polish in Lubiteka Library. The first one, *What is Modernity in Translation? The Poles of Modernist Literary Translation*, was held by Tamara Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz; the second, *In the Claws of Ideology. The Influence of Politics on Literary Translation*, was offered by Leszek Małczak. The main aim of the lectures was to arouse interest in translation issues in the younger audience.

To conclude, the *Modernism in Translation* conference should be considered very successful. The organizers not only took care of its strictly scientific dimension but also extended its popularization function, as evidenced by the opening and closing events of the conference. All the events were arranged in the center of Lubliniec, and the plenary sessions (as well as the accommodation of the participants) were in a hotel located in a historic, centuries-old castle. This experience provided an opportunity to delve into the rich cultural heritage of a centuries-old location, which many of the participants were undoubtedly exploring for the first time. The range of cultural texts analyzed by the speakers was undeniably diverse, ranging from narrative films and rock songs to avant-garde poetry, crime prose, and medieval hagiography. Despite this and the multiplicity of languages the speakers used and addressed in their speeches, the exchange of knowledge, experiences and observations did not pose any problems, as evidenced by numerous discussions between participants both during the panels and in their leisure time. It should be noted that the presentations examined not only translations of Western European writing, but also the internal circulation of cultural practices and texts among the Slavs. Even though a few unforeseen changes occurred in the program (several participants canceled their arrivals at the last minute for personal reasons), the organizers definitely rose to the occasion, and the whole event was indeed of a very high organizational and scientific standard, bringing together scholars from more than a dozen research centers in several Slavic countries. A fact worth noting is that, thanks to the consent of the authors, the presentations were recorded and will be published on the official conference website[1]. It remains to be hoped that, as announced by Tamara Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz and Leszek Małczak, the 2022 conference will be followed by further events devoted to Slavic translation studies.

[1] https://modernizm.us.edu.pl. Available in both Polish and English, it contains a large number of full texts of the speeches given at the conference (some of them have previously been published in "Translations of Slavic Literatures"). The direct link to the YouTube channel of the conference is: https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTd3mQ1-COoaG_6SWF9Gh8F8bL98ZC32y

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Modernizm w przekładzie. Międzynarodowa konferencja przekładoznawcza w Lublińcu, 2022

Tekst stanowi relację z międzynarodowej konferencji przekładoznawczej „Modernizm w przekładzie". Wydarzenie zostało zorganizowane przez Uniwersytet Śląski w Katowicach, odbyło się w Lublińcu w dniach 28–30 września 2022 r. i zgromadziło prelegentów z kilku krajów.

Słowa kluczowe: przekład; modernizm; konferencja; slawistyka; literatury słowiańskie

Modernism in translation. International translation conference in Lubliniec, 2022

This text is a report from the international translation conference *Modernism in Translation*. Organized by the University of Silesia in Katowice, it was held in Lubliniec on 28–30 September 2022 and gathered speakers from several countries.

Keywords: translation; modernism; conference; Slavic studies; Slavic literatures

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Piotr Misztela (piotrmisztela90@gmail.com) – PhD, literary historian. He graduated in Slavic studies (bachelor's degree) and Polish philology (bachelor's and master's degree) at the University of Warsaw. He cooperates with the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, where in 2022 he defended with distinction his dissertation examining the issue of the reception of Stanisław Przybyszewski's oeuvre and legend in Bulgaria. His research mainly focuses on the Polish and Bulgarian literature of the second half of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century.

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