

The “own” vs the “foreign” in the German translation of Pavol Rankov’s novel *Svätý mäsiar zo Šamorína a iné príbehy z čias Malej dunajskej vojny*¹

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Abstract:

The paper deals with cultural phenomena – realia and precedent phenomena – in the novel by contemporary Slovak author Pavol Rankov: Svätý mäsiar zo Šamorína a iné príbehy z čias Malej dunajskej vojny [The Holy Butcher of Šamorín and Other Stories from the Time of the Lesser Danube War, 2016] and in its German translation Der Kleine Donaukrieg (2022). The novel depicts a fictional war between Slovakia and Hungary, with its specific feature being the clash of several cultures and linguo-cultural spaces (Slovak, Hungarian, Roma, Czech) on the linguistic and extra-linguistic levels. The paper presents an interpretative probe into the analysed novel as well as a theoretical definition of the types of cultural phenomena in translation communication, focusing on the ambiguity of the rendering and definition of the “own” and “foreign” in a literary text. In the comparative analysis of the original work and its German translation, we focus on the interpretative, receptive and translational specificities of realia and precedent phenomena reflecting the Roma and Slovak linguo-cultural space.

Interpretive probe into Pavol Rankov’s novel *Svätý Mäsiar zo Šamorína a iné príbehy z čias Malej dunajskej vojny* [The Holy Butcher of Šamorín and Other Stories from the Time of the Lesser Danube War]

Pavol Rankov is one of the most well-established authors on the Slovak literary scene. His prose work is characterized by a distinct poetics, strikingly punctuated stories, unexpected narrative twists and effects (Rédey, 2007). The novel at the centre of our attention is *Svätý Mäsiar zo*

Šamorína a iné príbehy z čias Malej dunajskej vojny (Artforum, 2016), published by Rankov under the pseudonym Peter Pečonka. It is a work combining elements of socio-political, fantasy novel and alternative history.

The central theme of the novel is a fictional conflict – the Lesser Danube War – on the Slovak-Hungarian border. In the storyline, there are battles between members of the Slovak militia and Hungarian separatists, but volunteers from the Czech Republic, church authorities and members of a Roma resistance group are also involved in the fighting. The war interferes in the lives of the protagonists of the novel, who struggle with the question of whether they will participate in the killing or endanger their own lives and the lives of their loved ones. In individual plot lines, Snajperka conveys her fate and love story to the readers, Sapér describes his time in Africa, and Feri, a former butcher from Šamorín, is forced to kill Hungarian women who have committed war crimes against civilians. The individual stories intertwine, only in the end creating a kaleidoscope through which the reader sees the world in new, previously unknown colours and shapes (Šaková, 2017). The reader is drawn into the action in medias res – the novel begins with an interview with a Roma member of a resistance group, which has a form of a single person dialogue (the protagonist asks the questions and at the same time answers them).

The author deals with extremely serious themes in the novel – a fictitious military conflict on the Slovak-Hungarian border with hyperbolized consequences, questions of collective guilt, racism, life and death, while elements of humour and satire form a counterpoint to these themes, which can be interpreted as a certain degree of lightness and detachment from the seriousness of the theme being processed. Rankov (see the discussion Trojica: Tomasz Grabiński – Pavol Rankov) confirms that it was through these elements that he coped with difficult actual events in Slovakia at the time of writing the novel (the attack by armed members of the police force on the Roma settlement in Moldava nad Bodvou and the explosion of the ammunition depot in Nováky, both of which he also mentions in the text of the novel). The theme reflecting the tensions between Slovaks and Hungarians in the border areas can be seen as having existed for a long time, a kind of latent conflict developing in various stages and levels, from the linguistic to the socio-political. However, although the Slovak-Hungarian tension is a long-standing problem, it has never resulted in armed conflict. Several parallels can be found in the novel with contemporary (ethnically or religiously motivated) conflicts, especially the war in Ukraine.

Intertextual elements in the form of excerpts from books of a similar genre (alternative history) on the Czecho-Slovak War (Palán, 2012) or the Civil War in Denmark (Nielsen, 2015)

complete the text. The multimedia superstructure includes QR codes at some places in the text, which show a map of the fictional military conflict or links to quoted excerpts from literary works.

The specificity of the novel can be identified as a clash of several cultures and cultural spaces – Slovak, Hungarian, Roma and Czech. Although it is an alternative history, the author frequently uses a combination of real events, facts, names and realia reflecting the Slovak, Hungarian and Roma linguo-cultural space with fiction. In addition to the realia, the text also contains ethno-cultural units characterized by a strong connotative potential crossing linguistic boundaries – the so-called precedent phenomena (Zahorák, 2022). The object of our research and reflection on “own” vs “foreign” are the aforementioned cultural phenomena in the form of realia and precedent phenomena primarily associated with the Roma and Slovak linguo-cultural space, as these linguistic-cultural codes are characterized by many specificities at the level of reception, interpretation and translation into a different (German) linguo-cultural space.

What is “own” and “foreign” in Pavol Rankov’s novel? A theoretical probe into the issue

The research of cultural phenomena, which, in our opinion, form a kind of umbrella term for interculturally determined phenomena, to which one can also include realia, has been the subject of long-standing attention in world and domestic translation studies from various aspects (see the works of Kadde, 1964; Newmark, 1988; Popovič, 1983; Vilikovský, 1984; Zybatow, 2002; Vlachov – Florin, 2009; Drahotová-Szabó, 2013; Hrdinová, 2017; Koželová, 2017 and others). Žitný, who has devoted himself to systematic research of realia in fiction texts (2008, 2012), understands them in accordance with the Slovak school of translation studies as “factual knowledge, data, information characteristic for representation of a certain period, cultural or geographical environment, lifestyle, especially knowledge about the life and culture of a certain nation” (Žitný, 2008, p.71). They also include linguistic phenomena of the language of another culture (proper names, addresses, multi-word expressions, phraseology, idiomatic, dialect, slang, etc.) (Vilikovský, 1984; Urbanek, 2002). The above definitions of realia imply that it is a broad-spectrum concept, which is able to (mostly) explicitly represent foreign colouring, particular elements and phenomena of a particular linguo-cultural community in an artistic text.

A special category is formed by the so-called precedent phenomena (precedent texts, names, utterances, situations), which, in our opinion, cannot be identified with realia, because they are characterized by several specificities at the level of identification and reception already in the initial linguo-cultural space itself. Our research (Zahorák 2019, 2022) confirms that the

concept of precedence provides an optimal instrumentation for perception and analysis of linguistic-cultural codes (precedent phenomena) in an artistic text that mediate associative relationships with the linguistic-cultural community.

According to Krasnykh (2003, p. 178) precedent phenomena are events, phenomena, objects, names or statements which are: well known to all representatives of the national linguo-cultural community (they have a super-personal character); they are actual from the cognitive point of view; in the discourse of representatives of a particular linguo-cultural community there is a constant renewal of them. Behind the precedent phenomenon there is always a certain common idea for all representatives of a certain national-cultural mentality (linguo-cultural community). Representatives with a different national-cultural mentality may have different associations or ideas (even zero connotations) when perceiving the same precedent phenomenon, while in their linguo-cultural community the phenomenon may not necessarily function or be perceived as precedent (*ibid*). For this reason, it is necessary to approach these phenomena in translation communication extremely sensitively, to know their ethno-social starting point, to consider their associative potential or possible degree of their actualization in the text, and to choose a translation procedure and strategy on this basis.

The opposition between exoticization and naturalization can be considered as a traditional basis of translation communication. While exoticization fully respects and emphasizes the source culture and its elements, naturalization respects the communicative principle of translation and the cultural specificities of the target linguo-cultural space. Use of exoticization procedures is desirable if the translation does not only fulfil a function of linguistic material exchange, but reflects the source context and linguo-cultural space in a relevant way (Koželová, 2016). Several linguo-cultural spaces – Slovak, Hungarian, Roma and partly Czech – including interculturally determined units – realia and precedent phenomena from both synchronic and diachronic perspectives – are significantly represented in the analysed novel.

The primary object of our qualitative research are the realia and precedent phenomena associated with the Roma and Slovak linguo-cultural space, as these units are characterized by many specificities and ambiguities of the opposition “own” vs “foreign” in the analysed work. The relationship between “own” and “foreign” in the translation process should be perceived at the level of connotation, not denotation (Koželová, 2016). In some respect, the elements reflecting the Roma linguo-cultural space could be seen as elements of a so-called “third” cultural space. According to Mocarz (2008), it is a set of elements of the source and/or translation text that are not characteristic both for the language and culture of the original as well as for the language and culture of the translation. However, it is important to note that the

definition of “own” and “foreign” in the above-mentioned context is not unambiguous – the Roma people are a large national or ethnic minority living in the territory of Slovakia and many of them identify their nationality as Slovak. According to the National Analytical Report of 2021 – Census of Population, Houses and Flats² (), 1.2% of the population, which amounts to 67.2k inhabitants, declare themselves to be Roma. It is interesting to note that in the 2021 census, it was possible to indicate an additional nationality, which is understood as a resident’s belonging to a nation or ethnic group. In that category, the most common nationality in Slovakia was Roma. Out of the total number of inhabitants declaring another nationality, almost 89k inhabitants (29.1 %) declared Roma as another nationality. The most numerous group that declared Roma as an additional nationality was the population that first declared Slovak nationality (77.3k inhabitants, which represents 86.9%). The above statistical data confirm the difficulty of self-identification and at the same time a clear definition of “own” vs “foreign”, which in the analysed novel is manifested not only in the nationality issue, but also at the level of linguistic specifics; in the depiction of the Roma and Slovak linguo-cultural community, including its values, ideas, etc.

Comparative analysis of selected linguistic-cultural phenomena in Pavol Rankov’s Novel *Svätý Mäsiar zo Šamorína a iné príbehy z čias Malej dunajskej vojny* (The Holy Butcher of Šamorín and Other Stories from the Time of the Lesser Danube War)

As we have already mentioned, in the analysed novel by Pavel Rankov there is a clash of several cultures – Slovak, Roma, Hungarian and partly Czech. The aforementioned, rather broad-spectrum (inter)cultural dimension is represented in an explicit form in the novel, both at the level of realia associated with a particular linguo-cultural space, and in the implicit form through precedent phenomena with strong ethno-cultural potential. In the comparative analysis, we present extracted examples of realia and precedent phenomena in the original, i.e. in the Slovak language (Rankov, *Svätý mäsiar zo Šamorína a iné príbehy z čias Malej dunajskej vojny*, 2016 [The Holy Butcher from Šamorín and Other Stories from the Time of the Lesser Danube War]) and in their translation into German language (Rankov, *Der Kleine Donaukrieg*, 2022, translation: Slávka Rude-Porubská). We focus on linguistic-cultural phenomena reflecting the Roma and Slovak linguo-cultural space, explaining them, placing them in context and analysing their reception specificities (in the source and target linguo-cultural space), including the translation practices and strategies applied.

Original: *Mama bola gadžovka, ale v srdci, či ako to povedať, bola e Romňi viac než otec. Na leto nás brala k otcovým príbuzným na východ. Nie do osady. Do Košíc. Nie! Nie Lunik. Gadžovský panelák, kde láskavo dovolili žiť jednej integrovanej cigánskej rodine [...]* (2016. p. 10). [My mother was a gadjo, but inside her heart, or how should I say it, she was e Romňi more than my father. She used to take us to my father's relatives in Eastern Slovakia for the summer. Not a Roma settlement. To Košice, to the city. No! Not Lunik IX! A gadjo block of flats, where they kindly allowed one integrated gypsy family to live].

Translation: *Meine Mutter war eine Gadschi, aber im Herzen oder wie man das sagen soll, war sie mehr Romni als mein Vater. Im Sommer hat sie uns immer zu Vaters Verwandten in die Ostslowakei mitgenommen. Nein, keine Roma-Siedlung. Nach Košice, in die Großstadt. Nein! Nicht Lunik IX! Ein ganz normaler Gadscho-Plattenbau, wo man freundlicherweise einer gut integrierten Roma-Familie erlaubt hat zu wohnen. [...]* (2022. p. 10).

In the first chapter of the analysed novel, the author frequently uses single and multi-word Romani expressions that explicitly point to the identification of the character with the Roma ethnic group. A paradox, which confirms the aforementioned ambiguity of the perception of the Roma and Slovak linguo-cultural space (the opposition of own vs foreign), is that the character speaks in Slovak, and Romani expressions “only” complete his utterances. Another paradox in the above-mentioned context can be considered that the character points out that his father married a non-Roma woman because he wanted to assimilate with the whites, and, on the contrary, his mother married a Roma man because she felt that she had a “gypsy soul” (2016, p. 11). *Gadjo* is a Romani expression for a white (non-Roma) citizen, *e Romňi* is a term used for a Roma woman (see the Romani dictionary). The German translation respects the author's intention and leaves the above terms in their exoticized form – *Gadschi, Romni*.

The geographical realia *Košice*, the second largest city in Slovakia and located in the east of the country, and *Lunik* – a district of Košice, which is predominantly inhabited by Roma citizens and is characterized by extremely poor social and hygienic conditions, are also represented in the excerpt. In the German translation, the translator uses intra-textual explication – *Nach Košice, in die Großstadt* (literally translated – *Do Košíc, do veľ'komesta* [To Košice, to the city]), by which she optimally facilitates reception of the above-mentioned geographical realia in the German linguo-cultural space. In the Slovak linguistic-cultural space, *Luník* is associated with the above associations, and although the text implies that it is a Roma settlement (*Romasiedlung*), it cannot be assumed that the connotative potential in the German and Slovak linguistic-cultural space will have the same intensity.

Original: *Muzika vyhrávala do noci. Prišli šingune, policajti. Rušenie nočného pokoja. Romáci boli už opití [...]* (2016. p. 13). [Music played into the night. Šingune, the policemen, came. Disturbing the night peace. The Roma were already drunk].

Translation: *Bis in die Nacht hinein spielte die Musik. Dann kamen die Šingune, die Polizisten. Von wegen Störung der Nachtruhe. Die Roma waren schon betrunken [...]* (2022. p. 13).

There are Romani expressions naming persons or professions used in the text. Since in some cases the author mentions their Slovak pendant in parallel (in Slovak *šingune, policajti*) [šingune, the policemen], in German their reception can be described as unambiguous in both Slovak and German linguo-cultural or translation space.

Original: *Po rómsky vedia všetci okrem mňa. Ale učím sa. Čierni? V množnom čísle kale a vlci sa povie ruva. Ruvestar balevas na ela. Nebude z vlka slanina.* (2016. p. 10). [Everybody knows Romani except me. But I am learning. Black? Kale in plural and wolves are ruva. **Ruvestar balevas na ela. There will be no bacon from the wolf**].

Translation: *Romani sprechen alle außer mir. Aber ich bin dabei, die Sprache zu lernen. Schwarz? Kale im Plural, und Wölfe heißt Ruva. Ruvestar balevas na ela. Auch im Schafspelz ist der Wolf kein Lamm.* (2022. p. 10).

The above excerpt again demonstrates the Romani colouring at the linguistic level of the work. The author uses the proverb *Ruvestar balevas na ela*, while in parallel he gives its Slovak translation *Nebude z vlka slanina* [There will be no bacon from the wolf] (in the meaning “there will never be anything good out of the bad”). The excerpt can be interpreted as an implicit reference to the prejudices of Slovaks against the Roma. The German translation uses a semantically adequate phrase in a modified form *Auch im Schafspelz ist der Wolf kein Lamm* (literally translated ‘a wolf is not a lamb even in sheep’s clothing’). *Wolf im Schafspelz* (literally translated *Vlk v ovčom rúchu* [A wolf in sheep’s clothing]) is a biblical idiom that denotes a false, insincere person who pretends to be gracious but means harm; it denotes a secret, hidden enemy. The transliteration can be judged optimal in terms of both meaning and expression.

Original: *Milanko vďaka nám získal posmrtnú slávu. Čoskoro po ňom nasledovala tá orvoška, ktorá odmietla poslať Leona ku kardiológovi. Nie, nezabili. Odsekli sme jej pravú ruku [...]* (2016. p. 17). [Thanks to us, Milanko gained posthumous fame. He was soon followed by that **Orvoška** who refused to send Leon to a cardiologist. No, not killed. We chopped off her right hand].

Translation: *Milanko wurde dank uns posthumer Ruhm zuteil. Kurz danach ist ihm **die Orvoška** gefolgt, **die Ärztin**, die es abgelehnt hatte, Leon zum Kardiologen zu schicken. Nein, nicht getötet. Wir haben ihr die rechte Hand abgehackt. [...]* (2022, p. 18).

However, there are also Romani expressions in the novel that the author does not duplicate with a Slovak equivalent. Since expressions associated with Roma ethno-culture are undoubtedly characterized by a high degree of exoticization in the German linguo-cultural space, use of the intra-text explication *die Orvoška, die Ärztin* (literally translated *orvoška* – ‘a doctor’), which does not disturb the fluency of the target text and is aimed at facilitating the reception process, can be considered justified.

Original: *Otec ma nevychovával ako **Róma**. Nútil ma učiť sa, kontroloval, či mám slušných kamarátov. Väčšinou som nemal žiadnych, lebo aj mojich spolužiakov kontrolovali rodičia a nedovolili by im kamarátiť sa s **cigošom**.* (2016. p. 11). [My father didn’t raise me as a **Roma**. He forced me to learn, he made sure I had decent friends. I didn’t have any friends most of the time, because my classmates were also controlled by their parents and they wouldn’t let them be friends with a **gyppo**].

Translation: *Mein Vater hat mich nicht als **Rom** erzogen. Er hat mich zum Lernen gezwungen, er hat kontrolliert, ob ich anständige Freunde habe. Meistens hatte ich gar keine, weil auch die Eltern meiner Mitschüler ihre Kinder kontrolliert haben und ihnen nie erlaubt hätten, mit einem **Ziggo** befreundet zu sein.* (2022, p. 11).

Use of the lexeme *Roma* vs *Gypsy* in the Slovak linguistic-cultural space can be considered a specific linguistic-cultural phenomenon with regard to its use in different contexts characterized by different degrees of expressiveness. In the text of the novel, we find several denotations - *Roma*, *gypsy*, or *gyppo*. In this context, it is necessary to realize that the historical origin of the word *gypsy* is related to the ethnic group and has a predominantly negative or even pejorative meaning (Havířová, 2020). In the countries of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Roma are referred to as *Cigáni* (‘Gypsies’) – *Cikán* (Czech), *Zigeuner* (German), *Zinkali* (Italian), *Cygan* (Polish), *Cigányi* (Hungarian), *Zigenare* (Swedish), with the aforementioned lexeme being mostly associated with negative connotations (see Dunko, 2019, p. 51). An analogous situation is also observed in the excerpt – in the Slovak original, the author uses the lexeme *Roma* and a stylistically symptomatic lexeme with negative connotations *gyppo*. The German translation reflects the above-mentioned specificity, appropriately distinguishing between the pendants *Roma* and stylistically symptomatic *Ziggo*.

Original: *Ani mama už nežije. Po otcovej smrti začala dosť piť. Zomrela na rakovinu žalúdka. Rýchly priebeh, vraj to môže spôsobiť alkohol. Jej pohreb v **Slávičom údolí** bol najkrajší cigánsky **bašavel**.* (2016. p. 11). [Even my mother is not alive any more. She started drinking quite a lot after my father's death. She died of stomach cancer. Fast progression, supposedly caused by alcohol. Her funeral in the cemetery in **Slávičie údolie** was the most beautiful **Gypsy Bashavel**].

Translation: *Meine Mutter lebt auch nicht mehr. Nach Vaters Tod hat sie mit Trinken angefangen. Sie ist an Magenkrebs gestorben. Ziemlich rascher Verlauf, das kann angeblich vom Alkohol kommen. Ihre Beerdigung **auf dem Friedhof im Slávičie údolie** war das allerschönste **Roma-Başavel**.* (2022, p. 11-12).

The lexeme *Bashavel* means *to play, to play on an instrument* in the Romani language, and it is also a dialect word from the Slovak region of Šariš, which means fun. It is also used in this sense in the text (*the most beautiful Gypsy Bashavel*), while the translator leaves it in its exoticized form – *das allerschönste Roma-Başavel*. In this excerpt, a geographical realia associated with the Slovak linguo-cultural space – *Slávičie údolie* – is also represented. It is the largest cemetery in Bratislava, which was founded in 1912 and was originally intended for poor citizens. In the context of reciprocating the above-mentioned unit, it cannot be assumed that the German reader has the necessary knowledge of the realia. The intra-textual explication in the form *auf dem Friedhof im Slávičie údolie* (literally translated as ‘at the cemetery in Slávičie údolie’) can therefore be evaluated as justified and functional. At the same time, the analysed excerpt can be interpreted as a stereotypical image of the Roma living in Slovakia, of the liveliness of their ethnicity, their emotionality and inclination towards entertainment, music and exuberance.

Original: *Mesiac po maminej smrti som mal bakalárske štátnice. Sociológiu. Potom som išiel na magisterské štúdium politológie. Predstavte si študentov politológie – mladí rozhľadení ľudia, všetci plynule hovoria po anglicky, čítajú knihy v cudzích jazykoch, majú plnú hubu tolerancie, sociálnej inklúzie, multikulturalizmu, participácie. A potom s nimi sedíte na voliteľnom predmete Slovenská republika a Rómovia a všetko je inak. Pre mňa pojem rómsky problém znamenal otázku, ako začleniť Rómov do slovenskej spoločnosti. Pre nich rómsky problémy rovná sa existencia Rómov na Slovensku. Ak by zmizli Rómovia, zmizol by problém. Im skrátka prekážalo aj to, že nejaký chudák ide nadržanom do lesa, nazbiera za vedro hribov a potom sa ich pokúša predat' pri ceste. Pýtate sa, čo im na tom mohlo prekážať? Že ten chudák je Róm!* (2016, p. 12). [I had my Bachelor's final exam a month after my mother's death. In

sociology. Then I continued studying political science for my Master's degree. Imagine political science students – young, bright people, all fluent in English, reading books in foreign languages, full of tolerance, social inclusion, multiculturalism, participation. And then you sit with them in the elective course The Slovak Republic and the Roma and everything is different. For me, the concept of the Roma problem meant the question of how to integrate the Roma into Slovak society. For them, the Roma problem equals the existence of the Roma in Slovakia. If the Roma people disappeared, the problem would disappear. They were also bothered by the fact that some poor man would go into the forest in the morning, pick a bucket of mushrooms and then try to sell them by the roadside. What, you ask, could have bothered them? The fact that the poor man is a Roma!].

Translation: *Einen Monat nach dem Tod meiner Mutter habe ich meinen Bachelorabschluss gemacht. In Soziologie. Danach habe ich weiter studiert, Master in Politikwissenschaft. Stellt euch mal die Studis vor – lauter junge Leute mit super Allgemeinwissen, alle sprechen fließend Englisch, lesen Bücher in Fremdsprachen und haben das Maul voll mit Toleranz, sozialer Inklusion, Multikulturalität und Partizipation. Und dann sitzt du mit denen im Wahlfach „Die Slowakische Republik und das Roma-Problem“, und alles ist anders. Für mich ging es bei dem Begriff „Roma-Problem“ darum, wie man die Roma in die slowakische Mehrheitsgesellschaft integrieren kann. Für die anderen bestand das Roma-Problem in der Existenz von Roma in der Slowakei. Wären die Roma weg, wäre auch das Problem weg. Sie hat sogar gestört, dass so 'ne arme Sau am frühen Morgen durch den Wald läuft, einen Eimer voll Pilze sammelt und dann versucht, sie am Straßenrand zu verkaufen. Ihr fragt, was sie daran gestört haben könnte? Dass die arme Sau halt ein Rom ist! (2022, p. 12).*

Not only Romani expressions and elements reflecting the Roma linguo-cultural space in explicit form are represented in the text. There are also passages that are characterized by a particularly strong connotative potential for the speakers of the language (i.e. the Slovak reader) and that reflect the issues of integration, racism and intolerance of Slovaks towards the Roma. In these terms, the above-mentioned demonstration crossing the “linguistic boundaries” can be classified as a precedent phenomenon, namely as a precedent situation. Krasnykh (2003) understands a precedent situation as a model situation, associated with certain connotations, the differential symptoms of which belong to the cognitive base of representatives of a certain linguo-cultural community.

In the analysed excerpt, a Roma who is part of a Roma resistance group composed of volunteers from Slovakia and Hungary reflects on the fact that even university-educated Slovaks are prejudiced against Roma; they are xenophobic and racist. He demonstrates his

argument with the example of a “poor man” who picks mushrooms in the forest and then tries to sell them on the roadside. He refers to a rather frequent phenomenon in the Slovak linguo-cultural space – Roma (often Roma children) who sell mushrooms or blueberries they have picked by the roadside. Since the above-mentioned associative potential of the precedent phenomenon is nationally determined (the precedent situation can be assigned to a national base), we believe that in the German context (both in the plane of reception and interpretation) the plane of precedence disappears and may remain shrouded in fiction for the German reader.

Original: *Áno, neuveriteľné, aké banálne pocity vedia rozpútať vojnu. Naozajstné boje sa v Nových Zámkoch začali okolo železničnej stanice. Bývali sme prakticky hneď tam, v jednom z panelákov na **Cyrilo-metodskej**. O dvesto metrov ďalej stredom **Ulice Ľudovíta Štúra** viedla frontová línia. Už len pomenovania tých ulíc museli Maďarov celé roky dráždiť.* (2016. p. 179).
[Yes, it is unbelievable, how trivial feelings can unleash war. The real fighting in Nové Zámky started around the railway station. We lived practically right there, in one of the blocks of flats on **Cyril and Methodius Street**. Two hundred metres further on, the front line ran through the middle of **Ľudovít Štúr Street**. Only the names of those streets must have irritated the Hungarians for years].

Translation: *Ja, kaum zu glauben, was für banale Emotionen einen Krieg auslösen können. Die richtigen Kämpfe sind in Nové Zámky um den Bahnhof rum ausgebrochen. Wir haben praktisch gleich dort gewohnt, in einem von den Plattenbauten in der **Cyrlometodská ulica**. Zweihundert Meter weiter, in der Mitte der **Ulica Ľudovíta Štúra**, ist die Frontlinie verlaufen. Schon die Namen von den Straßen müssen den Ungarn die ganzen Jahre ein Dorn im Auge gewesen sein* (2022, s. 183).

On the level of precedence, we also identify precedent names (street names) associated with the Slovak linguo-cultural space. Cyril (Constantine) and Methodius were Slavic apostles active in the 9th century in the territory of Great Moravia, who brought the Glagolitic script and spread Christianity. They are among the most important figures in the history of the Slavs and Slovakia itself. Ľudovít Štúr was the most important representative of Slovak national life, the codifier of the Slovak literary language. Various objects in Slovakia are named after these personalities – squares, streets, parks or schools.

The names of Cyril and Methodius, Ľudovít Štúr, as well as other important figures (M. R. Štefánik, A. Dubček) symbolize the pillars of anthropocentric values in Slovak ethno-culture (Sipko, 2011). They are associated with identity, Slovak national revival, codification of the Slovak language, etc. in the Slovak linguo-cultural space. In the novel, the war on the Slovak-

Hungarian border occurs, and the level of precedence in the excerpt lies in the optimal identification and reception of the precedent names of significant personalities mentioned above. There are streets named after them, which “must have irritated the Hungarians for years” – because the aforementioned figures significantly advocated for the separateness of the Slavic or Slovak nation (the tension of Slovak-Hungarian relations is a long-standing real problem at the same time). However, national determined precedent names (Cyril and Methodius, Ľudovít Štúr) in the German space do not possess the level of precedence and are not characterized by a strong connotative potential.

Conclusion

In this paper we focus on the interpretative, receptive and translational specificities of selected cultural phenomena – realia and precedent phenomena reflecting the Roma and Slovak linguo-cultural space in the translation of the novel by contemporary Slovak author Pavol Rankov *Svätý mäsiar zo Šamorína a iné príbehy z čias Malej dunajskej vojny* (2016) [The Holy Butcher of Šamorín and Other Stories from the Time of the Lesser Danube War] into German, which was published under the title *Der Kleine Donaukrieg* (2022) in a translation by Slávka Rude-Porubská. The novel is an alternative history describing a fictional armed conflict on the Slovak-Hungarian borderlands, characterized by a broad representation of realia and precedent units in both synchronic and diachronic planes, while in this paper we have focused on cultural phenomena primarily associated with the Roma or Slovak linguo-cultural space. In the context of the challenging national-ethnic question (on the linguistic and extra-linguistic level) of the Roma in the Slovak linguo-cultural space, it was particularly stimulating to observe which analysed phenomena can be considered “own” and which can be considered “foreign” in the context of the novel.

The analysed examples of realia and precedent units show that the novel is characterized by many nationally determined specificities at the level of reception and interpretation. The translator’s solutions and strategies in translating the analysed realia (exoticization, intra-text explication) testify to the translator’s erudition, her high degree of sensitivity to culturally determined phenomena and, at the same time, to a unified conception of translation. The illustrative examples of precedent phenomena imply that the author uses ethno-cultural units showing a strong affinity with the Slovak linguo-cultural space, while their reception is determined primarily by the knowledge of their ethno-social starting point in the initial linguo-cultural space.

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Endnotes:

¹ In English 'The Holy Butcher of Šamorín and Other Stories from the Time of the Lesser Danube War'.

² See https://www.scitanie.sk/storage/app/media/dokumenty/SODB_Narodna_analyticka_sprava.pdf

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Material basis

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