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Introductory Comments

Abstract

The 10th, jubilee issue of *Colloquia Humanistica* (2021) contains a thematic section: *Heritage and the Post-Socialist City: Cultural and Social Perspectives*. Alongside this section devoted to cities and towns of Central and Eastern Europe, in the issue's *Materials* section we publish the first Polish poetic translation, authored by Małgorzata Borowska, of the second poem by Grigor Prličev (1830/31–1893), *Skanderbeg* (1862, Σκενδέρμπεης). The translation is accompanied by two papers/commentaries in English, for a wider audience prepared by Małgorzata Borowska and Jolanta Sujecka. The *Discussions, Presentations, Book Reviews*, section features three reviews, including a presentation of the monograph “*Et les Juifs bulgares furent sauvés*”: *Une histoire des saviors sur la Shoah en Bulgarie* by Nadège Ragaru.

Keywords: *Colloquia Humanistica*, jubilee, Polish translation, Grigor Prličev, *Skanderbeg*.

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And here we are, celebrating our little jubilee! We present readers with the 10th issue of *Colloquia Humanistica*, the annual of the Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences. Ten years is not long, but for the editors who established the journal in 2012, it is the first jubilee worth recording, especially when our readers on Facebook congratulating us on the ninth issue noticed the inexorable passage of time.

Like its predecessors, the 10th issue includes an interesting thematic section, this time dedicated to the cities and towns of Central and Eastern Europe *Heritage and the Post-Socialist City: Cultural and Social Perspectives*. The idea that motivated the section's editors and initiators, Maciej Falski and Linda Kovářová, fits in very well with the annual's profile. More than thirty years have passed since the disintegration of the Eastern Bloc, and almost thirty since the break-up of Yugoslavia. It is worth looking more closely at the multifaceted thinking on ways of understanding and building urban reality from the distance created by the temporal perspective, and at the same time listening to the voices of those who were children or very young people when the walls were coming down.

Tanja Petrović presents the unwanted heritage of Pula, a Croatian city on the peninsula of Istria ("Heritage of Liminality: Remnants of the Military in the Istrian City of Pula in the Aftermath of Yugoslav Socialism"), the long-time headquarters of the Yugoslav navy and also a city with a prominently working class profile. Proposing an open-minded attitude to this unwanted legacy, she also takes into account the opinions of Pula's residents, who perceive their city as being multicultural as well as working class.

Denis S. Ermolin analyses local narratives in present-day Albanian and Serbian communities that were once part of the same city: Pristina, showing the memory of mutual tolerance from Yugoslav times, which corresponds well to the centuries-long Ottoman heritage ("Multiple Voices of the Past: (Hi)stories and Memories from the Ethnically Mixed Neighbourhoods in Pristina").

Analysing the experimental Solidarita estate built in Prague in the years 1946–1951, Tereza Hodúlová ("Reinforcing Place Attachment Through Its Disruption: An Ethnographic Example from the Solidarita Housing Estate in Prague") also makes us aware of residents' ties to the place where they live, which encourages us to rethink the concept of a housing estate.

Naum Trajanovski ("The First Sociological Study, the Polish Sociological Expert Aid to Macedonia in the Mid-1960s and the Post-

-Earthquake History of Interethnic Relations in Skopje”) introduces us to the extremely interesting history (especially to a Polish audience) of the first sociological study (conducted in the period from December 1964 to April 1965) that was part of Poland’s expert aid for Skopje after the 1963 earthquake but was never utilised. Trajanovski convincingly argues that it can still be studied as an introduction to a better understanding of the ethnic relations in the city.

The paper by three Buryatian authors: Bato Dondukov, Oyuna Dorzhigushaeva and Galina Dondukova (“Buddhism and Urbanism in Post-Soviet Buryatia”) takes us into the world of religious revival in the space of post-Soviet Buryatia, in Ulan-Ude. The authors investigate how global and local Buddhist organisations are represented in the Ulan-Ude cityscape.

In a similar vein, the image of symbolic urban practices in five cities of southern and eastern Ukraine (Dnipro, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Odesa and Kharkiv) leads Yevhen Rachkov to draw conclusions on the power of historical memory, whose capacity enables the blending of separate and seemingly opposite themes, i.e. national Ukrainian ones as well as Soviet ones, and, finally, those borrowed from the West (“Symbolic and Ritual Practices in the Post-Soviet Urban World: Symbolic Space and Festivity in the Cities of Eastern and Southern Ukraine, 1990s–2010s”).

In fact, the communist legacy of cities and towns in Central and Eastern Europe as seen through the eyes of young researchers from the region is an interesting example of self-reflection on the recent past, which is dominated not so much by nostalgia but rather by critical thinking about the latest ideas of the governments of the places under scrutiny.

In the *Materials* section we publish the first Polish translation, from the original Greek, of the second poem written by Grigor Prličev (1830/31–1893), *Rzecz o Skanderbegu* (1862, Σκενδέρμπεης), produced by Małgorzata Borowska. The poet from Ohrid (now Republic of North Macedonia) never finished this work, nor was it published in his lifetime. In 1862 the poem was entered in a competition organised by the University of Athens. This was the second competition in which Grigor Stavrev Prličev took part, but contrary to the first one in 1860 (Sujecka, 2012), he did not win. Nevertheless the poem was translated into Macedonian, Bulgarian and Albanian. The first poetic translation was published in Macedonian in 1961, authored by Georgi Stalev (Prličev, 1961), who based his text on the prose translation from the original Greek penned by Mitre Damjanovski. The first prose translation into Bulgarian, which was also a critical edition, was written by Khristo Kodov and published in 1967 (Përlichev, 1967), while a poetic translation into Albanian was published in 1968 (Përlichev, 1968).

Two poetic translations appeared in 1970, in Macedonian by Mihail D. Petruševski (Prličev, 1970, pp. 1–626, 1971, pp. 627–1603) and in Bulgarian by Aleksandŭr Milev (Pŭrlichev, 1970). Petruševski's translation was also published in a separate book in 1974 as a critical edition (Prličev, 1974).

This means that Borowska's brilliant Polish poetic translation, which has preserved the charm of the original, is a very special occurrence. It is the first time that Prličev's poem has been translated into a non-Balkan language and thus has emerged from its regional backwater, while literary Polish has expanded its time-space continuum to include the culture of the Balkans. One might justifiably ask why we translate works of literature that belong to minor literatures and additionally come from historically distant times. The answer is actually simple: because we want to better understand the context of cultures that gave rise to works important for the region. They enable us to understand the region better, and perhaps even ourselves and our own complicated identity. Prličev's poem is essentially a Balkan product through and through, and one might also say that it was produced at the junction of cultures: Greek, Macedonian, Bulgarian, and Albanian if we take into account the eponymous hero, Skanderbeg. No wonder that the first translations appeared in precisely those three languages.

The Polish poetic translation is accompanied by two papers/commentaries in English, for a wider audience. The one by Borowska, the translation's author ("The Slavic Homer: From Grigorios Stavridis to Grigor Prličev"), outlines the story behind the two poetry competitions in which Grigor Prličev took part, complete with a full translation of the grounds for the decisions made by both competition committees, and also presents a profile of the author very different from what we find in existing literature of the subject; it is well worth reading. The other paper/commentary ("Bilingualism (Multilingualism) in the Balkans: Bulgarian and Macedonian Exemplification") attempts to reconstruct the multilingualism of the Balkans in the nineteenth century as the context for the none-too-easy identity choices of *Skanderbeg's* author, whose oeuvre fell on a period when young nationalisms in Turkish Europe were changing the region for ever.

In the *Discussions, Presentations, Book Reviews*, section we publish three reviews and a paper by Ewelina Drzewiecka ("Accuracy and Reception: On Theological and Aesthetic Novelty in Two Novels by Teodora Dimova") on the prose of the contemporary Bulgarian writer Teodora Dimova. The author analyses two novels by the Bulgarian writer using the concepts proposed by Paul Ricoeur, while also raising some fundamental issues: how does one paraphrase a biblical story and remain orthodox?

Raymond Detrez presents the monograph "*Et les Juifs bulgares furent sauvés*": *Une histoire des saviors sur la Shoah en Bulgarie* by Nadège Ragaru,

published in 2020. This book by the French Shoah researcher is unique in many ways, and we are very happy that such an eminent scholar agreed to review this publication for *Colloquia Humanistica*. In her monograph, Nadège Ragaru writes about the extraordinary rescue of the Bulgarian Jews, and at the same time uncovers the structures of official Bulgarian discourse, which – like many national narratives in the Balkans and in Europe – was developed around the given population's positive behaviours. Detrez aptly notes that Bulgarian society, like many others in Europe, has not faced up to the full truth about the Shoah and the role played in it by Bulgarian citizens. Ragaru points to how the government of Bulgaria, yielding to pressure from its ally – Nazi Germany, deported 11,343 Jews from the territories of Greek Thrace and Yugoslav Macedonia, which were under Bulgarian control at the time. At the same time, the French scholar shows a slight change in the perception of the Shoah in Bulgaria after the fall of communism. And although the Bulgarian narrative is still dominated by belief in the rescue of “our Jews”, while the deportation of the Jewish population from Macedonia and Thrace seems to be overlooked, the internationalisation of the issue of the Shoah after the fall of communism gives hope that things will change in future.

We give you the 10th, jubilee issue of *Colloquia Humanistica*, the whole of which is devoted to issues of identity. In the thematic section, the *Discussions, Presentations, Book Reviews*, section and, finally, also the core part of the issue, the authors' interest is focused on problems of identity: ambiguous, fluid, multi-tiered, and often simply endangered.

We wish you interesting reading.

Jolanta Sujecka

Warsaw, 14 November 2021

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Uwagi wstępne

Dziesiąty, jubileuszowy numer „Colloquia Humanistica” (2021) zawiera blok tematyczny zatytułowany: *Heritage and the Post-Socialist City: Social and Cultural Perspectives*. Obok poświęconego miastom i miasteczkom Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej bloku tematycznego, w dziale *Materials* publikujemy pierwszy polski poetycki przekład drugiego poematu Grigora Prličeva (1830/31–1893), *Rzecz o Skanderbegu* (1862, Σκενδέρμπεης), autorstwa Małgorzaty Borowskiej. Przekładowi towarzyszą dwa artykuły/komentarze w języku angielskim, dla szerszej publiczności, których autorkami są Małgorzata Borowska i Jolanta Sujecka. W dziale *Discussions, Presentations, Book reviews*, publikujemy trzy recenzje, wśród nich znajduje się prezentacja monografii francuskiej badaczki Zagłady Nadège Ragaru, *“Et les Juifs bulgares furent sauvés”: Une histoire des saviors sur la Shoah en Bulgarie*.

Słowa kluczowe: „Colloquia Humanistica”, jubileusz, polski przekład, Grigor Prličev, *Rzecz o Skanderbegu*.

Note

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