

THE SLOVAK TRANSLATION SCHOOL OF NITRA.  
IDEAS AND SCHOLARS

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Outline of ideas on translation in Slovakia

The general groundwork for the scientific study of translation in Slovakia dates back to the 1950s. Here a significant role was played by Slovak and Czech linguists, literary scholars and hands-on translators. This is connected with the established traditions in research on language and literature (B. Havránek, K. Horálek, B. Ilek, J. Levý, F. Wollman, K. Hausenblas, V. Kochol, J. Felix, O. Čepan). The work carried out during that period can already be viewed as laying the foundations for a general theory of translation, focusing on linguistics, stylistics, versification and literary science. Research concentrated principally on literary translation in line with the social requirements of the time. At the time the majority of the translations produced were translations of literary works.

Systematic thinking on translation in Slovakia began developing from the end of the 1960s, when Felix's and Čepan's analytical interpretation approach to a translation text<sup>1</sup> was joined by the semiotic communication concept associated predominantly with Anton Popovič and František Miko. A. Popovič surveyed the previous period of Czech and Slovak translation science (1974)<sup>2</sup> and, building on the work of J. Levý (1963)<sup>3</sup> and Polish scholars (J. Sławiński, E. Balcerzan), developed his own concept based on the model of literary communication applied since 1968 in literary research by the Cabinet of Literary Communication at the Pedagogical Faculty in Nitra.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. J. Felix, *Slovenský preklad v perspektíve histórie a dneška*, "Romboid", 3 (1968) 2, pp. 3-10; 5-6, pp. 80-94; O. Čepan, *Preklad ako proces*, "Romboid", 12 (1972) 3, pp. 66-70.

<sup>2</sup> A. Popovič, *Umelecký preklad v ČSSR*. Výskum. Bibliografia. Martin, Matica slovenská, 1974.

<sup>3</sup> J. Levý: *Umění překlada*. Praha, Akademia, 1963.

<sup>4</sup> Now the Institute of Literary and Artistic Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Constantine the Philosopher, Nitra, Slovakia.

Popovič, a founding personality of the Cabinet, is well-known as the author of communication translation theory applying Miko's expressional concept of style (the expressional system) and the communication model of the text which constitute the basis of the Nitra School's methodology.

Popovič applied the general literary communication model of *Author – Text – Receiver* to translation. Under the communication concept he views the translation act as a communicative confrontation with the act of original creation expressed by the model *Author – Text 1 – Receiver 1 = Translator – Text 2 – Receiver 2*. Basically, according to Popovič, the translation process involves the confrontation of the systems of two senders, two texts and two receivers.<sup>5</sup> In describing and evaluating translation operations, Popovič bases himself on the work of F. Miko,<sup>6</sup> accompanied by thematic analysis particularly in the area of stylistics, as theoretically refined in Miko's categorization of expressions and brought together in Miko and Popovič's *Tvorba a recepcia* (Creation and Reception).<sup>7</sup> Developing his early works, Popovič summarises his ideas in *Teória umeleckého prekladu* (Theory of Literary Translation),<sup>8</sup> which became the cornerstone of the scientific study of translation in Slovakia. In this work, he concentrates on general issues in translation theory, translation as a communication process, the structure of a translation text and communication in translation style, as well as a discussion of issues of translation semiotics, praxeology and the teaching of translation. He views translation studies as an independent scientific discipline with its own metalanguage. He adopts a systematic approach to creating this metalanguage, culminating in the dictionary *Originál / Preklad. Interpretácia terminológia* (Original/Translation. Interpretation Terminology).<sup>9</sup>

Translation research in Slovakia in the 1970s and 1980s produced a number of scientific monographs, scientific papers and specialist articles. In Czechoslovakia the research ranged from general translation theory based on semiotic communication principles (Ilek, Hrdlička, Popovič) through translation stylistics (Miko, Hausenblas), versification (Turčány, Slobodník, Hvišč,

<sup>5</sup> A. Popovič, *Poetika umeleckého prekladu*, Bratislava, Tatran, 1971, p. 29 (1975<sup>2</sup>, p. 49).

<sup>6</sup> F. Miko, *Estetika výrazu. Teória výrazu a štýl*, Bratislava, Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1969.

<sup>7</sup> F. Miko, A. Popovič, *Tvorba a recepcia. Estetická komunikácia a metakomunikácia*, Bratislava, Tatran, 1978.

<sup>8</sup> Id., *Teória umeleckého prekladu*, Bratislava, Tatran, 1975.

<sup>9</sup> A. Popovič et al., *Originál/Preklad. Interpretácia terminológia*, Bratislava, Tatran, 1983. The entries in the dictionary were produced by a team of authors, although the bulk of the work is Popovič's own.

Válková, Vilikovský, Feldek, Bacigálová, Zambor), the relationship between translation and original creation in a comparative prospective (Ďurišin) and the history of translation (Vlašínová, Panovová, Lesňáková). The findings affected the development of the discipline itself and enriched the development of thinking on language and literature.

This wealth of publication activity also includes a number of works dealing with translation, where certain theoretical issues are set against practical know-how and translation experience.<sup>10</sup>

Alongside Popovič's research initiatives on translation studies, J. Vilikovský's monograph *Preklad ako tvorba* (Translation as Creation)<sup>11</sup> is seen as making the most important contribution to Slovak translation theory in the 1980s.<sup>12</sup> In the relationship between theory and practice Vilikovský summarised the bipolarity of the translation opposition between 'top-down aesthetics' and 'bottom-up aesthetics'. He sees language in translation as the bearer of certain non-linguistic, aesthetic, cultural and social meanings. He assesses translation as a semiotic operation. He essentially bases himself on a semiotic communication theory, while devoting considerable attention to the reader in the communication chain.

The impact of Popovič's scheme, combined with an attempt to reassess his views and create a qualitatively superior synthesis in theoretical thinking on translation, can be seen in B. Hochel's book *Preklad ako komunikácia* (Translation as Communications).<sup>13</sup>

A significant contribution, particularly in the field of poetry translation, was made by J. Zambor's book *Preklad ako umenie* (Translation as an Art),<sup>14</sup> covering the author's work on the translation of poetry over the last 25 years. Zambor writes about the translation of poetry "not as a disinterested party,

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<sup>10</sup> These works include J. Rybák's *Kapitolky o jazyku a prekladaní* (Chapters on Language and Translation), Bratislava, Smena, 1982 and J. Ferenčík's *Kontexty prekladu* (Contexts of Translation), Bratislava, Slovenský spisovateľ, 1982, which rely principally on experience of translating Russian and Soviet literature. While Rybák's work reads more like a practical translation manual, Ferenčík addresses not just the practicalities of translation, but also communication theory. Through his own experience he sheds light on the editorial and praxeological aspects of literature in translation and stresses the existence of a 'Slovak school of translation' (J. Ferenčík, *Kontexty prekladu*, cit., pp. 54-55.)

<sup>11</sup> J. Vilikovský, *Preklad ako tvorba*, Bratislava, Slovenský spisovateľ, 1984.

<sup>12</sup> With minor adjustments and additions by the author, this book was published in Czech as *Překlad jako tvorba*, Praha, Ivo Železný, 2002.

<sup>13</sup> B. Hochel, *Preklad ako komunikácia*, Bratislava, Slovenský spisovateľ, 1990.

<sup>14</sup> J. Zambor, *Preklad ako umenie*, Bratislava, Univerzita Komenského, 2000.

but as a participant in the literary process, which includes the translation process, engaged not just as theoretician, but also as practitioner”.<sup>15</sup>

Since the beginning of the 1990s translation theory and, principally, the history of translation in Slovakia has been systematically addressed by a research team at the Institute of World Literature of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava. The team carries out research activities on translation theory and history in Slovakia in a broadly construed philosophical and cultural studies context.<sup>16</sup>

General issues of translation theory, translation as intercultural communication and, in particular, the translation of pragmatic texts are addressed by Rakšányiová's *Preklad ako interkultúrna komunikácia* (Translation as Intercultural Communication).<sup>17</sup> The multidimensional view of translation as a phenomenon of a cultural, psychological and cognitive nature is discussed in a monograph by Gromová and Müglová entitled *Kultúra – Interkulturalita – Translácia* (Culture – Interculturality – Translation).<sup>18</sup>

#### Impact of the Nitra School abroad

Reaction to, in particular, Popovič's work began to appear abroad as early as the 1970s in papers and reviews by Russian (V. Rosseľ's, P.M. Toper), Polish (E. Balcerzan), German (H.-J. Schlegel) and Hungarian (I. Bába) scholars.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Ibidem, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> The theoretical activities of the members of the research team include monographs: B. Suwara, *O preklade bez prekladu* (On Translation without any translation), Bratislava, Ústav svetovej literatúry SAV, VEDA, 2003; M. Kusá, *Preklad ako súčasť dejín kultúrneho priestoru* (The Translation as Part of the Cultural Space History), Bratislava, Ústav svetovej literatúry SAV, VEDA, 2004; L. Vajdová, *Sedem životov prekladu* (Seven Lives of Translation), Bratislava, Ústav svetovej literatúry SAV, VEDA, 2009; O. Kovačičová, *Textové a mimotextové determinanty literárneho prekladu* (Textual and non-Textual Determinants of Literary Translation), Bratislava, Ústav svetovej literatúry SAV, VEDA, 2009; collective monograph L. Vajdová (ed.), *Myslenie o preklade* (Thinking on Translation), Bratislava, Ústav svetovej literatúry SAV, Kalligram, 2007, which are giving new impetus to Slovak thinking on translation.

<sup>17</sup> J. Rakšányiová, *Preklad ako interkultúrna komunikácia*, Bratislava, AnaPress, 2005.

<sup>18</sup> E. Gromová, D. Müglová, *Kultúra – Interkulturalita – Translácia*, Nitra, Filozofická fakulta, Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa, 2005.

<sup>19</sup> See V. Rosseľ's, *Sklonenie teorii na svoi nrapy*, "Masterstvo perevoda", 8 (1971), pp. 435-438; P. M. Toper, *Vysokaja missija perevoda*, "Literaturnaja gazeta", 49 (1977) 35, p. 15; I. Bába, *Preklad a výraz. Poetika umeleckého prekladu* (Translation and Expression. Poetics of Literary Translation), "Helikon", 19 (1973), 2-3, p. 440; E. Balcerzan, *Regióny slova* (Re-

They highlight the translation-as-communication concept of literary translation as a contribution to the scientific study of translation.<sup>20</sup>

In relation to Popovič the beginning of the 1980s sees the appearance abroad of terms like the Slovak ‘theory of metacommunication’,<sup>21</sup> the Nitra School<sup>22</sup> and the Nitra Group.<sup>23</sup> In the anthology *Poetics Today*, put together by Gideon Toury and Itamar Even-Zohar, Toury<sup>24</sup> identifies the Nitra Cabinet of Literary Communication and Experimental Methodology as an important centre of research on translation theory. Translations in 1980 of Popovič’s monograph *Teória umeleckého prekladu* (Theory of Literary Translation) into Hungarian (by Zsilka), Russian (by I.A. Bernštejn and I. Černjavskaĵa) and Italian (B. Osimo and D. Laudani)<sup>25</sup> attracted further reactions in

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gions of Words), “Kultúra”, 9 (1972), pp. 1-4; H.-J. Schlegel, *Slowakische Forschungen zur Theorie und Praxis der literarischen Übersetzung*, “Der Übersetzer”, 9 (1972), 5, pp. 1-2.

<sup>20</sup> The responses appeared thanks to Popovič’s enormous activities in organizing international seminars and conferences: in 1967 an international seminar on the interpretation of the literary text in Nitra with presentations of Polish guests J. Sławiński, A. Okopień-Sławińska, L. Pszczółowska, in 1968 Popovič’s initiatives within the FIT organizing the international conference Translation as an Art in Bratislava, Slovakia with the participation of the FIT Council and publishing the proceedings of the conference: J. S. Holmes, F. Haan, A. Popovič (eds.), *The Nature of Translation. Essays on the Theory and Practice of Literary Translation*, The Hague, Mouton, 1970, in 1969 an international seminar on Contexts of Literary works held in Nitra with presentations of J. Holmes and E. Kerhoff from the Netherlands and Polish translation theoretician E. Balcerzan (see also M. Valentová, *O niektorých historických a metodologických súvislostiach nitrianskej školy interpretácie umeleckého textu* (On Some Historical and Methodological Correlations of the Nitra School of Literary Texts Interpretation), in *O interpretácii umeleckého textu. Autentické a univerzálne v tvorbe a interpretácii umenia*, E. Kapsová and M. Režná (eds.), Nitra, Ústav literárnej a umeleckej komunikácie, Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa, Filozofická fakulta, 2009, pp. 48-63).

<sup>21</sup> A. Lipovec, *Slovaška teorija metakomunikacije* (Slovak Theory of Metacommunication), “Vestník. Društvo za tuje jezike in književnosti SRS”, 14 (1980) 2, pp. 65-74.

<sup>22</sup> M. Harpanj, *Proučavane književne komunikacije i metakomunikacije* (On Literary Communication and Metacommunication), “Delo”, 28 (1982) 2, pp. 140-156; W. Hässner, *Zu den literaturtheoretischen Forschungen des Nitraer „Kabinetts für Literaturkommunikation und Experimentalmethodik (KLKEM) – Versuch einer Bestandsaufnahme*, “Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Pädagogischen Hochschule “Liselotte Herman” Güstrow, 1 (1980), pp. 109-117.

<sup>23</sup> D. Stanojević, *O interpretaciji umetničkoga teksta* (On Interpretation of Literary Texts), “Književna reč”, 11 (1982), 196, pp. 15.

<sup>24</sup> G. Toury, *Translated Literature: System, Norm, Performance. Towards a TT-Oriented Approach to Literary Translation*, in “Poetics Today. Theory of Translation and Intercultural Relations”, 2 (1981), 4, Summer/Autumn, pp. 9-27.

<sup>25</sup> A. Popovič, *A műfordítás elmélete*, trans. T. Zsilka, Bratislava, Madách, 1980; Id., *Pro-*

specialist journals not only in Slovakia, but mainly abroad. The authors refer to Popovič as a significant figure in Slovak comparative literary science and literary translation theory.<sup>26</sup> Reaction to Popovič's work abroad was considerable. This is also thanks to the fact that some of his works had been translated into major languages, in particular English and he also published abroad. In 1976, during his stay as a visiting professor in Canada at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Popovič published his *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation*.<sup>27</sup> This may be viewed as a significant achievement since, as stated by the important British translation theorist Susan Bassnett-McGuire<sup>28</sup> this dictionary was at the time (and up until the mid 1990s most definitely remained) the only terminological dictionary of translation science published in English. Elsewhere in her monograph, Bassnett-McGuire compares Popovič's theory with the theories of other major exponents of translation science, such as Nida, Neubert, Mounin and Catford. She notes, in particular, Popovič's system of expressive shifts, his understanding of equivalence and the invariant in translation and the problem of untranslatability. She highlights his concept based on literary communication theory.

In 1997 Shuttleworth and Cowie published their *Dictionary of Translation Studies*.<sup>29</sup> It contains basic translation study terms, as well as briefly describing different schools of translation theory. From the point of view of Slovak translation theory, it is significant that the dictionary includes terms from the Nitra School based on the Popovič's *Dictionary for the Analysis of*

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*blemy chudožestvenného prevodu*, transl. I.A. Bernštejn and I. Černjavskaia, Moskva, Vysšaja škola, 1980; Id., *La scienza della traduzione. Aspetti metodologici. La comunicazione traduttiva*, trans. B. Osimo and D. Laudani, Milano, Hoepli, 2006.

<sup>26</sup> P. M. Toper, *Predislovie* (Preface), in A. Popovič, *Problemy chudožestvenného prevodu*, cit., pp. 5-12; I. Vaseva, *Problemy chudožestvenného prevodu*, "Bálgarski ezik" 31 (1981), 4, pp. 385-88; I. Szerdahely, *Az irodalomtudomány legújabb ága*. (A. Popovič: *A műfordítás elmélete*, Madách. Konyvkiadó. Bratislava 1980), "Nagyvilág", 8 (1982), pp. 1252-1254; U. Weisstein, *Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft*, "Jahrbuch für internationale Germanistik Bericht" 1 (1968-1977), Bern & Frankfurt a. M., Peter Lang, 1981, p. 218; M. Harpáň, *Podnetnosť novej literárnej vedy* (Impulses of New Literary Criticism), "Nový život", 34 (1982), 2, pp. 193-199; U. Stecconi, [rev.] Anton Popovič. *La scienza della traduzione. Aspetti metodologici. La comunicazione traduttiva*, Milano, Hoepli, 2006, "Target", 19 (2007), 1, pp. 173-177.

<sup>27</sup> A. Popovič, *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation*, Edmonton, The University of Alberta, Department of Comparative Literature, 1976.

<sup>28</sup> S. Bassnett-McGuire, *Translation Studies*, London, Methuen, 1980, p. 5.

<sup>29</sup> M. Shuttleworth, M. Cowie, *Dictionary of Translation Studies*, Manchester, St. Jerome Publ., 1997.

*Literary Translation.* The Nitra School even has its own entry in the dictionary<sup>30</sup>, where it is described as a group of Slovak scholars originally based at the Nitra Pedagogical Faculty in former Czechoslovakia. The group, which included Jiří Levý, František Miko and Anton Popovič among its members,<sup>31</sup> took some of the work of the Russian Formalists and the Prague Linguistic Circle as its starting-point in an investigation of some aspects of literary translation. Together these scholars were responsible for a number of important insights which have been taken up by later writers, in particular those associated with the Manipulation School. Among these were: an emphasis on retaining the artistic quality of a work in translation,<sup>32</sup> the investigation of the possibility of cataloguing the expressive features contained in a text,<sup>33</sup> the importance of shifts as a general translation phenomenon,<sup>34</sup> and the consideration of translation in the context of the wider notion of metatext.<sup>35</sup> As pointed out by Hermans, the group fell silent after 1980.<sup>36</sup>

The Nitra School is classified as one strand in translation theory, alongside the Leipzig School, the Manipulation School and the Paris School. According to the authors of the entry, the theoretical foundations of the Nitra School in researching certain aspects of literary translation were the Russian formalists and the Prague Linguistic Circle. They saw the continuation of this school in the work of the Manipulation School, also known as the Low Countries Group, which brings together researchers from Belgium, the Netherlands, the former Czechoslovakia and Israel. Hermans, e. g., stresses the descriptive, functional and systematic approach to literary translation with the emphasis on the target language.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ibidem, p. 112.

<sup>31</sup> The authors did not get things quite right when they included Levý in the Nitra School, since he was no longer alive at the time when it was formed. Nevertheless, Levý seemed to be a trigger of Popovič's research work in translation studies.

<sup>32</sup> J. Levý, *Die Literarische Übersetzung: Theorie einer Kunstgattung*, Frankfurt a. M., Athenäum, 1969.

<sup>33</sup> F. Miko, *La théorie de l'expression et la traduction*, in *The Nature of Translation*, cit., pp. 61-77.

<sup>34</sup> A. Popovič, *The Concept "Shift of Expression" in Translation Analysis*, in *The Nature of Translation*, cit., pp. 78-87.

<sup>35</sup> Id., *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation*, cit.

<sup>36</sup> T. Hermans, *Toury's Empiricism Version One*, "The Translator", 1-2 (1995), pp. 215-223, see p. 217. Further reading: E. Gentzler, *Contemporary Translation Theories*, London, Routledge, 1993.

<sup>37</sup> T. Hermans, *Introduction: Translation Studies and a New Paradigm*, in *The Manipula-*

In addition to this key entry, in terms of situating Slovak translation theory in the broader context of theoretical trends elsewhere in the world, the dictionary also contains other entries referring to Slovak translation theory initiatives in the 1970s and 1980s. Terms like expressive shift, prototext, metatext and stylistic equivalence have penetrated the conscience of translation theorists and become part of the terminological foundation of translation studies.

Responses to the works of Popovič and other representatives of Slovak translation studies (Miko, Vilikovský, Hochel) can also be found in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*.<sup>38</sup> The theoretical findings of, in particular, Miko and Popovič feature in the *Encyclopedia* and thereby gain a place in the history of translation theory research worldwide. However, it must be said that the space devoted to Slovak translation theory by the *Encyclopedia* is maybe not commensurate with its importance.

What we would like to stress is the formulation of the semiotic nature of translation early in the 1970s in Popovič's book *Poetika umeleckého prekladu*. In this book he introduced terms of semiotic nature like *medzičasový faktor v preklade*, *medzipriestorová faktor v preklade*, *faktor kultúry v preklade*, *kultúra 'cudzia' v preklade*, *kultúra 'domáca' v preklade*, *kreolizácia kultúry* that later in 1976 became entries of his *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation* where the reader can find the entries of the "interspatial factor in translation", "the factor of culture in translation", "intertemporal factor in translation", "exoticism in translation", "domestic culture in translation", "foreign culture in translation" and "creolisation of culture in translation". Popovič makes use of semiotics and semiotic terms introduced by Ju. Lotman.<sup>39</sup> He applies them to the literary communication model, where the mutual relationship between two cultural systems is seen as the decisive factor in literary communication alongside re-coding and translationality.<sup>40</sup> In line with the Tartu school of semiotics Popovič expresses the mutual relationship as the 'creolisation' of the two cultures in translation, which also involves the combination of two structures at the social level.<sup>41</sup> He develops this theo-

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*tion of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, ed. by T. Hermans, London, Croom Helm, 1985, pp. 10-11.

<sup>38</sup> M. Baker (ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, London & New York, Routledge, 1998.

<sup>39</sup> Ju. M. Lotman, *O metajazyke tipologičeskich opisaniij kultury*, in *Trudy po znakovym sistemam*, IV, Tartu, 1969, pp. 460-477.

<sup>40</sup> See entries in his *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation*, cit., p. 22.

<sup>41</sup> A. Popovič, *Poetika umeleckého prekladu*, cit., p. 30.

ry further in the section on the interspatial factor in translation, where, using Lotman's typology, he distinguishes three positions on the relationship between the culture of the original and the culture of the translation as follows:

(a) the activity of the external environment is stronger than the activity of the internal environment; (b) the activity of the internal environment is stronger than the activity of the external environment, and (c) the tension between the external and internal environments is balanced. Internal environment refers to the situation of the recipient, his cultural code and ability to situate the fact of translation in the home context. External environment refers to the identification of facts beyond the internal environment, the relationship of the communication product to the foreign environment. The task of the translator is to resolve this tension.<sup>42</sup>

An important element in Popovič's thinking was the conception of the experiential complex of translator and receiver and its cultural determination, which is a matter of cultural anthropology. It thereby relies on research by Miko showing that the experiential complex is reflected in the text in connection with the communicative circumstances, also referred to as the communicative stance. The translation strategy and translation operations depend on this stance.<sup>43</sup>

The culture factor in translation, expressed in the translation principles of naturalisation and exoticism was formulated later also by Vilikovský in his monograph *Preklad ako tvorba* (Translation as Creation) in 1984 and by Hochel in his monograph *Preklad ako komunikácia* (Translation as Communication) in 1990. These terms are significant also for the cultural shift in translation studies in "western translation theories" in the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>44</sup>

The contribution of the Nitra School can also be seen in the breaking down of the barriers between academic disciplines, which had been an obstacle to the development of translation studies. As early as the 1970s Popovič and the people working with him realised that, without contact with other disciplines, translation studies would not be capable of examining the multidimensional phenomenon that translation unquestionably is. An example of this is Popovič's comment on the *Stručný výkladový register termínov* (A Brief Glossary of Terms).<sup>45</sup> It (the register of terms) contains terms used for the

<sup>42</sup> Ibidem, p. 106.

<sup>43</sup> Id., *Teória umeleckého prekladu*, cit., p. 37.

<sup>44</sup> See e.g. M. Snell-Hornby, *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1988; G. Toury, *Translation: A Cultural-Semiotic Perspective*, in *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Semiotics*, ed. by T. A. Seboek, Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter, 1986, 2, pp. 1111-1124; L. Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*, London, Routledge, 1995.

<sup>45</sup> A. Popovič, *Teória umeleckého prekladu*, cit., p. 273.

systematic understanding of the problems of the translation process and the text. Some of the terms were born out of translation theory, some in the context of interdisciplinary study of translation issues. In such cases the terms taken from related disciplines were transplanted into translation theory and acquired a special classification.

A further contribution made by Popovič and the Nitra School is that they attempted to fill the gap in the scientific knowledge between East and West. East bloc authors did not get published in English, German or French,<sup>46</sup> which made it difficult for Western scholars to access these findings. It is ironic that the political and language barrier afflicted a discipline whose job it is to examine the overcoming of linguistic and cultural barriers. The question is: has this barrier now been overcome?

Looking at translation studies from the East-West perspective, it would appear that in the East we have recently been seeing an interest in and adoption of 'Western' theories at the expense of re-evaluating and responding to our own theories in the light of current trends. In certain respects, particularly as regards the cultural and sociological orientation of present-day translation studies in the West,<sup>47</sup> today's Western translation theories are discovering what our translation studies had identified as far back as the 1970s. In Slovak translation theory, the signs of the cultural studies and (most recently) sociological shift in translation studies were already apparent in the work of Popovič, whose communication-based model of translation (essentially a model of translation actions) introduces a cultural studies and sociological dimension.<sup>48</sup> In his work we find terms such as 'factor of culture in translation', 'exoticism', 'naturalisation', 'creolisation', 'domestic' culture in translation', 'foreign culture in translation', 'creolisation of culture in translation', which he takes as the "overlapping of the two texts of the original and the translation, where the texts represent the two cultures in question".<sup>49</sup> There is

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<sup>46</sup> With very few exceptions, including certain works by Slovak scholars, in particular Popovič and Miko, for example in *The Nature of Translation*, cit.

<sup>47</sup> See Z. Jettmarová, *Czech and Slovak Translation Theories: the Lesser-Known Tradition*, in *Tradition versus Modernity*, ed. by J. Králová, Z. Jettmarová, Praha, Opera Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis, vol. 8, Karlova Univerzita, Filozofická fakulta, 2008, pp. 15-46; Ead., *Sociologie v paradigmatu a teorii: hledá se model a metodologie* (Sociology in the Paradigm and Theory: Searching for a Model and Methodology), in *Preklad a kultura*, 2, ed. by E. Gromová, D. Múglová, Nitra, Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa, Filozofická fakulta, 2007, pp. 56-78; U. Stecconi, rev. to Anton Popovič. *La scienza della traduzione*, cit.

<sup>48</sup> A. Popovič, *Teória umeleckého prekladu*, cit.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 278.

also the concept of the ‘sociology of translation’, which he views as the research of the genesis and functioning of translation in the social context. Sociology is concerned with translation as a manifestation of social communication. It studies translation as a fact of social and cultural conscience within the sphere of operation of institutions and the individual (publishing policy, cultural relations etc.).<sup>50</sup>

To sum up, we would like to stress that in the history of translation studies, the Slovak, or rather Nitra School, is classified as a trend in translation theory, studying translation and the translation process from the point of view of semiotics and communication, while emphasising the preservation of the literary quality of a work by maintaining the expressive values of the text, introducing the term ‘functional shift’ and addressing translation in the context of the broader term ‘metatext’. From the semiotics perspective the work of the Nitra School also developed the temporal and spatial factor in translation that substantially affects the translator’s decision-making process (Popovič, Miko, Vilikovský, Hochel). More broadly speaking, Slovak translation studies in the 1970s and 1980s paved the way for modern thinking on translation, stressing the idea that, although the translator takes decisions at the level of the text, there are also broader macro-contextual and socio-cultural factors at play.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibidem, p. 287. The innovativeness and originality of the research approach to translation issues is brought out by Ubaldo Stecconi in his review of the 2006 Italian translation of Popovič’s *Teória umeleckého prekladu*, where he praises the book and regrets that it has not been published in English, which would have a greater impact on the translation studies community. He states that despite that “it appears 31 years after the Slovak original and 26 after the 1980 translation into Russian, on which it is also based, many positions and insights still read fresh and provocative. How can it be that the book does not show its age? I can think of two reasons: either Popovič was a Leonardo-like genius way ahead of his time, or Translation Studies has been running out of steam lately” (U. Stecconi, rev. to Anton Popovič. *La scienza della traduzione*, cit., p. 174).