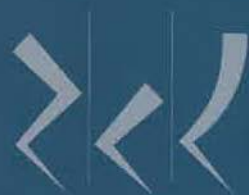


SUVREMENA KNJIŽEVNOST
I SJEĆANJE
CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE
AND MEMORY



29. zagrebački
književni razgovori
29th Zagreb
Literary Talks

Zagreb, 9. - 12. listopada 2008.

Zagreb, 9-12 October 2008

DHK

Društvo hrvatskih književnika
Croatian Writers Association

Igor Štikš, *Elijahova stolica* — *Die Archive der Nacht*

Ogledala europske *ars memoriae* i *ars poeticae*

Kulturalni dijalog u prevođenju

Elijahova stolica hrvatski je roman zapažen nakon leipziškog književnog sajma 2008. godine zahvaljujući kvaliteti dobro ispričane i čitatelju dojmjive priče, koja vodi duboko u njemačku i suvremenu južnoeuropsku povijest, te zahvaljujući uspjelom prijevodu Marice Bodrožić na njemački jezik. Roman znanosti o književnosti i kulturi nudi bogat potencijal, razotkriva smisao i odnose, kao i slojevita i duboka načela konstrukcije, a čitatelje potiče na misli, sjećanja, asocijacije i iskustva ponovnoga prepoznavanja. Na svim razinama roman pokazuje za postmodernog autora tipičnu usadenost u intertekstualne odnose, ne samo u književne nego i kulturno i književno teorijske mreže teksta. Moguće ga je svrstati u mnoge kontekste — u tome je njegova posebna kvaliteta i njegova draž. Neke od tih konteksta moguće je ovdje prizvati.¹

Čitam tu knjigu kao njemačka čitateljica i odmah otkrivam: doslovan prijevod naslova na njemački glasio bi: *Elijas Thron* (*Elijahovo prijestolje*). Međutim, naslov umjesto toga glasi: *Die Archive der Nacht* (*Arhivi noći*).² Što postiže taj naslov za razliku od naslova originala? Treba li ta promjena njemačkoj publici?

Elijahovo prijestolje³ spada u ritualni inventar židovstva i stolica je na kojoj se izvode obrezivanja kao znak saveza s Jahvom. U romanu ona ostaje ključnom metaforom koju autor postavlja za diskurs identiteta izigran do gorkoga kraja, koji u povijesti naroda Izraelskog i u njegovu romanu u isprepletenosti sudbine junaka sa sudbinom Sarajeva razvija dimenzije neizbježive tragedije koja vodi u katastrofu, s pripadnim joj patosom, doticanjem posljednjih pitanja bitka, ishoda propasti u strastima, tragičnim promašajem junaka u znaku lošeg diskursa (demona) i preživjelog koji čuva priču. Diskurs se čini kao da je pod vlašću bogova («ciničan redatelj te izokrenute priče», str. 58) kojima nedostaje dobronamjernosti i koji svaki prividni slučaj uvezuju u sudbonosni čvor koji unaprijed baca sjenu »u tamnoj igri koja je mene izabrala kao žrtvu« (str. 20); »Sad znam da je moja nesreća bila odavno odlučena i pismeno potvrđena« (str. 21); »Traženje za istinom vodilo me je u kavez« (str. 22); »Labirint sudbine čiji bi smisao mogli objasniti samo dekadentni antički bogovi« (str. 72); »Destiny is the most

¹ O hrvatskom romanu općenito usp.: Krešimir Nemeč, *Povijest hrvatskog romana od 1945. do 2000.*, Zagreb 2003.

² Reference na roman uvijek u zagradi prema izdanju: Igor Štikš, *Die Archive der Nacht*, Berlin 2008.

³ Prijevod »ein Holzstuhl für Elias« u sadržaju romana ne izražava svečano ritualno oblikovanje tog ritualnog predmeta.

powerful coincidence of all« (str. 172). Junak osjeća »na koji se strašan način sudbina sa svima nama poigrala« (str. 28).

Jureći pod cijenu vlastitog života što ga je izgradio (»Nije li bilo dovoljno jednostavno imati ime i pripadati samom sebi?«, str. 70) za identitetom koji mu je određen podrijetlom i time za identitetom žrtve, junak romana sjeda, ne znajući, na tu stolicu u staroj napuštenoj sinagogi opkoljenog Sarajeva. Taj simbol otvara radijus smisla izabranosti, podrijetla koje sve određuje, uhvaćenosti u konstelaciju počinitelj-žrtva i ritualnog pristupa u jednu zajednicu. Obrezivanje je kao razgraničenje prema Babiloncima u znak saveza između Jahve i Abrahama stavljeno pod zaštitu proroka Elijaha⁴ koji se uzdigao do borca za taj simboličan čin. Igor Štiks umrežuje metaforu za savez izabranog naroda s Jahvom s teorijskim tumačenjem ritualnog pristupa u zajednicu⁵ Jacquesa Derride, kako bi diskurs razvio kao tragediju u svom romanu u kojem se identitet određuje prema podrijetlu.

Odstupajući naslov njemačkog prijevoda ostaje vezan s romanom u kojem se spominje »Božji arhiv«, »arhiv Svemogućega« (str. 40) ili »tamni arhiv« (str. 15) vlastitog života i sjećanja (»Gedächtnissammler«, str. 239). Mijenjanje naslova vrlo je značajno i reflektira načelno drugačiji kulturalni pristup prošlosti, kakav se kultivira u Njemačkoj, naime ne identitetu već sjećanju. Njemačka kultura podržava načet odnos prema identitetu i njegovim metaforama, no za to razvija potencijale sjećanja kako ne bi zaboravila krivnje prošlosti što ih je skrivio opsesivni i agresivni koncept identiteta. Nadomjestak metafore za identitet metaforom za sjećanje u naslovu romana može se pokazati prikladnim da bi namamio obrazovanog njemačkog čitatelja.

Iz te »nevjernosti« originalu ne izrasta nedostatak, jer razlika koristi prostor prijevoda da ne bude jednostavno prijenos i ekvivalent, već otvara dodatne dimenzije smisla i unosi ih u svaku mrežu smisla što opredla tekst, kako to izlaže germanist Peter Utz u svojoj knjizi *Autrement dit*. Prijevod, prema Utzu, tumači original, omogućuje svojim kulturalnim stvaranjem vrijednosti čitanje koje ulaže smisao i pokreće novo produktivno čitanje. Tako prijevod stvara dodatni smisao, ne identitet, i uči da se kultura shvati kao proces koji svoje granice uvijek iznova definira time što ih uvijek iznova prekoračuje. Koncentracija ne slijedi uvijek samo identično, nego diferentno, da bi vidjela kako stvara dodatno i drugačije značenje.⁶ Kao što njemački čitatelj posredstvom romana putem stranog oka može promatrati sam sebe, i hrvatski čitatelj dobiva pomoću njemačkog prijevoda mogućnost komunikacije između dviju kultura.

Lektira kojoj je na prvom mjestu sjećanje, kulturalno pamćenje, stavlja u prednji plan aspekte romana koji bi dominacijom metafore identiteta doduše uvijek postojali, ali bi po mogućnosti bili manje vidljivi: Europa kao gigantski prostor sjećanja i pamćenja koji kroz prostore i vremena povezuje i zrcali kulture i njihove katastrofe, a poje-

⁴ Usp. www.jewishencyclopedia.com; *Biblija*, Gen. 17; Jos. 5, 2-9; Ex. 4, 24-26; 1 Makk. 2, 58. »Ilija, jer bijaše gorljiv borac zakona, bi uznesen na nebo.«

⁵ Riječ je o eseju Jacquesa Derride »Circonfession«. Usp. intervju s Igorom Štiksom »Antički mit ponovio se u Sarajevu«, u: *Vjesnik, Kultura utorkom*, 22. kolovoza 2006.

⁶ Usp. Peter Utz, *Anders gesagt — autrement dit — in other words: Übersetzt gelesen: Hoffmann, Fontane, Kafka, Musil*, München 2007.

dinca uvlači u sudbinska zajedništva, koja on svojata, no ne može ih nadzirati, jer ga proždiru.

Naslov njemačkog izdanja snaži u opažaju čitatelja aspekt kulturalnog pamćenja, neposredno povezanog s temom identiteta, ali ne s njom identičnog. Njemački se čitatelj time brine za to da se u suosjećanju bolne priče o identitetu ne zanemari važan kontekst u koji roman spada, naime kontekst pradavnog umijeća pamćenja, ishodišta pjesništva, umijeća kojim se oduvijek bavio,⁷ kojem se danas ponovno dodjeljuje izuzetno značenje za opažaj kulturalnog osmišljavanja identiteta i prekoračenja granica što ih je povukao, i koje se opet izrazito suodnosi s pjesništvom.⁸

Razlika njemačkog i hrvatskog naslova romana svojim različitim prioritetom izražava u riječi uzajamne kulturalne odnose koji obim stranama omogućuju strani prilaz vlastitome i obje kulture čini čitkima u njihovim razlikama.

Već se ovdje pokazuje kako uloge autora i prevoditelja idu prema sukladnosti.

Konstrukcija: književne i književnoteorijske tradicije

Igor Štiks se otkriva kao književno i teorijski načitan autor, koji je među inima čitao Michela Foucaulta and Jacquesa Derridu, te koji je omotao svoj roman u pređu intertekstualnih odnosa već postojećih književnih i teorijskih tekstovnih mreža i time ga učinio sastavnim dijelom metafore *svijeta kao teksta*. Zato čitanje njegova romana traži obrazovana čitatelja. Svojim isprepletenim intertekstualnim odnosima, rekvizitima i domišljajima posuđenim iz arsenala književnog znanja, prizivanjem mitova (Edip, Odisej) i njihovom dekonstrukcijom, te zrcaljenjem drugih tekstova (*Homo faber*) i drugih vrsta tekstova (tragedije, ispovijedi), roman je postmoderan u smislu bujnog bogatstva što ga može razviti postmoderna.

Njegova se struktura nadaje iz isprepletenosti mnogih niti i moguće ju je pogodno karakterizirati tekstilnom metaforom pletiva ili pređe, prikladna je za slikoviti prikaz intertekstualne isprepletenosti diskursa,⁹ jer je svaka slika i svaka strategija utkana u tu mrežu refleksivnih i teorijskih odnosa. Igor Štiks postavlja takvu metaforu za sudbinu svog junaka u gradu Sarajevu da čini jednu od »tisuću niti u njegovoj tragičnoj tapiseriji« (str. 196).

Autor se u svakom slučaju ne igra s razinama, strategijama, rekvizitima i diskursima, već ih upliće u tragediju i postavlja jasne prioritete u svim područjima u kojima razine mogu biti dovedene u igru. Osobito ostaje čvrsto povezan s povijesnom realnošću i osobnom pogodnošću, te cilja na dirnutost čitatelja kojemu je nadražen i probuđen potencijal razumijevanja.

Intertekstualnost¹⁰ prakticirana u romanu postaje radnjom pamćenja,¹¹ sjećanjem ne samo na tekstove i književne i kulturalnoteorijske strategije nego na svijet čiji gubitci traže razvoj tehnika čuvanja.

⁷ Usp. Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, London 1966.

⁸ Usp. Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, München 2005.

⁹ Usp. Erika Greber, *Textile Texte. Poetologische Metaphorik und Literaturtheorie. Studien zur Tradition des Wortflechtens und der Kombinatorik*, Köln 2002.

¹⁰ Karin Herrmann (ur.), *Intertextualität. Perspektiven auf ein interdisziplinäres Arbeitsfeld*, Aachen 2007.

Autor do kraja izigrava diskurs identiteta iz podrijetla i oprema ga s bezuvjetnom nužnošću i nemilošću bogova antičke tragedije koji kao da ulančuju događaje. Nije više moguće nikakvo izmicanje, dokle god se junak kreće u diskursu. Tragedija sa svojom unutrašnjom zakonitošću obuhvaća dakle dio svijeta, diskurs, i tvori podtekst romana koji čini strukturu. Samo bi »zaborav pomogao« (str. 44) izbjeći tragediju, dakle kontrapunkt sjećanju, kojim se poslužila tragedija romana, diskurs identiteta iz podrijetla.

Roman se nalazi u intertekstualnom odnosu zrcaljena i dijaloga s *Homo faberom* Maxa Frischa (1957.) i edipovskim tragedijama Sofoklove tebanske trilogije. Mit grada, središnji mit moderne i postmoderne, priziva se i dekonstruira opkoljenim gradom Sarajevom, dakle gradom iz kojega potječe autor Igor Štikis i u koji odlazi junak romana u potrazi za svojim identitetom: »jer se sa svakom misli vraćam u onaj grad koji je u ovom trenutku na putu da nestane« (str. 18); Sarajevo je »posljednji grad u nizu te kletve« (str. 161) koja s lica zemlje briše sve gradove u kojima se kulture miješaju, grad »koji su napustili bogovi« (str. 331). Junak osim toga priziva gradski mit Beča, grad u kojem će učiniti samoubojstvo: »Beč (...) je pun zamršenih demona prošlosti (...) Žubore iz trulih zidova, iz odjela mrtvih gospodstava« (str. 19). Propast grada u romanu korelira s propašću junaka — grad slijedi junaka — koji osjeća tu usisnu moć. »Jer grad ide u meni sa mnom. Njegovim ulicama još uvijek beskrajno lutam. (...) I nema koraka koji bi me mogao odnijeti daleko, dalje od samoga mene.« (str. 349); »Bilo je ugodno polako i zajedno s gradom potonuti u tamu« (str. 53).

Obrnutim je putem krenuo, primjerice, suvremeni katalonski autor Emili Rosales u svom romanu *Tiepolo und die Unsichtbare Stadt (Tiepolo i nevidljivi grad)*,¹² u kojem izvješće zapisano starim rukopisom arhitekta te obnova i drugačije tumačenje gradskog mita prate autora do njegova mjesta u životu, do identiteta i pomirenosti s podrijetlom.

Autor i povijest

U književnosti i teoriji moderne i postmoderne omiljena metafora rada i doradivanja već postojećeg teksta (palimpsest) odgovara već u romantici razvijenoj ulozi autora kao pronalazača i čuvara, kao prevoditelja i izdavača pronađenog ili dostavljenog teksta. Igor Štikis u svom romanu razvija tu ulogu autora dosjetkom koja je već često bila primijenjena u književnosti i usidruje tu ulogu u književnoj tradiciji preživjeloga koji izvješćuje o strašnoj priči.

U prologu čitatelj doznaje o junaku romana, koji je pisac, da će ostaviti protokol, dakle rukopis o tragičnom događaju svog života. U epilogu je njegov prijatelj Ivor iz Sarajeva koji prezire diskusiju o etničkoj pripadnosti, dakle o identitetu iz podrijetlu, primio nakon tragične smrti junaka rukopis i preuzima ostatak priče i izvješće o tome kako je uredio rukopis u priču koja je pred čitateljem. Ivor čini masku autora Igora Štikisa. Taj domišljaj stavlja roman u dugi niz tekstova čija je konstrukcija slično koncipirana. Priče opremljene takvim umjetničkim zahvatom nastale su iz velike senzibil-

¹¹ Usp. Renate Lachmann, *Gedächtnis und Literatur. Intertextualität in der russischen Moderne*, Frankfurt a. M. 1990.

¹² München/Zürich 2007.

nosti što se ne osjeća tek u postmoderni za povezanost i kontinuitet svih tekstova. I iz iskustva, odnosno teorijskog stajališta da autor ne izmišlja priču nego su priče one koje biraju autora.

Ta strategija govori da autor više nije autor, teorem koji također prinosi teoriji diskursa. Izvor ili rukopis koji ostavlja očevidac ili donositelj neke tajanstvene i tragične priče, skriva ili predaje prijatelju, dolazi do onoga koji ga želi predati ljudima i objaviti.

Igor Štikis dvaput rabi taj zahvat i slijedi time dva cilja konstrukcije. Pronađeno skriveno majčino pismo pokreće tragediju junaka, čija se kob nalazi u diskursu koji će junak sad prisilno slijediti i zna »da je to pismo došlo iz dubine nesreće u moj život i da je sve već bilo unaprijed odlučeno« (str. 39). Nije više on sam subjekt nego diskurs traženja identiteta iz podrijetla. Njemu ostavljen i nakon smrti autoru predan rukopis donosi povijest te tragedije u svijet i pred čitatelje, te dobiva šansu da poluču katarzu i sućut, dovršava dakle strukturu tragedije koja je položena u temelj: »Posljednji besmisleni zavještaj?« (str. 41). I ovdje je status subjekta s autora premješten na priču. Mogućnost da bude subjekt otvara se možda čitatelju, koji može birati koje bi on djelovanje priče na svoj život želio dopustiti. Za Igora Štiksa djelovanje književnosti je doduše ograničeno, no drži književnost neophodnom za život: »S književnošću ne možemo trajno mijenjati zbilju, a ipak ne možemo bez nje živjeti.«¹³

Roman *Ime ruže* Umberta Eca služi se strategijom autoru namijenjenog rukopisa ili rukopisa kojeg je našao i definira ulogu autora kao prevoditelja i prerađivača prijevoda, a prikazanu knjigu kao tekst uloženi u nerazmršivu mrežu prijevoda i prijenosa teksta.¹⁴

U katalonskom romanu *Tiepolo und die Unsichtbare Stadt* pripovjedaču se na tajanstven način dotura stari rukopis koji je povezan s njegovim vlastitim životom i njegovim tajanstvenim otkrićem nevidljivog grada, Tiepolove slike i ljubavi, kojeg on prevodi i dopušta da djeluje na njegov život.¹⁵ Konstrukciju romana *Nachtzug nach Lissabon* (*Noćni vlak za Lisabon*) Pascala Merciera¹⁶ također nosi pronalazak rukopisa kojeg junak prevodi i on mu mijenja život.

U pustolovnoj priči H. Rider Haggarda o Leu i Holly na selu i potrazi za prelijepom, strašnom i tajanstvenom kraljicom, nasljednici su poznati isključivo izdavaču koji se brine za objavljivanje Hollyna rukopisa.¹⁷ Kao u *She*, i u *Arhivu noći* primatelju rukopisa se prepušta odluka što će s njim učiniti, uništiti ga ili objaviti. Gustav Meyrink služi se takvim umjetničkim zahvatom u *Andeo sa zapadnog prozora*,¹⁸ a *Der*

¹³ Usp.: www.monstersandcritics.de/artikel/200811/article_66923.php/Igor-Stikis-ist-geprägt-von-den-Jahren-des-Zerfalls.

¹⁴ Umberto Eco, *Ime ruže*, München 1983., str. 10: »njemački prijevod moje talijanske verzije jedne opskurne novogotske francuske verzije izdanja iz 17. stoljeća teksta što ga je u 14. stoljeću na latinskom napisao njemački redovnik.«

¹⁵ Emili Rosales, *Tiepolo und die Unsichtbare Stadt*, München/Zürich 2007.

¹⁶ Pascal Mercier, *Nachtzug nach Lissabon*, München 2006.

¹⁷ H. Rider Haggard, *Ayesha. The Return of She*, New York (prvo objavljivanje u: *The Windsor Magazine*, London 1904.-1905.).

¹⁸ Gustav Meyrink, *Der Engel vom westlichen Fenster*, München 1975. (prvo izdanje 1927.).

Meister des Jüngsten Tages (*Majstor sudnjega dana*) Lea Perutza¹⁹ ostavljen je u obliku rukopisa koji izvješćuje kako je neki mnogo stariji rukopis polučio tragičan hod povijesti. *Đavolje eliksire* objavio je E. T. A. Hoffmann kao ostavljene papire brata Medarda, fratra, na koje je izdavač naletio u jednom samostanu.²⁰

Opisanim umjetničkim zahvatom Igor Štiks osobito izražava razumijevanje realizirano i potvrđeno u književnoj tradiciji, ali i u teorijskim pristupima poput teorije diskursa. Priče dolaze autoru, izabiru ga i čine svojim agentom. Autor dakle nije više prvi autor nego prerađivač i prevoditelj.

Ivor, prijatelj junaka, onaj je koji preživljava i shvaća sebe kao čuvara priče: »Oni su ostavili tu priču i ja sam bio njezin čuvar.« (str. 373). Uloga autora, koji priču dovodi među ljude, leži kao u *Imenu ruže* u prevodenju: »Istog sam dana počeo prevoditi rukopis Richarda Richtera, polako i strpljivo, potrošio sam mjesec na to, pazio na svaku riječ, na svaki zarez i prenio sam priču brižno u drugi jezik, u moj jezik. Uz njegovu sam pomoć naučio na taj način zanat autora.« (str. 374). Već se junak romana, pisac, osjeća kao objekt priče koja ga pogađa i prenosi je na pisanje: »Pripovjedača, i više, pisca radnja drži za ruku (...) On se podvrgava diktatu fabule koja ga od onog travanjskog dana drži u šaci i koja će staviti završnu točku, kad bude do toga došlo.« (str. 126). U intervjuu Igor Štiks potvrđuje stajalište koje autora drži izvoditeljem: »... vodila me je hitna potreba ispričati priču koja me je obuzela.«²¹

Priča koja dolazi autoru stajalište je koje Igor Štiks među inima dijeli i s indijskom autoricom Arundhati Roy, autoricom romana *Bog malih stvari* (1997.): »Priče nam se otkrivaju (...) one nas koloniziraju. One nas naručuju. One inzistiraju na tome da ih se ispriča.«²² Sila tragedije koja nezadrživo nastavlja svoj put prema vlastitim zakonima u romanu Igora Štiksa je metafora za odnos između autora i priče, metafora za pisanje koje se osamostaljuje u odnosu na autora.

Roman je priča koju je Igor Štiks morao ispričati na osnovu svojih biografskih iskustava. Učinio je to na visini književnog i književnoteorijskog razvoja i koji put se vide vijci koji drže konstrukciju. Proziranje postmodernih načela konstrukcije romana nisu uvjerljivi svakom čitatelju: »djelo je jedinstven veliki kliše. Radnja i likovi djeluju neuvjerljivo, a sastavnice — rat, ljepotica, osamljeni junak — podsjećaju na holivudske drame. Konstrukcija škripi i zapinje, svaki problemčić ultimativno se dramski zaoštrava.«²³

Bezuvjetnost i opsesivnost kojima junak u viru diskursa dospijeva do traženja identiteta i prisila ostvarenja tragične varijante njemačkom čitatelju nisu bez daljnega razumljivi. Za razliku od progonjenih Židova u njemačkom sjećanju junak se dobro

¹⁹ Leo Perutz, *Der Meister des Jüngsten Tages*, Beč 2006. (prvo izdanje 1923.).

²⁰ Prvo izdanje u dva sveska u Berlinu 1815.-1816.

²¹ Usp.: www.monstersandcritics.de/artikel/200811/article_66923.php/Igor-Stiks-ist-geprägt-vonden-Jahren-des-Zerfalls.

²² „Stories reveal themselves to us (...) they colonize us. They commision us. They insist on being told.“ Usp.: ccrma.stanford.edu/~peer/arundhati/Roy.html.

²³ Uwe Stolzmann, »Leben mit einer brüchigen Identität«, u: www.dradio.de/dkultur/sendungen/kritik/759640.

voljno i bez objektivne nužnosti upušta u područje moći diskursa, koji se u romanu u opsadi Sarajeva devedesetih godina dvadesetog stoljeća manifestira kao zrcalo strahota Drugog svjetskog rata i nacističke vladavine. Njemačkom čitatelju nedostaje ovdje jedan aspekt koji bi hrvatskom čitatelju trebao biti bliži, jer ne raspolaže biografskim iskustvom autora koji je doživio prisilu i neizbježnost kad je diskurs etničkog identiteta raspršio zajednički život ljudi u Bosni (i Jugoslaviji) i zato više osjeća težinu te teme: »Nekoliko sam demona mogao smiriti. Drugi su još uvijek aktivni.«²⁴

Kod njemačkog bi čitatelja diskurs identiteta iz podrijetla i incestuoznih i ratničkih zapleta što se uzajamno zrcale (*Homo faber*, Edip, sudbina Simona, sudbina junaka) mogao naići na dodatnu prisilu i patos tragedije, dakle na nerazumijevanje, te izazvati dojam ne posve vjerodostojne konstrukcije jer ne prepoznaje i ne dijeli strast što je autor iz vlastitog iskustva i pogođenosti stavlja u priču. Autor uvodi u roman razliku između života i teksta, dakle distancu od jednog postmodernog kreda: »Ljudska nesreća je beskrajna (...) Ali kao tekst obuhvaća samo ograničeni broj stranica.« (str. 41). Max Frisch je u romanu zrcalo za razumijevanje Štiksova odnosa između književnosti i života: »mislio je, književnost se temelji na mogućnostima koje proizlaze iz toga što življavamo mi sami ili drugi.« (str. 178).

Njemački naslov njemačkom čitatelju daje u ruke Arijadninu nit da kroz roman uđe u prostore sjećanja koji europski kulturni prostor održavaju spremnim za njegove suvlasnike, a hrvatskom čitatelju mogućnost da roman vidi u drugačijoj razdiobi prioriteta od identiteta iz podrijetla. Thomas Hummitzsch okarakterizirao je *Archive noci* kao »sveeuropski povijesni roman«.²⁵

²⁴ Igor Štiks u intervjuu s Deutschen Presse-Agentur od 12. ožujka 2008.: www.monstersandcritics.de/artikel/200811/article_66923.php/Igor-Stiks-ist-geprägt-von-den-Jahren-des-Zerfalls.

²⁵ Usp.: »Eine europäische Katastrophe — Igor Štiks' *Die Archive der Nacht*«, u: www.berlinerliteraturkritik.de/index.cfm?=17450.

Igor Štiks, *Elijahova stolica* — *Die Archive der Nacht*

Mirrors of European *ars memoriae* and *ars poeticae*

Cultural dialogue through translation

Elijahova stolica is a Croatian novel that has been under discussion since the Leipzig Book Fair in 2008. It owes this attention both to a well-narrated story that appeals to the reader and delves deep into German history and the contemporary history of southern Europe, as well as to the successful translation into German by Marica Bodrožić. For the study of literature and culture, the novel offers rich potential, meaning and references. It also divulges complex and profound principles of construction and prompts the reader to many ideas, memories, associations, and experiences of recognition. Typical for a post-modern author, the novel exhibits on all levels an embedding in intertextual references: to literary texts, as well as cultural and theoretical sources. The novel can be classified in many contexts; indeed that is its particular value and appeal. Some of these contexts can be named here.¹

As a German reader, I read this book and immediately notice the following: the literal German translation of the title would be: *Elijas Thron*. However, the title reads instead: *Die Archive der Nacht*.² What effect does this title have in comparison to the title of the original? Does the German public need this alteration?

Elijah's throne³ belongs to an inventory of Jewish rituals and is the seat upon which circumcisions are performed as a sign of alliance to Yahweh. In the novel, the throne serves as a key metaphor that the author utilises for his discourse on identity, which plays out until the bitter end. Within the history of the people of Israel, as well as in the novel through the combination of the fate of the hero with the fate of Sarajevo, the discourse displays the dimensions of a tragedy that inescapably leads to catastrophe. In addition, the discourse features the appropriate pathos, touches upon the question of being, and deals with the origin of corruption in passion, the tragic error of the hero in the form of an evil discourse (demon) and the survivors that preserve history. The discourse appears to be under the authority of the gods ("the cynical director of this perverted story," p. 58), who lack benevolence and tie every apparent coincidence into a fatal knot with far-reaching consequences: "in a dark game that

¹ For general information on the Croatian novel cf.: Krešimir Nemeč, *Povijest hrvatskog romana od 1945. do 2000.*, Zagreb 2003.

² References to the novel are always given in parentheses, edition Igor Štiks, *Die Archive der Nacht*, Berlin 2008.

³ The translation "a wooden chair for Elias" in the novel's table of contents does not convey the festive-ritual design of the throne.

had chosen me as the victim," (p. 20); "Now I know that my misfortune had been decided upon and confirmed long ago," (p. 21); "The search for truth led me to a cage" (p. 22); "Labyrinth of fate whose meaning could have only been explained by the ancient, decadent gods" (p. 72); "Destiny is the most powerful coincidence of all," (p. 172). The hero senses "the terrible way that fate played with us all" (p. 28).

The hero of the novel, whose identity is defined by his origins at the cost of his own, self-made life ("Is it not enough simply to have a name and to belong to oneself?", p. 70) and who therefore hunts for a victim identity, unwittingly sits on the throne in the old, deserted Synagogue of besieged Sarajevo. This symbol opens up connotations that the hero might be one of the 'elect', whose whole self is determined by his origin, and who is held captive by the perpetrator-victim constellation and the ritual entry into a community. Circumcision was considered a form of dissociation from the Babylonians as a sign of the alliance between Yahweh and Abraham under the protection of the prophet Elijah,⁴ who had appointed himself as zealot for this act. Igor Štiks links the metaphor for the bond of the chosen people to Yahweh with Jacques Derrida's theoretical analysis of the ritualised entry into a community⁵ in order to deploy discourse as tragedy in his novel, in which identity is determined by origin.

The variant title of the German translation remains connected with the novel, for the "God's archive," the "Archives of the Almighty" (p. 40) or the "dark archive" (p. 15) of one's own life and memory ("memory collector", p. 239) are mentioned. This change of title is quite meaningful, for it reflects a fundamentally different point of cultural access to the past than is cultivated in Germany: through memory, rather than identity. German culture supports a broken relation to identity and its metaphors, but it develops the potential of memory in order to avoid forgetting the culpable instances of the past, which were caused by an obsessive and aggressive concept of identity. The replacement of a metaphor for identity with a metaphor for memory in the novel's title can even prove to be more fitting in terms of engaging the German reader.

Compared to the original, this "unfaithful translation" does not present any disadvantages, but rather takes advantage of the potentials of translation: rather than retransmitting or being merely equivalent, such a translation develops additional dimensions of meaning and imports them into the web of meaning that is woven around every text, as demonstrated by the specialist in German studies Peter Utz in his book *Autrement dit*. The translation thus interprets the original text; with the creation of cultural value, it makes possible a reading endowed with meaning and prompts a productive, new reading. Therefore, translating creates additional meaning, not identity, and teaches us to understand culture as a process that constantly redefines its boundaries because these boundaries are repeatedly crossed. In order to

⁴ Cf.: www.jewishencyclopedia.com, and the *Bible*, Gen. 17; Jos. 5, 2-9; Ex. 4, 24-26; 1 Macc. 2, 58. "Elijah fought with passionate fervor for the law and was accepted into heaven."

⁵ The relevant text is Jacques Derrida's essay "Circumfession". Cf.: interview with Igor Štiks "Antički mit ponovio se u Sarajevu", in: *Vjesnik, Kultura utorkom* from 22 August 2006.

see how the translation creates additional and different meaning, the focus is not on the identical aspects, but on the differences.⁶

Just as the German reader can see himself through foreign eyes through this novel, the Croatian reader receives a similar opportunity for communication between two cultures through the German translation.

A reading with an emphasis on the recollection and situates cultural memory brings aspects of the novel to our attention that were, under the dominance of the identity metaphor, always there, but were perhaps less perceivable: Europe as a gigantic space for recollection and memory that bound cultures and their catastrophes with one another throughout time, intertwining them, and that pulls every single human being into a collective fate that he demands for himself, yet cannot control because it engulfs him.

The title of the German edition thus raises issues directly connected with the topic identity, but not more strongly with the identical aspect of cultural memory in terms of reader cognition. The German reader thus makes sure that a more important context in which the novel belongs is not lost in the process of reading the heart-breaking story of identity, i.e. the context of the time-honoured art of memory, an origin of poetry, the art that has been practiced since the beginning of time,⁷ that is today once again given paramount importance for the perception of cultural endowment of meaning, identity and the transgression of boundaries drawn by culture, and that once again correlate explicitly to the art of poetry.⁸

The difference between the German and Croatian titles, with their varying orders of priorities, linguistically encodes the changing cultural relationships that allows both sides foreign access to themselves and makes both cultures readable in their differences.

Already here, it begins to become apparent how the roles of the author and translator converge.

Construction: traditions of literature and literary theory

Igor Štikl reveals himself to be an author educated in literature and theory who has read works by Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, among others. His novel becomes a part of the *World as Text* metaphor in that he weaves a web of intertextual references to already existing literary and theoretical texts. His novel therefore requires an educated reader. With his intricate intertextual references, requisites and devices from an arsenal of literary prowess, the invocation of myths (Oedipus, the Odyssey) and their deconstruction, as well as mirroring of other texts (*Homo faber*) and genres (tragedy, confession), the novel is post-modern in the sense of the ample richness that post-modern texts can develop.

⁶ Cf.: Peter Utz, *Anders gesagt — autrement dit — in other words: Übersetzt gelesen: Hoffmann, Fontane, Kafka, Musil*, Munich 2007.

⁷ Cf.: Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, London 1966.

⁸ Cf.: Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, Munich 2005.

The structure is a result of the weaving of many fibres and can be accurately characterized by the textile metaphor of basketry or a web of text. This provides a fitting symbolization for the weaving of discourses,⁹ for every picture and every strategy is a woven net of reflexive and theoretical references. Igor Štikš chooses such a metaphor for the fate of the hero in the city of Sarajevo: his fate weaves "a thousand fibres in its tragic tapestry" (p. 196).

However, the author does not play with the layers, strategies, requisites and discourses, but rather weaves them into a tragedy and establishes clear priorities in all areas in which the layers can be brought into play with one another. Above all, he remains bound to historical reality and his own personal sadness. He aims at moving the readers, appealing to and awakening their potential to understand.

The intertextuality¹⁰ employed in the novel becomes a memory plot (*Gedächtnishandlung*):¹¹ a recollection of not only texts and literary or culture-theoretical strategies, but also of a world whose losses encourage the development of preservation techniques.

The author plays out the discourse on identity through origin until the bitter end and furnishes the discourse with unconditional inevitability and the malevolence of the gods of ancient tragedy, who seem to concatenate events. Escape is not possible as long as the hero remains in the discourse. With its inner legality, the tragedy encompasses a part of the world, the discourse, and functions as a structuring subtext for the novel. Only "forgetting would have helped" (p. 44), him escape the tragedy: in other words, a counterpoint to memory that the tragedy of the novel engages from the discourse of identity through origin.

The novel enters into an intertextual mirror and dialogue relation to, among others, *Homo faber* by Max Frisch (1957) and the Oedipus tragedies of the Theban trilogy by Sophocles. The city myth, the central myth of the modern and post-modern era, is employed with the besieged Sarajevo and deconstructed: in other words, with the city in which the Author Igor Štikš was born and where the hero of the novel searches for his identity: "because with every thought, I return to each city, which is to disappear conceptually in this moment" (p. 18); Sarajevo is the "last city in a series of this curse" (p. 161), a curse which destroys all the cities on the face of the earth in which cultures come together; a city, "which the gods have abandoned" (p. 331). The hero invokes the city myth of Vienna, the city in which he will commit suicide: "Vienna ... is full of lively demons of the past ... They ripple out of the ramshackle walls, out of the clothing of dead dominions ..." (p. 19). The fall of the city correlates to the fall of the hero. In other words, the city follows the hero, who senses its undertow: "Because the city went along in me. I still wander about in its streets ... and there is no ship there that could

⁹ Cf.: Erika Greber, *Textile Texte. Poetologische Metaphorik und Literaturtheorie. Studien zur Tradition des Wortflechtens und der Kombinatorik*, Cologne 2002.

¹⁰ Karin Herrmann (ed.), *Intertextualität. Perspektiven auf ein interdisziplinäres Arbeitsfeld*, Aachen 2007.

¹¹ Cf.: Renate Lachmann, *Gedächtnis und Literatur. Intertextualität in der russischen Moderne*, Frankfurt a. M. 1990.

bring me away, away from myself." (p. 349); "It was pleasant and slow to sink with the city into darkness." (p. 53).

The contemporary Catalan author Emili Rosales introduced the reverse process in his novel *Tiepolo und die unsichtbare Stadt*.¹² In this novel, the author is led to his place in life, his identity and reconciliation with his origins by an architect's report found in an old, forgotten manuscript and the renewal and reinterpretation of the city myth.

The author and history

The metaphor of editing and re-writing an already existing text (palimpsest), a favourite metaphor of modern and post-modern literature and theory, corresponds to an idea that was already developed in the romantic era: the role of the author as finder and protector, translator and editor of a text found or referenced by him. Igor Štiks develops this role of the author in his novel with a device that had already been used in literature, and he anchors this role in the literary tradition of survivors that report horrible stories.

In the prologue, the reader learns that the hero of the novel, who is a writer, is a protocol; he is a manuscript, left behind as a record of the tragic occurrences of his life. In the epilogue, his friend Ivor from Sarajevo, who spurns the discussion on ethnical affiliation, i.e. identity based on origin, receives the manuscript after the death of the hero and continues with the narrative and a report of how he formulated the manuscript into the story that we read. Ivor represents the mask of the author Igor Štiks. This device places the novel alongside a number of texts with similarly conceptualised constructions. Stories furnished with such devices are products of a great urge for the sensibility to the connection and continuity of all texts, an idea that existed before the post-modern era. Such stories are also products of the experience or theoretical stance that the author does not devise stories, but rather the stories choose their authors.

This strategy expresses the idea that the author is no longer an author, an idea that closely correlates to discourse theory. The source, or the manuscript, that the eye-witness or sufferer of a mysterious and tragic history leaves behind, hides or passes on to a friend is employed by the one who should make the story known to others.

Igor Štiks employs this device twice, each time in pursuit of a different construction purpose. The letter from the mother that was found, hidden-away, launches the tragedy of the hero. His doom consists in a discourse which the hero must follow, and he knows "that this letter came from the depths of misfortune in my life, and everything was already decided in the forefront" (p. 39). He is no longer the subject, but rather the discourse on the search for identity based on origins. The manuscript that he left behind, later given to the author, brings the story of this tragedy into the world, before the reader's eyes. It achieves the possibility of catharsis and sympathy, completing the basic, underlying structure of the tragedy: "One last, meaningless legacy?" (p. 41). Here too, the subject status of the author devolves into the story. The reader presents perhaps one possibility for becoming a subject, for he can choose how to let the story affect his own life. For Igor Štiks, the effect of literature is limited, even

¹² Munich/Zurich 2007.

though he considers literature to be necessary: "We cannot effectively change reality with literature, but I would say that we are nevertheless incapable of living without it."¹³

The novel *The Name of the Rose* by Umberto Eco utilizes a similar strategy: it is structured around a manuscript, found by the author, and defines the role of the author as a translator and editor of translations. The resulting book is embedded in an inextricable web of textual references and transfers.¹⁴

In the Catalan novel *Tiepolo und die unsichtbare Stadt*, the first-person narrator is mysteriously given an old manuscript. The manuscript in turn has a connection with his own life. The author translates its mysterious discovery of an invisible city, a painting by Tiepolo and of a love story, and lets it influence his own life.¹⁵ The construction of the novel *Nachtzug nach Lissabon* by Pascal Mercier¹⁶ is also determined by the discovery of a manuscript that changes the life of the hero as he translates it.

In *She* by H. Rider Haggard, the adventuresome story of Leo and Holly in the country and on the search for the beautiful, terrible and mysterious queen, posterity is made known only to the editor responsible for the publication of the manuscript written by Holly.¹⁷ As in *She*, the recipient of the manuscript in *Die Archive der Nacht* is allowed to decide what to do with the manuscript: whether he wants to destroy or publish it. Gustav Meyrink makes use of this device in *Der Engel vom westlichen Fenster*¹⁸ and *Der Meister des jüngsten Tages* by Leo Perutz¹⁹ is left behind in the form of a manuscript that reports how another, even older manuscript had an influence on the tragic process of the story. E. T. A. Hoffmann published his work *Die Elixire des Teufels* as the posthumous papers of the Brother Medardus, a Capuchin that the editor meets in a cloister.²⁰

With the described device, Igor Štiks expresses in particular that an understanding of the author figure is realized and documented in the literary tradition, as well as in theoretical approaches such as discourse theory. Stories come to the author, choose him and make him their agent. Therefore, the author is no longer really an author, but instead an editor and translator.

Ivor, the hero's friend, is a survivor that sees himself as a protector of the story: "They had left this story behind, and I was the protector" (p. 373). The role of the

¹³ Cf.: www.monstersandcritics.de/artikel/200811/article_66923.php/Igor-Stiks-ist-geprägt-von-den-Jahren-des-Zerfalls.

¹⁴ Umberto Eco, *Der Name der Rose*, Munich 1983, p. 10: "The German translation of my Italian transcription of a French neo-gothic version of a 17th-century edition of a text written by a German monk in Latin in the 14th century."

¹⁵ Emili Rosales, *Tiepolo und die Unsichtbare Stadt*, Munich/Zurich 2007.

¹⁶ Pascal Mercier, *Nachtzug nach Lissabon*, Munich 2006.

¹⁷ H. Rider Haggard, *Ayesha. The Return of She*, New York (first published in *The Windsor Magazine*, London 1904-5).

¹⁸ Gustav Meyrink, *Der Engel vom westlichen Fenster*, Munich 1975 (1st publication, 1927).

¹⁹ Leo Perutz, *Der Meister des Jüngsten Tages*, Vienna 2006 (1st publication 1923).

²⁰ First published in two volumes in Berlin 1815-1816.

author, who brings the story to people directly, consists mainly of translating, like in *The Name of the Rose*: "On the very same day, I began to translate the manuscript by Richard Richter, slowly and patiently. I spent months with the manuscript, paid attention to every word, every comma, and translated the story carefully into another language, my language. With the help of the manuscript, I learned the craft of an author" (p. 374). The hero of the novel perceives himself as object of the story that befalls him and transcribes the story to writing: "The story takes the narrator, no, the writer, by hand... The writer subordinates himself to the dictates of the tale that has gripped him since that April day. The tale itself will determine the end, when it is ready." (p. 126). In an interview, Igor Štiks confirms the positioning of the author as executive: "I was led by the urgent need to tell this story that had engrossed me..."²¹

The story that comes to the author represents a position that Igor Štiks shares, among others, with Arundhati Roy, the author of the novel *The God of Small Things* (1997): "Stories reveal themselves to us... they colonize us. They commission us. They insist on being told."²² In Igor Štiks' novel, the inevitability of the tragedy that inexorably proceeds according to its own rules becomes a metaphor for the relationship between the author and the story, a metaphor for writing that becomes independent of the author.

The novel is a story that Igor Štiks must tell because of his biographical experience. He did so at the level of literary and theoretical development, and sometimes the screws that hold the construction together become apparent. The gleam of post-modern construction principles in the novel are not convincing for every reader: "The work is a great big cliché. The plot and characters are far-fetched; the components (the war, the beauty, the lonely hero) remind me of Hollywood dramas. The construction squeaks and jams, and every little problem becomes ultimately and dramatically acute."²³

For the German reader, the indeterminacy and obsessiveness which the hero falls into in the turbulence of the discourse of the search for identity, as well as the inevitability of the realization of the tragic variation is in itself not comprehensible. In contrast to the pursued Jews in the German memory, the hero willingly gives into the discourse's sphere of control, without any objective necessity. The discourse manifests itself in the siege of Sarajevo in the 1990s as a mirror of the terror of World War II and the Nazi reign. The German reader lacks one aspect that might well be present in the Croatian reader: The German reader does not have access to the biographical experience of the author, who lived the inevitability and inescapability as the discourse of ethnic identity disrupted the cohabitation of the people in Bosnia (and Yugoslavia) and therefore senses the urgency of the topic more strongly: "I was able to conquer some demons. Others are still active."²⁴

²¹ Cf.: www.monstersandcritics.de/artikel/200811/article_66923.php/Igor-Stiks-ist-geprägt-von-den-Jahren-des-Zerfalls.

²² Cf.: ccrma.stanford.edu/~peer/arundhati/Roy.html.

²³ Uwe Stolzmann, "Leben mit einer brüchigen Identität", in: www.dradio.de/dkultur/sendungen/kritik/759640.

For the German reader, the discourse of identity through origin and its self-mirroring, incestuous, warlike complexities (*Homō faber*, *Oedipus*, Simon's fate, the fate of the hero), conferred inevitability and the pathos of the tragedy (incomprehension) conflict and perhaps give the impression of an implausible constructedness. This is a result of the fact that the German reader cannot recognize and share the author's passion, which he achieved through his own experience and sadness. In the novel, the author interposes the distinction between life and text, i.e. the distancing from a post-modern credo: "Human misfortune is unlimited... But as a text, it can only include a certain number of pages" (p. 41). In his novel, Max Frisch creates a mirror for Igor Štiks' account of the relationship between literature and life: "He thinks that literature is based on the possibilities that come from him; what we ourselves or others have lived through" (p. 178).

The German title gives the German reader an Ariadne's thread through which the novel should enter into the realm of memory; a realm which considers the cultural area of Europe as ready for its participants. It gives the Croatian reader the possibility to perceive the novel with a different order of priorities than those associated with identity through origin. Thomas Hummitzsch describes *Die Archive der Nacht* as an 'historical novel for the whole of Europe'.²⁵

²⁴ Igor Štiks in an interview to Deutschen Presse-Agentur from 12 March 2008: www.monstersandcritics.de/artikel/200811/article_66923.php/Igor-Stiks-ist-geprägt-von-den-Jahren-des-Zerfalls.

²⁵ Cf.: "Eine europäische Katastrophe — Igor Štiks' *Die Archive der Nacht*", in: www.berlinerliteraturkritik.de/index.cfm?=17450.