

■ AGNIESZKA PODPORA

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0102-7219>

University of Warsaw

agapodpora@gmail.com

A MISBEHAVED TESTIMONY OF THE SHOAH AND THE DISCIPLINES OF MEMORY: *VERA GRAN: THE ACCUSED* BY AGATA TUSZYŃSKA IN THE ORIGINAL AND IN TRANSLATION*

Abstract

Oskarżona: Vera Gran (Vera Gran: The Accused), a hybrid biographical work relating the life story and testimony of the Warsaw ghetto singer by the Polish second generation author Agata Tuszyńska, was translated to many languages. Yet, all the translations were made on the basis of the French one, which in fact reflects a strongly edited version of the original text. As the author of the article argues, the modifications introduced to *Oskarżona: Vera Gran* upon its release on the foreign markets go far beyond the standard editing procedures and have to do with the fact that Tuszyńska's original text openly questions a certain fixed paradigm of representing the Holocaust and some of the socially sanctioned patterns of Shoah remembrance. The comparative analysis of the Polish and the American editions of the book presented in the article traces the most significant changes introduced to the foreign adaptation, identifying three main areas where the misbehaved testimony to the Shoah – of the survivor and the secondary witness alike – was disciplined to conform to the largely globalised discourse of Holocaust

* Originally published in Polish in *Przekładaniec* vol. 39/2019, this article was written within the framework of the author's research project funded by the Polish National Science Centre (NCN), following the decision no. DEC-2012/07/N/HS2/00968. The text appears in English thanks to the financial support from the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education (grant no. 643/P-DUN/2018).

memory, subjected to the regime of conventional representation and culturally reproduced reception patterns.

Keywords: Holocaust, memory, representation, translation politics, globalization, second generation

Holocaust life-writing

Life-writing genres have always been firmly rooted in Holocaust narratives, serving predominantly as a medium for the accounts of victims and survivors. As a result, within the emerging cultural patterns of reception of Holocaust-related writing they became associated with giving testimony (Young 1987; Foley 1982). So long as the biographic genres and similar conventions were applied by eyewitnesses to describe their experience, few would question their legitimacy as proper representations of the Shoah, despite the fact that the mentioned cultural patterns of reception, connoting authenticity and non-fictionality, have been repeatedly tested by various “forgeries”, like the fictional memoir of Binjamin Wilkomirski (1998). Nevertheless, the special status firmly attached to life-writing genres within what we are inclined to describe as Holocaust literature¹ begins to waver as they start to be explored by post-Holocaust authors, who were born after the war and never experienced the Shoah themselves. For even in a familiar genre such as biography, frequently used by the second generation authors to relate the life stories of survivors, there exists a fundamental gap between the protagonist’s life marked by trauma and the writing subject. The latter’s personal experience, while being largely inadequate in relation to the Holocaust, necessarily affects the way in which the experience of the other, the victim, is processed. The inadequacy of post-Holocaust authors in terms of Holocaust life-writing results from the temporal distance and lack of personal memory of the Shoah, even though, due to their family history or variously motivated interest, they might feel emotionally and creatively attached to this topic. Usually the sense of attachment to the un-lived past is so strong that the survivors’ biographies become, for the post-Holocaust writers, a space to

¹ Personally, I am inclined to accept David Roskies and Naomi Diamant’s (2012: 2) functional and inclusive understanding of Holocaust literature as one that “comprises all forms of writing, both documentary and discursive, and in any language, that have shaped the public memory of the Holocaust and been shaped by it”.

give an account of their own life—as is the case in the perhaps best-known example of this genre: Art Spiegelman’s *Maus* (Horowitz 1998).

As Froma Zeitlin aptly argued (1998: 8), the literary accounts of the Holocaust by vicarious witnesses, using “the various elements of documentary realism and mediated recollection” in a natural, or perhaps even inevitable way, combine the need to establish links to historical sources with the desire for self-exposition of a conscious writing subject. Owing to their active presence in the text, the writer not only engages in personal reflection and critical revision of sources, but also reconstructs the story of the Other – or, as Zeitlin (1998: 6) puts it, “reanimates” it, which, consequently, transforms it into a “lived performance for witness and listener alike”. The presence of the writing subject in those post-Holocaust narratives constitutes, therefore, a testimony to personal experience of the Shoah in terms of “transporting the event to the sphere of the subject, to one’s personal bodily and affective space” (Bojarska 2012: 296) and, as such, becomes a platform of emotional, living contact with this monstrous historical experience for those born in its aftermath.

Nevertheless – and, in a way, against the tide of the ever more heterogeneous character of Holocaust literature and increasing understanding of life-writing in terms of its (non)fictionality – there is still a lot of ambiguity surrounding Holocaust life-writing by the post-war generations. On the one hand, this is attributable to the mistrust in the authority of vicarious witnesses, as far as representing the Holocaust is concerned; on the other hand, it has to do with scepticism regarding the “authenticity”, or historical accuracy, of such narratives. The latter issue, rooted in the aforementioned cultural patterns of reception of Holocaust literature², is especially important in view of Holocaust literature’s growing genetic fluidity and open use of fictional elements in non-fictional (or at least not entirely fictional) narratives.

² Of course, the debate on representation of history is much wider and can be traced back to the post-war evolution of critical reflection linked with the radical collapse of the modernist views on language and history – this issue is synthetically and convincingly discussed by Katarzyna Bojarska (2012). Nevertheless, in the context of the Holocaust, viewed as the seminal event in post-modern history, the problem of representing the past has gained special importance especially in relation to all kinds of figurative representations, including literature – which, according to Lawrence Langer, epitomises the complex relationship between “historical oppression” and “artistic impression” (1990: 19). A good overview of the key aspects of the role of fiction in Holocaust literature, both in the context of ethical obligation to preserve the “historical truth” and in terms of the author’s legitimacy, is offered by Sarah Horowitz (1997).

A recent example of such controversies over a post-Holocaust literary representation of a survivor's story is the best-selling book *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*, by the British author Heather Morris. Although Morris herself has repeatedly claimed that her book is a novel, it is at the same time allegedly based on the "powerful true story" – related to the author first-hand – of Lala Sokolov, a Slovak Jew and Auschwitz survivor (Morris 2018). Yet, according to Wanda Witek-Malicka, from the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum Research Centre, who conducted a fact-checking analysis of Morris's text, "the reality of the war, especially the historical and socio-psychological context of the concentration camp, has been fictionalised and poetised in the book" (Witek-Malicka 2018: 14). From the historical and archivist angle represented by Witek-Malicka, it would seem that the real controversy here stems from the simple dichotomy between fact and fiction – the main area of conflict in most disputes over any literary representation of the Holocaust, especially those written by authors born after the war. Yet, if we approach the issue from the anthropological perspective, focusing on the communication situation, as well as on the cultural context of the creation and circulation of such narratives, there are at least four important aspects to be considered here. First of all, there is a certain, dominant image of the past recreated on the basis of available sources and disseminated by a specially designated, officially authorised and socially supported institution. Secondly, there are the particulars of the survivor's account, which is not directly accessible, but, what is even more important, is also underpinned by a specific agenda that the witness consciously or non-consciously attaches to telling his story. Another factor are the expectations, sensitivity and cognitive capacity of the readers who both shape the global market of Holocaust narratives and are shaped by it. Finally, there is the author's artistic vision, resulting from her personal experience and desires linked to the story. Considering all of the above, it would seem that, in light of this complex network of forces and tensions, Witek-Malicka's conclusion that "Given the number of factual errors (...) the book cannot be recommended as a valuable title for persons who want to explore and understand the history of KL Auschwitz" (2018: 17) is ultimately misguided. After all, it cannot be unequivocally assumed that it is the desire to "explore and understand" history that is the main motivation of the participants of contemporary Holocaust discourse.

Vera Gran: The Incurrable?

Agata Tuszyńska's book *Oskarżona: Wiera Gran* (translated into English as *Vera Gran: The Accused*)³, telling the story of the inter-war Polish artist and legendary singer from the Warsaw Ghetto, who after the war was faced with accusations of collaborating with the Germans, should surely be located on the opposite end of the Holocaust life-writing spectrum—namely, as being much closer to non-fiction than *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*. In her book, Tuszyńska, one of the leading Polish biographers, adheres to the traditional rules of biography and investigative journalism. The author tells the story of Vera Gran's life by means of a chronological, third-person narrative subordinated to the attempts to inquire into the veracity of the accusations against her on the basis of documents, artefacts and eyewitnesses' accounts. Despite adopting the pattern of reconstructing another person's tragic life story, in order to reach some kind of truth about it, Tuszyńska essentially exposes the inescapable futility of such an undertaking, yet without discrediting the sole desire situated in a specific subject. For, in contrast to Tuszyńska's earlier works, in *Vera Gran: The Accused*, the author appears not only as a writerly spectre revealing the particulars of the work involved in the process of writing or presenting reflections concerning the subject matter; here, the writer becomes a character in her own right, who by probing the tragic life of her protagonist hopes to better understand herself. Consequently, Tuszyńska's ultimate objective is not, as Witek-Malicka assumes in her critique of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*, knowing history. Instead, what the author hopes to gain by delving into the past is some sort of deep introspection, knowing herself and her own historical moment better. Moreover, the added layer of the narrator's critical reflection, frowned upon in the traditional understanding of the genre and yet so heavily accentuated in Tuszyńska's work, exposes also the illusion of transparency functioning in relation to biography, which allows the author to contest the dogma of objectivity and authenticity sustained by the documentary regime. It would seem, thus, that Tuszyńska's artistic endeavours in *Vera Gran: The Accused*, while to some degree focused on "exploring and understanding" history, are also intended

³ Agata Tuszyńska (2013), *Vera Gran: The Accused*, trans. Charles Ruas, New York: Knopf; the Polish edition: (2010), *Oskarżona: Wiera Gran*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie. All citations in the text refer to these editions.

to expose the limitations of the desire to know the past, which is always fuelled by personal agendas and social interests.

In light of the above, *Vera Gran: The Accused* can be read as the first Polish post-Holocaust auto/biography, which – as I hope to demonstrate – openly questions a certain fixed paradigm of representing the Holocaust and its social perception. Some traces of this questioning can be observed in the lively controversy the book excited in Poland. The debate that echoed the most in the leading media evolved in the same dichotomist axiological and symbolic space in which the fact-checking of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* took place: it centred on the veracity of Gran's accusation of collaborating with the Nazis directed at her former accompanist Władysław Szpilman. The singer repeated the allegation, among others, in the video testimony recorded for the Shoah Foundation, in her memoirs, as well as in the conversations with Tuszyńska. Nevertheless, Tuszyńska was criticised for featuring the accusation in the book – not because she invented or misrepresented certain facts, but rather because she quoted Gran without obtaining any proof for the validity of her words, which, allegedly made it impossible for Szpilman's family to cultivate a “good memory” of him. The decision of Szpilman's son to sue the author, as well as her Polish and German publishers, became the main focus of attention in the mainstream media, overshadowing any other aspects of the book and turning it into a mere scandal. Concurrently, the debate centred on the court case revealed the dominant reception model of biography, or non-fiction literature in general, in Polish culture, assuming a direct and thus authentic representation of reality (Kusek 2015), which could partly account for the comparatively weak response to Tuszyńska's artistic choices.

Fortunately, the Polish reception of *Vera Gran: The Accused* has not been limited to the reports on the court case and generally warm but superficial readings, sometimes combined with expressions of solidarity with the persecuted author. In fact, some critics did pay attention to the book's fundamental issues, which correspond also to the main areas of controversy in the Holocaust memorial discourse. First, Tuszyńska was criticised for insufficient documentary research and lack of accuracy in quoting her sources, including Gran herself (Nawój 2011). Secondly, some critics questioned Tuszyńska's ethics, both in terms of her relationship with the senior, ailing protagonist, especially with respect to obtaining information from her and presenting this information in the book (Samson 2011), and in terms of the author's accumulation of symbolic capital at the expense of Gran and the Holocaust

in general (Szczęsna 2010). Additional reason for critical uneasiness – and even some scholarly interest – was Tuszyńska's literary representation of the victim and the writer, who, never having experienced the Holocaust, is attempting to “experience it” (Śliwiński 2012; Sosnowski 2011).

Below, I will be referring to the above-mentioned problem areas, yet not in order to examine the validity of the criticism as such but rather to identify the contentious aspects of the socially sanctioned memory of the Holocaust, developed as a result of complex cultural negotiations and serving contemporary communities as a painful – but nonetheless commonly accepted and politically operationalised – point of reference. As I will try to show, Tuszyńska's text clearly unbalances some aspects of the binding Holocaust memory homeostasis, which becomes even more apparent as one examines the book's translation, or rather its adaptation suited to the needs of a foreign audience.

On the translation rights market, Tuszyńska's book quickly became one of the most sought after Polish titles; so far, it has had ten foreign-language editions, including those published in Macedonia, Slovenia and Israel. Interestingly, the text of *Vera Gran: The Accused* published in translation differs significantly from the Polish edition – so much so that one could claim these are two different books. As it turns out, the source text used as the basis of all the translations was not the Polish original but the French translation, or rather adaptation (Tuszyńska 2012). Such a strategy can seem surprising, considering that there are many distinguished Polish translators at hand, especially in Europe, and indirect translation is usually avoided. Asked about this decision in one of the interviews upon the release of the US edition, Tuszyńska explained, rather evasively, that the reasons behind this choice were prosaic and strictly procedural: “(...) of course, it would be much easier to translate only from the Polish (the original language) to a second language. Nevertheless, my French publisher holds the international rights to the book and its translation. Thus, translation of my book should be based on the French version” (Wróbel Best 2015: 89).

Putting aside the legal and commercial aspects of this reasoning, it needs to be said that the French “version”, as Tuszyńska herself labels it, of *Vera Gran: The Accused* is indeed a variant of the original text, subjected by the publisher to substantial modifications which, as I would argue, go beyond standard editing procedures. It is difficult to determine the extent of Tuszyńska's involvement in the process. In the aforementioned interview, the writer states that, thanks to her knowledge of foreign languages, she

participated in the book's adaptation, or conversion, from Polish to French and then to English and declares that she was very pleased with the outcome of the work which she describes using a rather peculiar term "transnational linguistics" (Wróbel Best 2015: 89). It is safe to assume, therefore, that Tuszyńska was at least partly involved in transforming her book into a text which – according to her publisher or the author herself – would be well received by foreign readers. At any rate, the differences between the original Polish edition and the "export" version of the book are worth examining more closely (for the purpose of the present analysis, I will be using the US version based on the French edition; Tuszyńska 2013). What their contrastive juxtaposition reveals, to my mind, are the hidden contours of the received, largely globalised discourse of Holocaust memory, subjected to the regime of conventional representation and culturally reproduced reception patterns. I am purposefully referring here to the "regime", in the sense of the functioning though uncodified rules of the social game, determining what can and what cannot be said about the Holocaust.⁴ For, contrary to popular belief, these rules are not simply a question of ethics, but also one of concrete needs and interests behind specific ways in which individuals and communities refer to the Holocaust. Eventually, as Hans Kellner (1994) points out, the memory of the Shoah, despite conveying respect for the suffering of the victims, does not serve them but the contemporary users of that memory.

Below, I am presenting a contrastive analysis of Tuszyńska's text in the Polish original and in the English translation, based – like all others – on the French modified edition. As I am well aware of possible large discrepancies emerging as a result of indirect translation, I do not intend to discuss all the differences. I am mostly interested in tracing global shifts that alter the overall meaning of the text, be it through changing the accents, altering the composition, or through stylistic modifications, elisions and abridgement. In my view, all of the above go beyond the standard procedures applied to make the book easier to understand for the readers from outside of the original cultural context⁵ and reflect wider tendencies to edit Holocaust-related

⁴ Grzegorz Niziołek (2019: 52–54) contrasts the regime of "ideologically regulated knowledge of the Holocaust", controlled by the politically correct discourse on the limits of representation, with the constantly subdued phenomenon of "memory in action" which occurs within the space of artistic creation.

⁵ These would include adding explanations or elaborating on certain issues in the text – for instance, expanding the illustration captions – as well as some of the numerous elisions, e.g. deletion of certain paragraphs, probably viewed as too detailed (see e.g. the downsizing

expressions according to the dominant patterns of representation. Identifying and analysing the changes introduced while adapting *Vera Gran: The Accused* for the globalised market of Holocaust imagery shows exactly how Tuszyńska's narrative was disciplined – or, in other words, culturally and aesthetically adjusted – to conform to certain socially sanctioned patterns of Holocaust memorialisation.

Fixed on non-fiction

The first, most substantial and perhaps functionally dominant layer of the editing policy, applied in the foreign version of *Vera Gran: The Accused*, is connected with the issues resulting from the liminal aspect of the text, especially its genre fluidity. As Tuszyńska herself explains in the acknowledgements, constituting a postscript to the main body of the book, her work was not written – and therefore, implicitly, is not meant to be read – as Gran's biography nor as a monograph on her artistic achievements, but rather as a record of a specific “encounter” (O 450).⁶ Admittedly, such an anti-biographical declaration seems grossly exaggerated, since, as I have mentioned, Tuszyńska's book relies heavily on the typical biographical structure, with the narrative focused on Gran's life and the author's investigation regarding the validity of the accusations against her. At the same time, however, the “encounter”, as Tuszyńska labels it, certainly comes to the fore in the text—both in the fragments describing the dynamics of the relationship between the two women and in the narrator's reflections on her personal confrontation with the experience reported by Gran.

In the context of the process of building and sustaining certain matrixes of Holocaust discourse in the sphere of globalised memory, the genre ambiguity of Tuszyńska's book is obviously important – not so much for the taxonomy

of the chapters on the pre-war Polish artistic milieu or on the complexities of witness accounts concerning Vera Gran). For different, but equally understandable reasons, the US publisher decided to insert a somehow stiff authorial disclaimer just before quoting Gran's assertion that Szpilman collaborated with the Nazis in the so-called “Blue Police” in the Warsaw Ghetto. Probably in order to protect the publisher from legal action, the US edition includes a clear declaration from the writer: “I have not found any confirmation of its veracity in the archives to which I had access, nor in the narratives of witnesses” (Tuszyńska 2013: 95).

⁶ All quotes from the Polish edition cited as O plus page number; all quotes from the American edition cited as V plus page number – A.P.

of literary genres, but with respect to certain fixed reception patterns ascribed to specific literary conventions. As far as reception is concerned, the genre liminality of Tuszyńska's book creates a fundamental uncertainty as to the proportions of fiction and non-fiction in the text. In the Polish edition, the tension between a certain version of truth expressed through the text, the historical truth contained, as it were, in the cited documents, the truth of Vera exercising her own agenda of telling the story and the truth of the author herself – whose personal stakes in Gran's life story are different from those of Gran herself, but perhaps no less important – is reflected in the book's hybridity and, at times, extremely fragmented nature. Tuszyńska uses the technique of collage, mixing different media, typographic conventions, sources and perspectives, yet without any direction for the reader as to how to piece them together and to which context, or actor, they belong. This dissonance clearly drew the attention of the critic Ewa Nawój (2011):

The reader cannot but wonder how a book which is seemingly so carefully edited could approach citing sources with such a whimsical attitude, nonchalance even. Certain passages in the book feel almost like a novel, but ultimately this isn't fiction, so all the principles of non-fiction should apply.

On the level of reception, any literary text concerning the Holocaust, and especially biography, which is universally understood as non-fiction, is expected to be meticulous in the use of sources. Fragmentariness, ellipses and allusions are not acceptable, even though the Shoah evoked through reference rather than representation can influence the reader equally strongly as an actual historical source. And yet exactly such "Holocaust effects" (Van Alphen 1997: 10), rather than direct images, are repeatedly produced by Tuszyńska's narrative – especially in those moments which affectively destabilise the reader. In the Polish edition, full of indirect references to the Holocaust, one such moment can be found at the very beginning of the narrative. The expository chapter, dedicated to the first meeting between Tuszyńska and Gran and describing the lengthy process of gaining Gran's trust, opens with a peculiar fragment printed in italics. At first glance, it looks almost like a tip from a housekeeping manual on getting rid of clothes moths; only later does the reader realise that it is in fact a monologue of an elderly person giving advice based on her own tragic experience. Towards the end, it becomes clear that the fragment has nothing to do with infestation and actually describes the ghetto – the reader realises this, despite initial disorientation, thanks to the deeply rooted and commonly identifiable cultural imagery of

the Holocaust (see Kowalska-Leder et al. 2017: 510–512). Towards the end of the chapter – titled, by the way, *Na mole najlepsze są cytryny* [The best remedy for clothes moths is lemons] – it becomes obvious that the opening passage, clearly standing out against the rest of the narrative, must be a snippet from a conversation with Vera Gran or else a quote from her memoir; such an interpretation is suggested by the difference in typography or, in the case of conversations with Tuszyńska, by the repetition of the formal version of the pronoun “you” [*pani*]. Upon reading further, one begins to understand the link between the image of swarming insects and the situation of being surrounded by enemies, which is repeatedly invoked by Gran in the text and serves Tuszyńska to signal the mental state of her protagonist.

While, from the perspective of the whole narrative, the context and function of the passage about lemons become obvious, its genesis remains unclear: the reader cannot be sure whether it is a direct quotation from Gran or rather some kind of creative variation of it. After all, one of Tuszyńska’s main strategies for depicting Vera Gran and her life is, as the author explains, “piecing together Vera’s monologues” (V 83). Yet instead of the conventional combination of free indirect discourse with direct quotations from interviews with Gran or her personal documents (diaries, letters, notes etc.), clearly indicated through the use of quotation marks or another unambiguous typographic strategy, the reader of the Polish edition is mostly confronted with a discourse directly dependent on the writer, represented in the text as the main narrative instance. Indeed, Tuszyńska pieces the narrative together with thin threads of information, incomplete or mutually contradicting documents and her interlocutors’ memories, “vacillating and changing, called back to life in contradictory contexts, and for different ends” (V 302).

The technique of montage allows Tuszyńska to purposefully bend what Nawój describes as “the principles of non-fiction”. The writer achieves this effect through the blending of boundaries between sources, contexts and interviewee’s testimonies, juxtaposing them in such a way as to create new meanings or creatively fill in the blanks, thus questioning one of the key assumptions of non-fiction, namely the objectivity of a documentary as the source of authenticity. Although theoretically, in the context of Holocaust writing, this silent, yet seemingly self-explanatory, assumption was exposed many years ago by James Young (1988) – who wrote on the “rhetoric of fact” as part of the process of producing meaning in testimony – the dominant conviction that facts “speak for themselves”, through sources such as documents and the testimonies of witnesses to historical times (German:

Zeitzeuge), is still very much present in the reception of Holocaust writing. Tuszyńska seems to purposefully question this line of thinking in the chapter perversely titled *Powyższe zeznanie daje świadectwo prawdziwe* (*In the above deposition, I have told only the truth*), in which she combines, adding hardly any authorial commentary, excerpts from witness statements in Vera Gran's collaboration trial. In contrast to the rest of the book, here every source is precisely cited and every statement marked with quotation marks. Paradoxically, however, it is these bare quotations (obviously selected by the author from court protocols and arranged to create a certain constellation, but otherwise unadulterated) that frustrate the hopes founding the factual rhetoric. They do not bring the writer any closer to knowing the truth about the past:

This is what happened, these are the facts, the variations repeated and transmitted as if by a game of "gossip". They bounce back as echoes, at once more distant and stronger. A new picture transforms the preceding ones. Echoes are echoed. Here are the witnesses with their own faults (V172).

Combining multiple witness accounts and sources, traditionally viewed as artefacts allowing us to approach history more or less directly⁷, Tuszyńska shows that, in fact, documents do not "speak for themselves". More than that, not only do they fail to provide any definitive answers regarding the course of events and Gran's behaviour in the ghetto, but they meddle the waters even more, ultimately destroying the fantasy of a primary, transparent image of the past that simply awaits to be revealed.

The fragmentary and discontinuous narrative strategy applied in the Polish text and its clear collage structure are thus meant, it seems, to reflect the dynamic of telling a story about the past which is always a construct: "There is no continuity in the narration of destiny. Nor in daily life, nor in memory. There are some traces, fragmentary pictures to reconstruct the past" – writes Tuszyńska in the chapter entitled *The Train from Marseilles pulled into the Gare de Lyon* (V 237). In this section, in order to describe Gran's life after the war, as well as to discuss the more personal aspects of her life, unrelated to the Holocaust (mostly her relationships with men), Tuszyńska uses freely selected

⁷ This perspective is epitomised by the scene from the film *Shoah*, where Raul Hilberg is touching a document once held by a Nazi official and speaks about the direct contact of an artefact with a concrete aspect of historical reality, which makes it its only material remnant accessible to us.

threads, or “postcards” from the life story of her protagonist, illustrated with photographs from Gran’s home archive. The images – which in the Polish edition play a crucial role, adding to the story rather than merely illustrating it – point to yet another aspect of the genre ambiguity of Tuszyńska’s book. Its interrupted, arbitrary structure, as well as the polyphony and ambiguous attribution of individual voices, seem to refer also to the fragmentary and inherently restricted perception of the author, who becomes a self-appointed bearer of the testimony of the rejected singer from the Warsaw Ghetto. The Polish edition, almost 400-page long and very carefully designed, includes not only documentary photographs illustrating Vera Gran’s life and depicting people and objects related to it, but also pictures taken by Tuszyńska in the singer’s apartment in Paris. The latter show Gran, for example in a dressing gown, supporting herself on a crutch and going about her daily activities, as well as focus on details linked either with Gran’s former beauty and glory (record jackets, posters, keepsakes, shoes, jewellery etc.) or her downfall attributable to age and mental illness (writings on the wall, dry flowers hung from the ceiling). It seems that by including her own photos, documenting the encounter with Gran, Tuszyńska additionally accentuates the strongly subjective nature of her account of Gran’s life. After all, it is only through the lens of the author’s personal, very specific perspective, that the reader of the book gains access to Gran’s story.

In contrast to the Polish edition, with its liminal structure and narrative, the international version of *Vera Gran: The Accused* is composed in such a way as to maximally resemble conventional biography. Even the cover of the American edition, catalogued by the Library of Congress under “biography/history”, shows this overall intention to fit Tuszyńska’s narrative into a common storytelling framework centred on the tragic fate of a Shoah victim, uncontroversial from the point of view of the dominant patterns of Holocaust remembrance. The American title, *Vera Gran: The Accused*, is arranged on the dust jacket in such a way as to highlight the protagonist’s name by typographic means, while the quasi-subtitle at the bottom of the page steers the reader’s expectations towards the “celebrated singer of the Warsaw Ghetto” as the main topic of the book:

THE CELEBRATED SINGER OF THE WARSAW GHETTO,
HER PIANO ACCOMPANIST WŁADYSŁAW SZPILMAN,
AND A MEDITATION ON THE NATURE OF COLLABORATION

Interestingly – and ironically, given Gran’s jealousy of her former accompanist and Tuszyńska’s bitter reflection on the gendered patterns of memory – Gran’s name is showcased here, probably for marketing reasons, next to that of Władysław Szpilman, who has been made internationally famous by Roman Polanski’s film and is recognised as an iconic figure of the Holocaust. Evidently, the American publisher does not promote the book – as did the Polish publisher, Wydawnictwo Literackie, in the initial marketing campaign – by presenting it as “an unknown chapter of the history of Władysław Szpilman, the famous Pianist from Polanski’s film”, which inspired Andrzej Szpilman’s court plea.⁸ Instead of relying on a rather cheap promise of scandal as their marketing strategy, the Americans apparently opted for classical name dropping, i.e. bringing to the fore the surname of the internationally recognized and truly “celebrated” Shoah survivor meant to attract the readers even though the story, in fact, focuses on someone else. The persuasive effect of this publishing strategy, steering the reception of the book initially in a concrete direction, is additionally reinforced by a hazy promise of touching the taboo of collaboration, mentioned at the end of the blurb. Yet, a much more sophisticated game with the readers is played in the text itself, as the American edition is only nominally a translation of the Polish original.

The difference becomes evident already upon browsing through the first couple of pages. The title of the first chapter in the Polish text: *Na mole najlepsze są cytryny* (The best remedy for clothes moths is lemons) comes from the incipit, according to the convention used throughout the source text and retained in the translations; nevertheless, in the American text, the initial chapter is entitled *She picked up the receiver but didn’t speak*. Why? Because the peculiar fragment on fighting home infestation, which opens the Polish original, does not appear at the beginning of the American version of Tuszyńska’s book. Here the opening chapter – in which Tuszyńska, instead of offering the conventional biographical opening, describes the beginning of her acquaintance with Gran – is significantly reduced; whereas the quote about the lemons, unabridged, is put inside quotation marks and transferred several pages later (V 12). Its new location is by no means accidental: it follows a paragraph in which Vera plays with a recording device. Placed after the words “A voice” the fragment about the lemons gets a new,

⁸ See the report by the Polish Press Agency: <https://www.tvp.info/3229544/syn-szpilmana-to-rojenia-chorej-kobiety> (access: 4.12.2019).

familiar and unambiguous context of Vera's recorded words. As a result, the element that was originally used to destabilise the linear narrative and tease the readers' expectations, has been transferred to a spot that ties it firmly to coherent narrative flow and conventional documentary structure. Moreover, by changing, or rather supplementing, the context of the fragment, the editors resolved its unclear genesis, clearly suggesting a direct transcript of Gran's recorded words.

The above example of the transformation of the source text, in the American edition of Tuszyńska's book, can be viewed as symptomatic of the general editing strategy behind the export version of the text, which is clearly aimed at adjusting the original to common strategies of telling the story of the Holocaust. They include formal conventions widely recognised as documentary, certain representation patterns adherent to a certain sense of decorum linked with representing the victims, as well as to ethical standards governing talking about the Holocaust by those who did not experience it. As far as the first aspect is concerned, the American version of Tuszyńska's book is made to maximally resemble classical biography, with its narrative being strikingly coherent, given the original text's fragmentariness. All statements by Vera and other witnesses, as well as those of the writer, are placed in quotation marks and neatly composed into dialogues or extended monologues, occasionally interrupted by authorial comments. Even though these sequences often remain unlinked with one another, the resulting composition seems much more coherent and hermeneutically stable, also in the moments where, in the original, Tuszyńska clearly aims at staging the situation of a lack of understanding. The remaining fragments, which in the original function as at least suggested quotations, in the edited version are printed in italics as verbatim citations from some external source (often with an added commentary delineating origins), or, very often, get transcribed into a third-person narrative. Another frequent strategy, applied in the foreign version of *Vera Gran: The Accused*, is to delete or separate whole passages, sometimes moving them someplace else to increase logic and fluency. (It is worth mentioning that many changes in the composition result from previous editorial interventions, creating a classical editorial vicious circle.) Last but not least, the narrative coherence of the translation is increased also through addition of subtle linking phrases, smoothing over the formal and thematic transitions which, in the source text, are much more abrupt. Where it was clearly impossible to introduce those, asterisks are used to alert the reader to sudden breaks in the narrative.

This tendency, to make Tuszyńska's book much more biographic and documentary in character than its purposefully more figurative and reflexive original, can be observed not only in the changes introduced in the text, but also in the conservative graphic design of the American edition. The photographs, reprinted in the standard linear layout rather than album arrangement as is the case in the Polish edition, have been preselected so that only the images that carry pure documentary value have been retained, while those conveying Tuszyńska's individual perspective are missing. The chosen photographs, accompanied by elaborate captions, serve purely illustrative purposes and legitimise the assumed authenticity of the historical account presented in the book.

In line with the aforementioned aspects of the clearly defictionalizing editing policy applied to Tuszyńska's original book, the American edition, conforming to the globalised cultural standards of representing the Holocaust, reveals a marked tendency to highlight those passages of the source text that are obviously biographical, presenting Vera Gran's life in a chronological sequence. They are clearly prioritised over authorial reflections and passages describing interactions between the writer and the protagonist, which are mostly rewritten or removed. While the first chapter of Tuszyńska's book, describing the first encounter between the two women, was largely recomposed and reduced in the American translation, the following two, focused on Gran's family background, childhood and youth, thus constituting the conventional biographic opening, mirror the Polish text almost perfectly, despite the mediation of the French version. It is worth noticing, furthermore, that even considering the obvious editorial preference for biographical passages, the American version conforms to it only when it comes to those parts of the text that describe Gran's fate during the Holocaust and its repercussions in her later life. Other issues connected with the protagonist's condition, especially those for different reasons controversial and potentially "profaning" in relation to the grave main subject matter, are treated by the editors with reserve, or even clear aversion. A case in point is the aforementioned chapter *Train from Marseilles*... presenting glimpses of Gran's post-war life and love relationships. Substantially reduced in the translation, it was most likely perceived as less important but surely also incompatible with the standards of narrating the tragic lives of the Holocaust survivors rooted in the global memorial culture. On the same basis – of incompatibility with the decorum of Holocaust discourse, still largely resilient to gender criticism – the American edition downplays the aspect of male

sexual and symbolic violence against Gran, which Tuszyńska stresses in the Polish text, suggesting it enabled the accusations of collaborating with the Nazis in the first place.

The Beauties and the Beast

The marked tendency to adjust Tuszyńska's original text to the existing cultural norms of representing Holocaust survivors, constitutes yet another important aspect of the editing policy executed in the foreign language version of the book. After all, when it comes to meta-reflection on human nature in the light of the Shoah, *Vera Gran: The Accused* clearly, almost compulsively, advances the view that Holocaust victims are people capable of cruelty and meanness not precluded by any individual experience of violence, even the most shattering one. Of course, in the context of the existing post-Holocaust literature, in Poland and elsewhere, this is no fresh discovery – suffice it to mention e.g. Bożena Keff's *On Mother and Fatherland*. Still, from the perspective of a certain decorum of representation and a specifically interpreted ethics of respect for the survivors' trauma, such contention may be seen as bordering on profanation (Czapliński 2009: 199). The story of Gran hounded by false accusations and broken by exclusion – as told in the original by Tuszyńska, who clearly sympathises with her protagonist – distributes the affects in such a way as to provoke questions regarding the motivation of the other survivors, who blackened Vera's name after the nightmare of the Holocaust had ended. The author suggests that it was these cruel allegations, made often without proof or any first-hand knowledge of the events, that eventually broke Gran's spirit and caused her mental illness. Concurrently, Gran herself did exactly the same, especially with regards to Szpilman, whom she openly accused of collaborating with the Nazis and joining the Jewish "blue police". Although Tuszyńska does not specify the motives behind such behaviour of survivors, she repeatedly indicates that the mutual accusations can be attributed to jealousy, personal aversion, desire to pass judgement or even to "justify their own fate" (V 171). Conversely, in the American edition this diagnosis, so often and unequivocally repeated in the original text, becomes blurred. The tendency can be observed, for instance, in the translation of the following sentence, crucial in this context: "Oto świadkowie własnych win i krzywd" [O 220; Here are the witnesses of their own faults and injustices], translated as "Here are the

witnesses with their own faults, *who are, at the same time, the victims of past evils*" (V 17; italics mine).

Furthermore, in the Polish text of *Vera Gran: The Accused*, Tuszyńska demystifies the majesty of the Holocaust survivor as a sanctified remnant of history, and with it also the symbolic status of survivor testimony, often treated in the Holocaust discourse as a direct link to the past. The author profusely uses the context of Vera Gran's stage career to narratively build the persona of her protagonist, which allows her to create dramatic tension within the text and evoke the performative character of the very act of testimony. Gran, as depicted in the original text, belongs both to the domain of center-stage performativity and off-stage obscenity. On the one hand, Tuszyńska shows her as a fickle, temperamental diva, radically self-centred despite suffering and illness ("Na początku byłam ja" [In the beginning was myself; O 94]). Vera Gran as described in the book is a faded star: barely glowing, yet surrounded with the remnants of former glory (in the form of posters, photographs, garments, jewellery, gifts from admirers etc.) and occupied with seducing her audiences (including the writer herself, who is trying to gain Vera's trust and extract from her at least some piece of the so-called true story). On the other hand, Gran is presented as a rejected, tainted survivor, excluded from Holocaust history and the "good", solemn commemoration of the survivors, as well as from life as such through illness and self-isolation, which lends her a carnival, at times even monstrous quality. Although Tuszyńska depicts vividly both these aspects of Gran's character in the book, they are largely mitigated in the foreign editions (mainly through the deletion of many passages describing the interactions between the writer and her protagonist, in which these qualities become especially pronounced). This is because the editorial strategy behind the adaptation of Tuszyńska's book for foreign markets seems to be directed at disarming all fragments subverting the ways in which we would like to commemorate and revere the Holocaust, especially as the last first-hand witnesses are passing away. As far as the cultural patterns of memory are concerned, the visible discomfort linked with the performativity of Vera Gran's character can be traced back precisely to the fear of losing touch with "living" memory, personified by the survivor's body, marked with the authentic historical *Erlebnis*.⁹ In the end it

⁹ As Hans Kellner (1994: 129) points out, "Like Barthes looking at a photograph of Jerome Bonaparte and thinking that these eyes saw the Emperor, one listens to a Holocaust survivor. The text is written on the body here, and not on the page".

is the persona of the survivor that, in the contemporary culture of Holocaust memory, stands for a stable guarantee of authenticity and effective memorial transmission – an association additionally reinforced by the rules of the documentary pact, promising the reader of a non-fiction work an access to history through a credible intermediary. Meanwhile, in Tuszyńska's book, Vera Gran is presented as a survivor who delivered her testimony not as a witness of history but as a defendant in various commissions and courts. The stigma of supposed immoral conduct during the war denied her the status of *un homme-mémoire* (Wieviorka 2006: 391), who testifies to historical events with her own body, and turned her instead into a *testis non gratus*, a witness excluded from the cultural cycle of memory transmission. After the war, Gran's voice was silenced not only on stage and on the radio, but, as shown by Tuszyńska, was also denied credibility as a legitimate testimony by Yad Vashem, an institution established especially to cultivate survivors' memories and to preserve their accounts. The protagonist of Tuszyńska's book speaks thus from the margins of life and history, from the inside of the locked bunker of her Paris apartment, which proves to be a hardly ever opened hiding place of collective memory. Gran's non-participation in history and memory transmission, as well as her inability to impact the outside world – resulting from illness but also imposed muteness – transform her into an anti-actress in the theatre of history and memory, who is forced either to watch others perform, or to withdraw and stick to her own show.

In the Polish text, Gran is both deeply obscene and perfectly performative as a lead in her private spectacle of memory, where all the roles, including that of the writer, have already been cast. On the one hand, Tuszyńska's protagonist "loves to seduce" [O 11] and, despite her distrust of other people, heightened by persecution mania, basks in the attention she is getting. On the other hand, however, she consciously plays with the obscene – also literally, by resorting to a direct, abject rhetoric employed as a masking technique, protecting her inner persona hidden behind the façade of the stage character. In the context of the cultural representation of Holocaust witness, as well as in view of certain assumptions regarding the functions of memory and its corresponding social and emotional stakes, Tuszyńska's style of representing the protagonist/witness, employed in the Polish source text, has at least three different subversive consequences. First of all, it overthrows the decorum governing the representation of survivors and questions certain assumptions regarding the ethics of cultivating the victims' memory. Secondly, it reveals the performativity of the act of giving testimony and

exposes the resulting image of the past as mediated by the persona of the witness. Finally, it brings to the fore important social and emotional stakes linked with preserving memory and representing the Holocaust. The edited version of Tuszyńska's book, conforming to the global culture of Holocaust memory, marginalises many of these aspects – again, mostly through elisions, changed composition and wording.

In the American edition of *Vera Gran: The Accused*, the fragments which expose the scale of the protagonist's mental disturbance and the extent to which she is immersed in a world of her own have been substantially reduced and mollified. While in the original edition various signals of Gran's sense of being constantly under attack, persecuted by unnamed enemies, are scattered throughout the entire text, either in the form of her early diaries or as quotes from her conversations with Tuszyńska, many of these fragments vanished in translation (see e.g. O 15, 19, 412f, 433). Admittedly, these alterations could potentially be explained by the editors' attempts to eliminate cyclical repetitions – which, by the way, are one of the dominant aesthetic features of the original book that determine its literary value – in order to make the text read more like a conventional biography. Still, it is hard to escape the feeling that, in fact, these shifts are motivated also by the desire to tone down Tuszyńska's obvious suggestion that Gran is not a reliable narrator, or even that she is a skilled manipulator, a demiurge of her own narrative:¹⁰

I look at her, her face; I can almost discern a gentleness, for an instant the shadow of a smile. It's an illusion. In reality, she is mean and authoritarian. She never gives in. She is the one who knows, who commands, who sets the rules of the game (V 140, in the Polish original the word used instead of "mean" is "predatory" – A.P.).

Gran's predilection for creating stories – be it as a result of her illness or a conscious intention of engaging in a performative game with the audience – cannot be reconciled with the image of *un homme-mémoire*, a living testimony to the truth of history who makes it more direct and accessible,

¹⁰ How important this aspect of Gran's character was for Tuszyńska becomes apparent in the play based on the book, which Tuszyńska co-wrote with Jerzy Żurek (Tuszyńska, Żurek 2013). In this context, it is especially worth looking at the final scene in the play, in which a knife appears behind Gran's back. In an interview, Żurek stresses Vera's ambiguity as the chief aspect of the play: "the viewer needs to decide whether who they see is just a persecuted victim, or perhaps also a skilled manipulator, carrying on with her combat against the world" (Tuszyńska, Żurek, Jaworska 2013: 120).

almost within our grasp. Conversely, Tuszyńska's protagonist constantly keeps her distance, watching her audience from afar and denying them access to the backstage.

Apart from neutralising Gran's performativity, the American edition of the book reduces her obscenity, reflected in a certain conventionality, radical exaggeration and abject quality, lent to Vera originally by Tuszyńska. A good example of the latter is the opening scene in the chapter entitled, tellingly: *Mogę pani coś opowiedzieć* (in the American edition: *I can tell you a few things*). It is the moment in the story, where both the writer (and the reader) teeters on the brink of receiving the long-denied, hesitantly offered account of the Holocaust by Vera Gran. Yet, after an innocent-sounding introduction about her morning ailments, such as dryness in the mouth and breathing difficulties – suggesting, perhaps, a rush of traumatic memories – Gran begins to tell the story of... her obstructed toilet:

Suddenly, there was a gurgling sound, and I looked into the toilet bowl, and that's when I got everything in my face – excrement, piles of shit, from the whole building, a stink, tons of pestilential waste. I flushed and received a second barrage (V 137).

The American edition retains this scene, with only minor stylistic revisions, probably because it structures the entire chapter and repeatedly echoes throughout it, or maybe because it offers a (too obvious, perhaps) “expression of a defiling, of a humiliation, of an outrage” (V 138). Still, the readers of the American edition will never get to know the Vera Gran who, in response to Tuszyńska's nagging insistence on taking photos, offers “pokazanie cipki” [to show her cunt; O 22], accuses the writer of trying to penetrate her soul “przez kışzkę stolcową” [through the gut; O 22], compares life to dung [O 436] and answers the compliments on her looks with “Ohyzda!” [Dizgusting!; O 21]. The editors cut also the majority of Gran's self-deprecating comments, which occur often in the original text and, by introducing humour and irony, are truly profanatory, in the sense of working against the pathos of Holocaust memory. One of such deleted fragments is a conversation on hairstyles, where Gran answers Tuszyńska's question concerning hair care with the following: “Wczoraj umyłam na pani cześć. Ładne? Już mi się wszy zaczęły gnieździć. Ale nie widać” [I washed it yesterday, because I knew you were coming. Nice, isn't it? I've got lice, but they don't show; O 25].

On the one hand, these elisions can be read in the context of the cultural principles of political correctness governing the American public space, especially concerning the Holocaust and the appropriate forms of representing the survivors, where profanities and abject affects are deemed unacceptable. Probably it is for this reason that Gran's original way of addressing her nurse as "kurwo" [you bitch; O 433] is softened in the American edition to "stupid" (V 293). Still, settling for this explanation for all the above-mentioned alterations would obscure their deeper motivation, which is, as I would argue, at least partly linked with the hidden social desires catered for by the memory of the Holocaust and its representations. After all, the global memorial culture – clearly characterised by pathos and elevated tone – while being imbued with the awareness of the normative aspects of Holocaust representation, is not accustomed to critically evaluate the motives behind the sole need for representation, which is always underpinned by particular interests and goals of the present, however incommensurable with the significance of the event they may be. According to Hans Kellner (1994: 128), it is this discrepancy that constitutes the source of the pervasive sense of decorum and belief in the "limits of representation" within Holocaust discourse which, as Grzegorz Niziołek argues, serve as the main tool to reject artistic representations that reveal the not so noble desires and affects fuelling the need for representing the Holocaust (Niziołek 2013: 53).

What seems to be the most interesting aspect of Tuszyńska's original text is precisely the contrast between Gran's resistive obscenity, as a witness of history, and the writer's ambition to participate in the act of bearing witness to the Holocaust as a model trustee of memory. The character of the reporter, created by Tuszyńska, is, indeed, to borrow Shoshana Feldman's term, a conscientious witness, *un témoin de bonne volonté* (Felman, Laub 1991: 111): full of noble intentions and compassion, but at the same time an agent of the existing culture of memory and of her own narcissistic drives. For, in Tuszyńska's book, the reporter is equally invested in listening to the authentic voice of the victim and propelled by the desire to uncover Gran's secret, whatever the cost. She tries to approach her protagonist with unconditional understanding despite the verbal abuse and humiliation, which in turn offers her a pretext to wallow in her own empathy and heroic endurance. Finally, while presenting her intention as a selfless lending of her ear and her pen to the muted victim, the writer ultimately creates her own story. Thus, the reporter's declared intentions to "understand the Shoah", to "give voice to a silenced victim", to "touch the world of the ghetto" or

“to reach the truth about Vera Gran” are underpinned by unspoken desires such as self-exultation, raptures over her own sensitivity and the need to distance herself from the monstrosity through convenient solidarity with the victim. The “beauty” of the memory bearing subject, created by Tuszyńska in the original text, is thus exposed as in fact streaked with the drive for self-elevation at the expense of the Holocaust precisely by the subversive “bestiality” of Vera, an insubordinate witness blocking all pathos. In the original version of the text, Gran’s savageness, only partly controlled by the writer, works on the elusive affective level, both reinforcing and challenging a certain image of the Shoah memory community functioning in the global memorial culture. The tendency to tame Vera Gran, to “beautify” her in order to neutralise the subversive potential hidden in her obscenities, which is so clearly visible in the editing of international versions of Tuszyńska’s book, can be attributed to the desire to sustain the image of selfless trusteeship of Holocaust memory and to protect the readers from confronting the reverse side of the memorial act, which is by definition bidirectional, always turned both towards the object and the subject of memory. And even if this reading of *Vera Gran: The Accused* may seem too far-fetched, the editors of the foreign version of the text deprived their readers of the chance to access an important layer of Tuszyńska’s book, robbing it of one of its undoubtedly most intriguing aspects.

A personal account of the Shoah

Despite its mostly biographical character, Tuszyńska’s original text relies heavily on the plot related directly to the inner life of the writer/reporter, whose condition may be described as permanent dislocation in relation to the subject of her quest. She reaches Gran in the last possible moment, and yet it is not the right time: admittedly, the writer manages to speak to the protagonist before she passes and the spring of “living memory” inadvertently runs out; still, it is too late to uncover the truth about the past or about Gran herself. The resulting tension, as well as the associated feelings of disappointment and frustration, constantly accompany the writing subject, constituting a source of the melancholy of the secondary, or “belated”, witness (see e.g. Levine 2006) that pervades the book.

Although the plot of *Vera Gran: The Accused* is focused on piecing together the life story of Vera Gran, and on the journalistic investigation

aimed at discovering whether the allegations of collaboration with the Nazis were justified, the author dedicates much space to the narrator's first-person account of her encounters with Gran, her own life and dilemmas linked with the process of writing the book, as well as general reflections stemming from the confrontation with the traumatic experience of the Holocaust. As I have mentioned earlier, it is this layer of Tuszyńska's book that makes it also a post-Holocaust (auto)biography – a genre developed by the post-World War II generations, which combines telling the story of the life of a Holocaust survivor (often a parent or a relative, as is the case of the second-generation authors *proper*) and that of the writer. In the literature written by the descendants of Holocaust survivors, this coupling is very tightly wrought, as being a child to someone bearing trauma necessarily involves one in its continual re-living. Of course, in the case of *Vera Gran: The Accused*, there can be no question of any such relationship between Tuszyńska and her protagonist. Nevertheless, Tuszyńska's second-generation identity, assimilated and tentatively explored in her earlier books, especially in the *Family History of Fear* (Łysak 2009), plays a central role in this one. For, as a passage from the acknowledgements sealing *Vera Gran: The Accused* suggests, the book stems from the author's previous personal experiences linked with the Holocaust and her need to have more:

I wanted to tell her story so that it would be *put to the test* [also: *experienced* – A.P.] by someone – like me – who did not live through the war, but who *by family ties has still “never left the ghetto” for years*. This is not a monograph about Vera Gran's artistic successes; these are my meetings with her, her *personal account of the period during the Holocaust*, which I have not experienced but which is invariably present in each of the choices I make in life (V 301–302; italics mine).

Tuszyńska's post-Holocaust writing subject places herself, thus, in the position of predestination: her personal connection with the Holocaust through “family ties” not only explains the choice of the topic of the book, and its personal nature, but also justifies the underlying desire to experience the Shoah first hand: “I want to survive and know the price of survival. I want to know. Perhaps it's because of that that I found Vera” (V 65). Tuszyńska's artistic decision to tell Vera Gran's life story is thus not motivated solely by the altruistic, somehow objective choice to lend a voice to the forgotten victim, but is fuelled also by subjective stakes to which the writer openly admits. To put it bluntly: Tuszyńska has long put her skin in the game of

writing about the Shoah. That's why, in the Polish version of the above cited passage, Tuszyńska ambiguously points to a "personal account of the period during the Holocaust", which can refer both to Gran and to the writer herself. (In the American edition, this ambiguity is removed by adding the possessive pronoun "her" which unequivocally points to the protagonist – more on this below.)

The basic strategy of Tuszyńska's personal reckoning with the Holocaust consists in embodiment – an attempt to imagine oneself at a different time and place, in somebody else's shoes. As Justyna Kowalska-Leder (2014: 773) points out, literary attempts to inhabit other people's bodies and fates constitute the key motif in Tuszyńska's autobiographical and biographical writings. For example in *Ćwiczenia z utraty* [Exercises in loss] she writes: "I need to feel like them, be in their shoes and their skin, as I wrote in a poem, to try on their Auschwitz glasses" (Tuszyńska 2007: 141). Taking this into account, one should not wonder at the writer's hope, excitement and obvious fascination: "I would have promised her anything to be able to stay near her, swept into this world unconnected to time. I could touch it" (V 136), expressed just before Gran was expected to offer her testimony (but instead told the story of a pile of excrement).¹¹

Tuszyńska's desire to enter the ghetto and the compulsion to identify with the persecuted victim – which were expressed already in earlier works and found the most vivid, if not concrete, form in the book on Vera Gran¹² – in practical terms translate into artistic attempts to re-enact the Holocaust within the safe space of a literary text. It is in this space where, as Tuszyńska herself puts it, it becomes possible to feel the "taste of hunger" (V 65) and try on somebody else's fate without feeling their pain: "Przymiarki nie boją. Chwilowe przebrania nie przenikają nas losem cudzych ubrań. Moment dobrowolnej charakteryzacji niewiele kosztuje" (O 212) [Trying on somebody else's clothes isn't painful. A temporary costume does not impregnate us with the fate of the person who once wore it. The moment of voluntary dressing-up does not cost you anything]. Although Tuszyńska

¹¹ Next to embodiment, the desire to touch the destroyed, non-existing world of Polish Jewry is also one of the main driving forces of Tuszyńska's writing, which can be seen especially in her biography of Isaac Singer (*Lost Landscapes: In Search of Isaac Bashevis Singer and the Jews of Poland*, 1998); it is also present in her literary debut – a reportage book about Israel (Tuszyńska 1993).

¹² As Kowalska-Leder points out (2014: 773), the real space of embodiment is the court where Tuszyńska had to defend herself from Andrzej Szpilman's accusations.

does not elaborate on this issue further, it is worth asking whether, firstly, such a strategy is at all possible, as geared toward re-living an experience that cannot, by definition, be painless nor culminate in full salvation, and secondly, whether it makes sense in the context of the writer's ambition to better understand the Shoah. Not to mention that, here too, the reservation referring to the narcissistic tendencies behind even the loftiest acts of commemoration by the post-Holocaust generations is very relevant. Nevertheless, in the context of contemporary reflection on the role and competence of belated witnesses in the necessary process of transmitting the memory of the Holocaust, Tuszyńska's strategy of embodiment seems important, as it is provocative in at least three main aspects.

Firstly, because it makes the character of the writer in *Vera Gran: The Accused*, controversial in the context of the dominant cultural imagery associated with secondary witnessing. Tuszyńska's reporter openly refuses to be a mere "tool, the ear and the pen, the extension of my hand and my eyes (...) keeping a record of my past" (V 7), as Vera would have it. Instead, she takes on the role of the co-creator and co-owner of history – both in the sense of Gran's individual story and history as a global process. For Dori Laub, this sense of possessing, linked with accepting personal responsibility, is a necessary condition for testimony to take place, as it demands not only an eye-witness but also a conscious, active listener entering into a dialogical relationship with the one giving an account of history (Laub 1991). Paradoxically, however, as the question of how to continue the chain of testimony (Horowitz 1997, 217) to the Holocaust after all survivors are gone becomes more and more urgent, the contemporary concepts of trusteeship of memory accentuate its passive, non-subjective aspect, presenting our contemporaries as those who preserve and store the memory that was deposited unto them rather than as its active co-creators. Again, what seems of paramount importance here, in the context of globalised cultural Holocaust memory patterns, is the strong, yet elusive sense of ethical decorum, which not only exerts a taboo over different social and individual needs linked with preserving the memory of the Holocaust (as mentioned earlier), but also does not account for the changing patterns and media of assimilating memory into one's individual experience.

Secondly, it seems that the stance of the writer in Tuszyńska's book, accentuating the deeply personal, subjective character of secondary witnessing to the Shoah, puts into question the dominant discourse that assumes the fundamental cognitive deficits of those "graced with late birth" with respect

to the events that they did not experience and that cannot be compared with any element of life after the war. This assumption of the fundamental incomprehensibility of the Holocaust for those who did not live through it, originally expressed by the survivors themselves, is reflected in one of Gran's utterances when, annoyed by a naïve or too inquisitive question asked by the reporter, she lashes out: "Do you know? You only think that you know" (V 143). For Tuszyńska, however, in spite of her ritual recognitions of own incapacity, in which she clearly finds a certain perverse pleasure – "I feel [powerless] confronting this past. Not qualified to pass a moral judgement. What do I know, what can I know?" (V 142) – the possibility to understand, partly at least, seems to be a prerequisite for effectively preserving the memory of the Holocaust: "The survivors say that they are the only ones who can understand life in a ghetto. Perhaps they are right. Then, why do I want to confront it once again?" (V 65; in the original impersonal: "Why to confront it once again?" – A.P.). Although the writer in *Vera Gran: The Accused* wants to pass for a "conscientious witness" and, to some extent, longs to adhere to the norms outlined by the cultural conventions regarding indirect witnessing, ultimately she casts off the fetish of fundamental inability to know and understand¹³ by openly expressing her desire for cognition ("I want to know") and trying to fulfil it through means available to her. Having opted for such a model of post-Holocaust subjectivity in her book, Tuszyńska presents an opposite view to those who would want to define such a subject solely through lack (of first-hand memory) and inadequacy (of cognitive capacity), perceiving the main reason for upholding the chain of testimony to the Holocaust in compensation rather than active participation.

Finally, Tuszyńska's strategy of embodiment used in *Vera Gran: The Accused* shows how problematic it is to concurrently meet both commonly accepted imperatives of the ever more commonly professed ethics governing bearing secondary witness to the Holocaust: on the one hand, empathy and on the other absolute prohibition of identification with the victim. One of the earliest and best expressed theoretical formulations of this rule of engaged non-engagement in Holocaust memory studies is Dominick LaCapra's notion of "empathic unsettlement". According to LaCapra it is "a kind of virtual

¹³ It is perhaps best expressed in the conversation with Claude Lanzmann, meaningfully titled "The Obscenity of Understanding" (Lanzmann, Caruth and Rodowick 1991), in which the director presents the inability to understand the Holocaust, or even the conscious refusal to understand it, as the purpose of his own artistic work and that of any other great artist, as well as the essence of morality of those who did not live through the event.

experience through which one puts oneself in the other's position while recognising the difference of that position and hence not taking the other's place" (1999: 722). For the American scholar, it is precisely the middle ground between empirical study and affective processing that constitutes the most desirable way of cultivating the memory of the Holocaust accessible to the generations born after the event. In the context of Holocaust discourse, the (relatively late) appreciation of empathy based, as Martha Nussbaum puts it, on being "aware of one's own *qualitative difference* from the sufferer" (2003: 328) offered two main advantages: on the one hand, it constituted an antidote to the long dominant fetish of research and fact; on the other hand, it put up a comfortable barrier to the complete annihilation of the Other – be it through alienation or through colonial appropriation. Nevertheless, once we try to analyse concrete examples of artistic – also literary – works which can be viewed as representations or rather performances of individual, often complicated ways of assimilating the Holocaust, it turns out that this convenient theoretical differentiation between "emphatic identification" (Dean 2004: 14)¹⁴ and the forbidden narcissistic substitution is by no means easy to implement in practice.¹⁵ A good example is Tuszyńska's book, where the author's awareness of the futility of the impersonation strategy, not to mention its radically egocentric character, does not make her abandon it, nor come up with an alternative solution.

Perhaps it is because of the subversive potential of Tuszyńska's concept of the post-Holocaust subject that the editing policy, applied in the export version of *Vera Gran: The Accused*, was especially ruthless precisely in this aspect. Generally speaking, the editors stripped the original text of many fragments dedicated to the writer's dilemmas and emotional responses, as well as of pieces of dialogue used to characterise the writer rather than Vera Gran (see e.g. O 13, 19). The narrative frame of "trying on fates", which sets up the structure of the chapter *Kodeks przetrwania w getcie i poza nim* (*The codes of survival inside the ghetto and on the outside*), is entirely lacking in the American edition, as are nearly all the fragments introducing the strategy of embodiment. A case in question is the typographically differentiated

¹⁴ The very concept of non-appropriative identification reverberates in the wider debate on art, with reference to contexts other than artistic representation of the Holocaust, see for instance Kaja Silverman's "heteropathic identification" (2013: 185) and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's "allo-identification" (1990: 59–63).

¹⁵ Or, perhaps, it is the function of interpretation, as in the analyses performed by Susan Gubar (2001, 2002).

encyclopaedic definition of lice, which appears in the original text with no apparent link to the neighbouring paragraphs, followed by an authorial comment saying: “Nie, nie brzydzi mnie ta sekwencja. W rzeczywistości, która nie była moim udziałem, stanowiła o tym, co realne. Więc jest moja. Miałabym wszy” (O 95) [No, I am not disgusted by this sequence. In the time and space that were not mine it determined what was real. So it is mine. I would have had lice]. Likewise, the international version of Tuszyńska’s text was meticulously purged of the fragments suggesting the writer’s strong connection to her protagonist, at times represented as an experiential, or even somatic, unity. These include, for instance, rather frequent authorial comments on Gran’s life story, speculating how she might have felt or what she might have said in a particular situation, as well as reflexive interludes in which Tuszyńska suggests almost immediate community of experience between the writer and the protagonist.¹⁶

What could not be removed from the original text, due to issues of coherence or the significance of a given idea in the context of the entire work, was consequently modified in the edited version. In all the fragments suggesting a subjective identification of the writing persona with the experience of the Holocaust, personal pronouns were corrected in such a way as to refer unambiguously to Gran. For example, while in the Polish text of *Vera Gran: The Accused* the above-mentioned fragment of the acknowledgements purposefully introduces ambiguity with respect to the “personal account of the Holocaust period”, in the American edition the attribution is made absolutely clear:

This is not a monograph about Vera Gran’s artistic successes; these are my meetings with her, *her* personal account of the period during the Holocaust, which I have not experienced but which is invariably present in each of the choices I make in life (V 301–302; italics mine).¹⁷

¹⁶ See, for instance, a fragment towards the end of the book, describing the relationship of the two women as Gran’s death approaches, which is not included in the American edition: „Przychodziłam do niej umierać. Otulałam ramionami i zagarniałam do siebie. Grzęzłyśmy, a potem unosiliśmy się razem, jak w kołysce. Upadek i lot, w tej kolejności. Osuwanie się i odbijanie od dna” (O 439f) [I came to her to die. I wrapped my arms around her and held her close. We drowned and then floated, as if in a cradle. The fall and the flight, in that order. Sliding down, re-emerging].

¹⁷ It is worth noticing on the margin that the seemingly minor change from a single “meeting” (used in the Polish text) to multiple “meetings” in the cited fragment of *Vera Gran: The Accused* negates the original work’s suggestion that the entire book constitutes,

Sometimes, the edited version of Tuszyńska's text neutralises the original subjectivisation through juggling with narrative modalities. A case in point is one of the many sequences which can be described as creative or imaginal, where the writer tries to fill in the gaps in Gran's account with speculation about unknown circumstances or situations (see O 91). The first, crucial sentence in the original text, which introduces the sequence: "Usiłuję umieścić to zdarzenie w codzienności tamtych dni" (O 91) (I am trying to fit this event in the reality of those days) is missing from the translation, while another, in the Polish text impersonal "Powrót do Warszawy, przekroczenie granic dzielnicy zamkniętej" (Return to Warsaw, entering the closed-off district), is supplanted with one clearly indicating a subject: "She [Vera – A.P.] returned to Warsaw, crossed the barrier to the closed-off area" (V 67). In other instances, where Tuszyńska inscribed embodiment deeper into the text, the editorial corrections go deeper as well. For instance, the following sequence, in the original told in first person present and representing the writer's imagined vision of Gran's feelings about being transformed into an Aryan after leaving the ghetto, in the American edition is converted into Vera's monologue about her past experiences (and framed, as the documentary convention demands, in quotation marks):

All along I worked with my face, my voice, my figure. I valued, perhaps overestimated my own image. Now suddenly someone came to transform me, to manufacture a new me, to disguise me. To destroy the person I was (V 98).

This way, all subject-oriented sequences evidently displaying identification of the writing subject with the protagonist, and with the Shoah, have been disciplined so as to always keep a safe distance from the Holocaust which, for many survivors, such as Imre Kertész, constituted a "unified value" and a "universal experience" (Kertész 2001: 267, 270).

A misbehaved testimony of literature and its translation

In her essay "Testimony without Intimacy", Patricia Yaeger (2006) reflects on Holocaust testimonies in terms of their possible insubordination or "misbehaviour" with respect to the capacity, values and expectations of their

in fact, Tuszyńska's meeting with Gran, instead steering the reader towards interpreting the book as a record of a series of meetings between the two women.

recipients, who play a crucial role in how they emerge and circulate in culture. The examples given by Yaeger represent concrete contexts of such misbehaviour, which causes an essential collapse of communication based on an unfulfilled desire for intimacy. It seems, however, that any Holocaust testimony – regardless whether given by a survivor or by a secondary witness – can be viewed from precisely this perspective, of its inherent subversive, or transgressive, potential with respect to the found cognitive structures and cultural imagery. The present comparative analysis of selected aspects of Agata Tuszyńska's original book, *Oskarżona: Wiera Gran*, and its international version represented by the American edition, aimed to showcase the contemporary culture of remembering the Holocaust as a structure which reinforces certain social or individual modes of (auto)perception it generates, while suppressing any attempts to verify or question them. Various corrective instruments, implemented in the international edition of Tuszyńska's original, largely "misbehaving" text revealed the basic assumptions of the contemporary cultural code of meanings and axiological context in which the Holocaust is processed and absorbed, delineating – as Berel Lang (1988) observed – the binding "limits of representation".

Resisting all attempts at full familiarization or domestication, the Shoah remains perpetually displaced from its memorial space, which by definition is intended to be welcoming, familiar and safe for its inhabitants and creators. This displacement is diagnosed and explored in art referring to the Holocaust, continually created despite the growing time distance and increasing historical knowledge. It is a truism, but one, perhaps, still insufficiently internalised, that Holocaust-centred artistic realisations do not respond, or at least not primarily, to the need to "know and understand history", as the author of the afore-mentioned verification of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* would hope. What they do undertake is to critically reflect on this desire, while exploring its limitations, as well as the needs and communication strategies behind it. Writing about the Holocaust, also by authors born after World War II, is therefore both writing about the past and about the present, an act of discovering and creating new, currently important relationships between the two. According to Dorota Głowacka (2012), following Imre Kertész, searching for new idioms to express these relationships, constitutes the gist of the ethical task of translation facing those wishing to bear witness to the Shoah, understood as a universal experience constantly evading the mediation of language and memory. I would argue that, despite all its shortcomings and inevitable failures, Tuszyńska's Holocaust life-writing

in *Oskarżona*... can be viewed as an attempt at this kind of translation. Firstly, the text becomes a space of transmitting Vera Gran's testimony, which, having long been excluded from memorial circulation, became impossible to retrieve – a state of affairs, paradoxically, largely attributable to the existing patterns of remembrance. Exposing the “misbehaviour” of Gran and her account, Tuszyńska touches upon the fundamental issue of the languages that we, as the remembering community, are willing to apply to her experience, testing the limits of propriety with respect to the acceptable intimacy of the Holocaust in the individual and social context. Secondly, the original version of the book attempts to trace the winding paths and blind alleys of the internal translation of the Holocaust, i.e. transposing it into the individual emotional and cognitive space of a concrete subject, involved in the co-creation of an otherwise rather abstract community of memory. The American edition of *Oskarżona: Wiera Gran*, although formally passing for its official translation, in fact abolishes the translatorial work of the original text, transforming the book – described by many as bad, inaccurate and arrogant, but still undertaking the task of translating the Shoah – into one that is correct, convenient and beautiful, like us.

Translated by Aleksandra Kamińska

Bibliography

- Bojarska K. 2012. *Wydarzenia po Wydarzeniu: Białoszewski–Richter–Spiegelman*, Warszawa: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN.
- Czapliński P. 2009. “Zagłada i profanacje”, *Teksty Drugie* 4, pp. 199–213.
- Dean C.J. 2004. *The Fragility of Empathy after the Holocaust*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Felman S., Laub D. 1991. *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, New York: Routledge.
- Foley B. 1982. “Fact, Fiction, Fascism: Testimony and Mimesis in Holocaust Narratives”, *Comparative Literature* 34 (4), pp. 330–360.
- Glowacka D. 2012. “The Tower of Babel: Holocaust Testimonials and the Ethics of Translation”, in: *Disappearing Traces: Holocaust Testimonials, Ethics, and Aesthetics*, pp. 62–101, Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Gubar S. 2001. “Prosopopoeia and Holocaust Poetry in English: Sylvia Plath and Her Contemporaries”, *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 14 (1), pp. 191–215.
- 2002. “Empathic Identification in Anne Michaels’s Fugitive Pieces: Masculinity and Poetry after Auschwitz”, *Signs* 28 (1), pp. 249–276.

- Horowitz S. 1997. *Voicing the Void: Muteness and Memory in Holocaust Fiction*, Albany: State University of New York Press.
- 1998. “Auto/Biography and Fiction after Auschwitz: Probing the Boundaries of Second Generation Aesthetics”, in: E. Sicher (ed.), *Breaking Crystal: Writing and Memory After Auschwitz*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, pp. 276–294.
- Kellner H. 1994. “‘Never Again’ is Now”, *History and Theory* 33 (2), pp. 127–144.
- Kertész I. 2001. “Who Owns Auschwitz?”, trans. John MacKay, *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 14 (1), pp. 267–272.
- Kosofsky Sedgwick E. 1990. *Epistemology of the Closet*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kowalska-Leder J. 2014. “Literatura polska ostatniego dziesięciolecia wobec Zagłady – próby odpowiedzi na nowe wyzwania”, *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* 10, pp. 768–802.
- Kowalska-Leder J. et al. (ed.). 2017. *Ślady Holokaustu w imaginarium kultury polskiej*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej.
- Kusek R. 2015. “Writing (Non)Fiction: On Polish Problems with Life-Writing”, in: C. Marquis, R. Nicholson, G. Szamosi (eds.), *Contested Identities: Literary Negotiations in Time and Place*, pp. 87–99, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- LaCapra D. 1999. “Trauma, Absence, Loss”, *Critical Inquiry* 25 (4), pp. 696–727.
- Lang B. 1988. “Language and Genocide”, in: A. Rosenberg, G.E. Myers (eds.), *Echoes from the Holocaust: Philosophical Reflections on a Dark Time*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 341–364.
- Langer L.L. 1990. “Fictional Facts and Factual Fictions: History in Holocaust Literature”, in: R.L. Brahm (ed.), *Reflections of the Holocaust in Art and Literature*, Boulder–New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 117–129.
- Lanzmann C., Caruth C., Rodowick D. 1991. “The Obscenity of Understanding: An Evening with Claude Lanzmann”, *American Imago* 48, pp. 473–495.
- Laub D. 1991. “Bearing Witness, or the Vicissitudes of Listening”, in: *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, New York: Routledge, pp. 57–74.
- Levine M.G. 2006. *The Belated Witness: Literature, Testimony, and the Question of Holocaust Survival*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.
- Łysak T. 2009. “Meandry ujawniania – późne odkrycie tożsamości w *Rodzinnej historii lekku* Agaty Tuszyńskiej”, in: P. Czaplinski, E. Domańska (eds.), *Zagłada – współczesne problemy rozumienia i przedstawiania*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne, pp. 195–208.
- Morris H. 2018. *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*, New York, NY: HarperLuxe.
- Nawój E. 2011. “O książce Agaty Tuszyńskiej *Oskarżona: Wiera Gran*”, Culture.pl. 2011 (access: 04.12.2019).
- Niziołek G. 2019. *The Polish Theatre of the Holocaust*, London–New York: Bloomsbury.
- Nussbaum M.C. 2003. *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Roskies D.G., Diamant N. 2012. "What Is Holocaust Literature?"; in: D.G. Roskies, N. Diamant, *Holocaust Literature: A History and Guide*, Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press, pp. 1–19.
- Samson H. 2011. "Obnazona Wiera Gran", *Gazeta Wyborcza*, „Wysokie Obcasy”, 14 April 2011, http://www.wysokieobcasy.pl/wysokie-obcasy/1,96856,9401039,Obnazona_Wiera_Gran.html (access: 04.12.2019).
- Silverman K. 2013. *The Threshold of the Visible World*, Florence: Taylor and Francis.
- Sosnowski A. 2011. "Lęk nad zmaconym źródłem", *Więź* 1, pp. 154–158.
- Szczęśna J. 2010. "To nie była agentka", *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 24 November 2010, http://wyborcza.pl/1,75475,8708401,To_nie_byla_agentka.html (access: 04.12.2019).
- Śliwiński P. 2012. *Horror poeticus: szkice, notatki*, Wrocław: Biuro Literackie.
- Tuszyńska A. 1993. *Kilka portretów z Polską w tle: reportaże izraelskie*, Gdańsk: Marabut.
- 1994. *Singer: pejzaże pamięci*, Gdańsk: Marabut.
- 2007. *Ćwiczenia z utraty*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie.
- 2010. *Oskarżona: Wiera Gran*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie.
- 2012. *Wiera Gran, l'accusée*, trans. I. Jannès-Kalinowski, Paris: Éd. Points.
- 2013. *Vera Gran: The Accused*, trans. Ch. Ruas, New York: Knopf.
- Tuszyńska A., Żurek J. 2013. "Wiera. Dramat w sześciu obrazach", *Dialog* 11, pp. 61–116.
- Tuszyńska A., Żurek J., Jaworska J. 2013. "Na cztery ręce", *Dialog* 11, pp. 117–121.
- Van Alphen E. 1997. *Caught by History: Holocaust Effects in Contemporary Art, Literature, and Theory*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Wieviorka A. 2006. "The Witness in History", *Poetics Today* 2(27), pp. 385–397.
- Wilkomirski B. 1998. *Bruchstücke: aus einer Kindheit 1939–1948*, 1. Aufl. Frankfurt (Main): Suhrkamp.
- Witek-Malicka W. 2018. "Fact-Checking *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*", *Memoria* 14, pp. 6–17.
- Wróbel Best J. 2015. "The Other Heroine Is Memory (A Conversation with Agata Tuszyńska)", *The Polish Review* 60 (1), pp. 85–95.
- Yaeger P. 2006. "Testimony without Intimacy", *Poetics Today* 27 (2), pp. 399–423.
- Young J.E. 1987. "Interpreting Literary Testimony: A Preface to Rereading Holocaust Diaries and Memoirs", *New Literary History* 18 (2), pp. 403–423.
- 1988. "Holocaust Documentary Fiction: Novelist as Eyewitness", in: J.E. Young, *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust: Narrative and the Consequences of Interpretation*, pp. 51–63. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Zeitlin F.I. 1998. "The Vicarious Witness: Belated Memory and Authorial Presence in Recent Holocaust Literature", *History and Memory* 10 (2), pp. 5–42.