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IS A CRIME NOVEL IN TRANSLATION CAPABLE OF TEACHING US HISTORY? A CONSIDERATION OF THE TRANSLATIONS OF *ŚMIERĆ W BRESLAU* [*DEATH IN BRESLAU*] AND *GŁOWA MINOTAURA* [*THE MINOTAUR'S HEAD*] BY MAREK KRAJEWSKI*

Écrire pour le grand public, c'est veiller à ne perdre personne en route.
Lui donner au fur et à mesure les clés de lecture dont il a besoin.

(Dominique Defert 2015: 89)

Abstract

Crime novel is considered one of the most important innovations of the twentieth century in the field of fiction. Together with cinema, television and "elite" literature which often take over some of its features (themes and plots), it plays a significant role in creating the representation of reality proposed to the readers. The investigation described in the novels is set in a context which refers to the real world, in its social, political or historical aspects. The realistic dimension of the crime story makes it a kind of "social document", which attracts the attention of researchers, including non-literary scholars. Reading crime novels allows them to acquire strictly literary information, but also some knowledge about

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communities, which leads them to an interpretation of relationships between literature and society. In this paper, the translated crime novel is seen as a special means of enriching the reader's knowledge of the source culture. The realistic character of the work, which is supposed to fulfil a primarily ludic function, implies a certain tension in the work of the translator, who is led to ask himself: "shall I entertain or shall I entertain and teach"? If realism becomes a constitutive feature of crime fiction, if, as stated by Maryse Petit and Gilles Menegaldo, "under the pretext of attracting a crime novel client, the intention is to give him a history lesson or to make him think about a certain state of society", the translator may be bound to include in the translation some elements that supplement the "encyclopaedic" knowledge of the target reader. The analysis is based on two novels by Marek Krajewski – his first novel, *Death in Breslau* (1999), set in the inter-war period, featuring the German policeman Eberhard Mock, and *The Minotaur's Head*, published a decade later, which action takes Mock to Lwów in the time when it was a Polish city and makes him befriend a Polish commissioner, Popielski. A comparison of some of their translations (eight for the first book, three for the second) shows differences in the treatment of the historical component of the novels, both in the treatment of selected text elements, as a result of the translator's project, and in the peritexts, which, however, usually do not depend on the translator, but on the publisher.

Keywords: Marek Krajewski, crime novel, historical and social realities, translation peritext, educational function

Introduction

The crime novel, once considered nothing more than an entertaining read, offering the thrill of mystery-solving, is today considered, in the field of fiction at least, one of the most important innovations of the twentieth century. Its typical themes and plot patterns are increasingly adopted by highbrow and even avant-garde literature, and above all, by film and television productions. The plot, set in a context referring to the real world in its social, political or historical aspects, plays a significant role in creating the representation of reality offered to the reader, and, as a consequence, it may influence the perception of various phenomena (Boltanski 2016: 21). The realistic dimension of the crime novel also makes it a kind of "social documentary" (Petit, Menegaldo 2010), a "grand narrative about society" or an "anthropological testimony" (Czubaj 2010), all of which attracts the attention of researchers, including those in non-literary fields. In such cases, crime novels are not read in order to study the textual construction of a certain type of literary fiction, but rather to obtain – aside from strictly literary knowledge – information about communities, or identifying relationships between literature and society.

In the present article, the translated crime novel is seen as a special means of enriching the reader's knowledge of the source culture. Like any translation – which is "a text cut from the environment in which it was produced and matured (…) and thrown (…) into a foreign culture, or, more precisely, addressed to other readers for whom it was not originally intended" (Torres 2002: 8) – it assumes that the personal "encyclopaedia" (to use Umberto Eco's term) of its addressee is different from that of the reader envisioned by the author of the original text, and as such may need appropriate interventions in order to compensate for this difference. In the case of translations of crime fiction, which has a primarily ludic function, i.e., whose reading, by virtue of an unwritten pact, is supposed to bring the reader pleasure rather than a didactic experience, a certain tension may arise in the translator's work and in the choices he or she makes. To simplify my point, this tension could be summed up by the following question: "shall I entertain, or shall I entertain and teach"? If realism becomes a constitutive feature of crime fiction, if, as stated by Maryse Petit and Gilles Menegaldo, "under the pretext of attracting customers with a detective story, the intention is to give them a history lesson, or to encourage them to think about a certain state of society: a form of culture presented in entertaining form, where, under its mask of popular literature, the crime novel would be a mere vehicle for conveying completely different knowledge to the reader's mind" (Petit, Menegaldo 2010), then the translator may consider it appropriate to include in the translation some elements that supplement the "encyclopaedic" knowledge of the target reader, that is, to "teach" him.

This article (which will necessarily produce partial results), and which seeks to answer the question of whether a translated crime novel is only meant to entertain or whether it can also have a didactic effect, is based on a comparative analysis of the English, Spanish, French, Greek, Italian, Russian and Czech translations of *Śmierć w Breslau* [*Death in Breslau*] and the English, Greek and Russian translations of *Głowa Minotaura* [*The Minotaur's Head*], both by Marek Krajewski, a Polish author who has been translated into more than twenty languages.

The analysis will consider firstly the techniques used to render in translation the proper names that refer to the German past of Wrocław and the Polish past of Lviv, in order to examine to what extent the translators have succeeded in preserving the informational (cultural, historical) load available

to the Polish reader[1]; and secondly, the paratexts added by the translator and/or the publisher – footnotes, prefaces or afterwords, appendices, and cover texts – which afford an opportunity to introduce historical information useful to the reader of the translation. It will also examine to what extent these translations are likely to provide foreign readers with knowledge concerning episodes in the history of Poland and neighbouring countries (Germany, Ukraine).

Why Breslau, why Lwów: crime and history

In 1999, Krajewski's first book, *Śmierć w Breslau* (hereafter: *Śmierć*), was the first in a series of "retro" crime novels featuring *Kriminaldirektor* Eberhard Mock as the protagonist, set in the interwar period, mainly in the German city of Breslau. In *Głowa Minotaura* (*Głowa*), published ten years later, Mock undertakes, in the late 1930s, an investigation which results in him forming a close working alliance with Edward Popielski, police commissioner of the Polish city of Lwów, and the two men soon become friends.

Krajewski's novels are a combination of two sub-genres of the crime novel: the so-called 'noir' and 'retro' (a variant of historical crime fiction) genres.[2] The conventions of the 'roman noir' present us with a social critique which mainly targets the urban world. The city, whose shameful and shocking secrets the novel uncovers, becomes more than just a setting – it can be seen as a protagonist on a par with the characters. As for the conventions of the historical crime novel, they require that the time in which the action takes place, prior to that of the novel's creation, be accurately described, that references to the atmosphere of the time – including real historical characters and places – be plausible, and that the facts on which the plot is based be in line with historical knowledge (Agger 2010).

Krajewski applies all the above rules: he describes an investigation that takes place in an urban space marked by injustice, violence and lies (which Mock and Popielski, who are supposed to respect and enforce the law, have no qualms in using either). While constructing this space according to the

[1] For further discussion on the proper name as a culturally marked element, see Ballard 2005: 126.

[2] The complexity of the genre of Krajewski's novels has been examined in more detail by Browarny (2019: 76–90).

rules of the 'roman noir', the author uses authentic elements from the time in which it is set, as required by the rules of the historical crime novel. In this way, his novels take on a realistic dimension, which has even led to an unexpected pragmatic effect: their use in literary tourism. This is evidenced by some guides to Wrocław offering to follow in Eberhard Mock's footsteps (e.g., Kaczmarek 2008; Urlich-Kornacka 2017), or a city tour of Lviv called "The criminal mysteries of Commissioner Popielski's Lwów" (Kotyńska 2015: 165). "Historicity" thus serves to increase the novels' attractiveness: they no longer offer a mere journey or excursion into another space, but also – and perhaps above all – into a past recreated for the readers. The novels' success could thus be attributed to the fact that the author has chosen to set their action in cities that have a special status in the eyes of today's Poles: they are mythical cities, both known and unknown, cities "without a biography" (Gemra 2013: 125).

Before the Second World War, Lwów was part of Poland, while Breslau was one of the largest German cities, the capital of Silesia. The decisions of the Yalta and Potsdam conferences, which shifted Poland's borders to the west and established new ones in the east and west, led to migrations and resettlements: more than 10 million Germans were expelled from the new territories attached to Poland, and replaced by several million Poles – the so-called "repatriated" (according to the official term) – who were forced to leave the eastern Borderlands annexed by the USSR. The previously German town of Breslau became the Polish Wrocław, the new home for thousands of Polish Leopolitans, while their own town of Lwów became the Ukrainian Lviv. In the memory and post-memory of the former inhabitants of Lwów and their descendants, the city is now a lost ideal: there is no possible return to a place that has been ruled by another nation for more than 70 years and where the previous order has been replaced by another culture and history:

> As a city of the USSR (i.e., both the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), it also became an unknown place, with alien street and square names, buildings that had been given new functions (…). It was no longer Królewskie Stołeczne Miasto Lwów [the Royal Capital City of Lwów], but Львив or Львов: a city in the the USSR (Gemra 2013: 126).

In the eyes of the Leopolitans who settled in Wrocław after 1945, but also for people from other parts of pre-war Poland, this new city was a place of exile, an unknown and hostile space that for a long time remained difficult

to accept, since the western border of Poland was ratified only as recently as 1990.

Gemra also notes that the "literary alienation" of the two cities is due to the fact that the political censorship of the People's Poland gave them the aura of a "forbidden zone": there are very few Polish novels written after 1945 whose action takes place in Breslau or Lwów in the 1920s or 1930s (Gemra 2013: 126). According to the official ideological discourse, Wrocław was to be presented as an ancestral Polish city (the "Wrocław of the Piasts"), and attempts were made to erase from its history the years when it was called Breslau. But material traces remained – indeed, they are still noticeable to this day (Grębowiec 2015). As Krajewski himself wrote:

> I lived in a kind of conflict between official opinions about the eternal Polishness of Wrocław and ordinary, everyday life, in which I kept discovering traces of its German past (for example, names of German companies on sewer manholes, advertising slogans written in Gothic letters that appeared under the cement falling off the walls) (quoted in Gemra 2013: 127).

However, the cities in the two novels under discussion here are not real cities: the detailed descriptions of places, the precise references to everyday items – car brands, factory or company names, etc. – are used to construct a fictional city, a dark character befitting a 'roman noir'. Thus, the Polish readers of Krajewski's retro crime novels experience the perverse pleasure of a double set of unknowns: the mystery of the investigation, and the mystery of the city which has a long-gone past, whose image is a mixture of truth and fiction. They are likely to have enough knowledge to enjoy the mystery and be able to distinguish between the real and the fictional. But this is hardly the case for readers of the translations. Their possibilities of interpretation or their ability to "cooperate with the text" are limited, and moreover, depend on the translator's reading of the text: he or she may have decided to focus on the crime mystery, leaving aside historical realities.[3]

[3] The role of the publisher, who can decide (or at least co-determine) the content of the peritexts, should not be ignored either.

Translations – between crime fiction and historical realities

Śmierć w Breslau

Breslau in the first novel (and those which follow, whose titles always have the same structure: *Plague in Breslau*, *Phantoms in Breslau*, *The End of the World in Breslau*) is a German city, and direct references to major events in German history play an important role in the plot. When the criminal investigation begins, in May 1933, only a few months have passed since Adolf Hitler came to power (in January) and the NSDAP won the elections (in March). In the police force, now infiltrated by Gestapo agents, the most important positions are already occupied by Nazis. The menace of the new government is increasingly felt in the city, which – together with corruption, violence and demoralisation – increases the atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. Mock's position as *Kriminaldirektor* is weakened, since he is only there thanks to the support of the Freemasons. By July 1934, when the investigation is resumed, the situation has worsened: the Night of the Long Knives had just taken place. Thus, German history has a direct impact on Mock's life and work.

Where historical events are mentioned, the names of relevant historical characters appear: Hitler, *Obergruppenfuehrer* SA Edmund Heines, chancellor [*sic*] von Hindenburg, Hermann Göring, Supreme President of Silesia Helmuth Brückner, Ernst Röhm, to name but a few. Other references, for example, to urban spaces, institutions, and inhabitants, reveal the Germanness of Breslau, with their German names, surnames, and titles. The main character, Eberhard Mock, who is referred to either as *Kriminaldirektor* or *dyrektor kryminalny* [Director of Criminal Affairs], moves around a city whose place names are either wholly German (*Sonnenplatz*, *Teichaeckerstrasse*), or half-Polish and half-German (*Landtag śląski* [the Silesian *Landtag*], *Fabryka Linkego, Hofmanna i Lauchhammera* [Linke, Hofmann and Lauchhammer's factory]); the German language also appears in the names of everyday objects (*woda kolońska od Welzla* [Welzl's cologne], *piwo od Kipkego* [Kipke's beer], the newspapers *Schlesische Tageszeitung* and *Breslauer Zeitung*), all of which belonged to the German material culture of the time.

However, the "marking" with German forms is not systematic: while street names or newspaper titles are always in German, some institutions

and neighbouring towns are also frequently referred to by their Polish names (*Dom Koncertowy* [Concert Hall], *Dworzec Główny* [Main Station], *Wałbrzych*, *Trzebnica*, *Legnica*). Furthermore, although *Breslau* keeps its German name in the title of the book, in the chapter headings (consisting of the name of the city, the date and the exact time), it appears under its Polish name, *Wrocław*.[4] Some authentic street or institution names are explained in footnotes, where the author gives the present Polish names (e.g., on page 28, a footnote explains that *Schweidnitzer Stadtgraben* corresponds to today's *Podwale* Street, and the *Wertheim* department stores to *Dom Towarowy "Renoma"*, also called *"PDT"*). Such a technique has a double effect: it increases the "authenticity" of the novel, but at the same time, since some names refer to places that no longer exist, it conjures up for the reader a moment in time that belongs entirely to the past.

When examining the translations, differences in the treatment of proper names can be observed. Anthroponyms – genuine or fictitious – are quoted literally in the English, French, Spanish and Italian translations (*Helmuth Brückner; Herbert Anwaldt*). The Greek and Russian translators use a phonetic transcription (*Χελμουτ Μπρουκνερ, Χερμπερτ Ανβαλδτ; Хельмут Брюкнер, Герберт Анвальдт*) and, if necessary, decline the nouns (*он вошел в кофейню Оттона Штиблера*).[5] In the Czech version, they are also declined (*Brucknerovi*), and first names are sometimes translated (*vstoupil do prazirny kavy Otty Stieblera*).

The Polish names of functions or positions are translated (*Nadprezydent Śląska / The new Supreme President of Silesia / Oberpraesident de Silesia / Oberpraesident de Silésie / Κυβερνητης της Σιλεσιας / Nuovo governatore della Silesia / обер- президент Силези / Slezský vrchní prezident*); on the other hand, when the original text contains a German title of military function or rank, the solutions vary between borrowing, translation and adaptation, with no observable rules in the choices of the various translators; the Greek version is the only one where Greek names are used systematically. The same applies to function names used as appellatives. For example, in

[4] For interpretations of this solution, see Osmólska-Mętrak 2010 and Gemra 2013: 133.

[5] In the case of languages with a non-Latin alphabet, the choice of translation techniques affords an additional possibility: the transfer of the proper name in its original form, which creates a strong signal of otherness; this technique, increasingly used by Greek translators, gives rise to very lively debates (Papadima 2013); as far as I am aware, Russian translators do not use it.

the original text, sentences addressed to Mock may use either Polish (*panie radco*) or German forms (*Herr Kriminaldirektor*).

In the translations, the form of address either disappears, is translated either from Polish or German, or remains in German as in the original. In the French translation, German forms are often used to translate Polish forms, as in the example below:

– Drogi panie radco. (…) Na dole jest pański asystent (Śmierć, p. 13).

– Lieber Herr Kriminalrat, votre assistant vous attend en bas (*Mort*, p. 16).

However, in the treatment of toponyms, an almost perfect unanimity can be observed in the various translations: German street names are preserved, and local German towns which are given Polish names in the original text, are translated using German names, including the use of transliteration in the Greek or Russian versions (e.g. *Trzebnica*: *Trebnitz*; *Τρεμπνιτς*; *Требниц*). Only the Czech translation keeps the Polish form (here: *Trzebnica*), thus reproducing a feature of the original. It should also be noted that, except in the title, the German name *Breslau* does not appear in this version, nor in the Italian translation.

The manner in which some Polish toponyms are translated is interesting. For example, in order to verify some important information concerning the investigation, Mock's assistant, Herbert Anwaldt, goes to Rawicz. It is one of the few Polish towns whose name is presented both in German (*Rawitsch*, in the German detective's note to his assistant), and in Polish (*Rawicz*, in the text itself and in Mock and Anwaldt's dialogues) in the original text, with an explanation that appears in a dialogue (the policeman informs his colleague that the town is in Poland, fifty kilometres from Wrocław, just over the border). This duality of using both German and Polish names disappears in all translations, which use either the Polish form (*Rawicz*, *Равитς*, *Равич*) or the German form (*Rawitsch*). Thus, Anwaldt arrives in Rawicz, "a pretty, neat little town, full of flowers and dominated by red-brick prison watch towers",[6] and goes to *3 Rynkowa* Street where, to his surprise, he comes across a man who introduces himself as police commissioner Ferdynand Banaszak from Poznań. As the German policeman's investigation is linked to the Polish policeman's, they both go to Poznań, to the police station at *3 Maja* Street, to decide together what to do next. At this point the French

[6] All English quotations are taken from D. Stok's translation.

translation differs from the others, in its use of the Polish name. In the sentence where Banaszak introduces himself, an explanation not actually in the original text presents the different names for the city: "Poznan, *Posen*, **si vous préférez**" [Poznań, *Posen*, **if you prefer**] (*Mort*, p. 191; emphasis added), and thereafter, the German name is used. A footnote on the next page concerning the name of the street, *ulica 3 maja* (translated as *la rue du Trois-mai*) is also worth noting: *Fête nationale polonaise dans l'entre-deux-guerres et depuis 1990* [Polish National Day in the interwar period and since 1990] (*Mort*, p. 192). Both examples can be interpreted as a desire to emphasise the distinction between Poland and Germany, reflected in the variety of names employed over time.

The above analysis regarding the treatment of proper names in translation allows us to conclude that it generally aims at emphasising the German character of Breslau. The Czech translation, which essentially reproduces the Polish toponyms used in the original text or else introduces Czech forms for certain names, not only sanitises the Germanness, but moreover only loosely recreates the space in which the action of novel takes place. Here, the sheer excitement of the plot seems to be more important than its historical aspect. This is confirmed by the paratext on the back cover, which focuses on the crime and the investigation, with its many unexpected twists, ignoring the historical dimension of the novel: clearly, the main purpose of this translation is to entertain the reader.

In this respect, the Russian translation, with its obviously "didactic" orientation, is the opposite of the Czech version. Not only does the back cover inform us that the action takes place in 1933 and that Mock's investigations involve both the Freemasons and the powerful Gestapo, but the text itself is accompanied by 42 translator's notes. Some are used to explain Latin, French or German expressions in the text, whilst others – concerning artists (such as Marcel Duchamp or Chaim Soutine), travellers, literary characters or objects (such as *Heidi* or *Durandal*) – refer to elements of general culture. Among these, some are meant to enrich the readers' "encyclopaedia" with historical details: for example, they are taught that Marshal Paul von Hindenburg became the German president in 1925 and handed over power to Hitler in January 1933 (footnote 9, probably intended to facilitate the understanding of Mock's situation and the plot's context); they also learn that *Zoppot* and *Oppeln* are the German names for present-day *Sopot* and *Opole*, and that *Karkonosze* is a town [*sic*] on the Polish-Czech border, which was the German-Czech border at the time of the action (footnote 33). Regarding

this last note, the translator pushes his didactic zeal a little too far, since the *Karkonosze* are in fact a mountain range.

There is also an error in the peritext on the cover of the Greek edition, which begins with the words: Πολωνία, Μπρέσλαου, 1933: τα πτώματα μιας βαρονέσας και της γκουβερνάντας της κείτονται στο βαγόνι ενός τρένου [Poland, Breslau, 1933: the bodies of a baroness and her governess are found in a railway carriage]. We then read that the city lives "in the shadow of the Gestapo" [Μπρέσλαου που ζει υπό τη σκιά της Γκεστάπο]. The anachronism of the first sentence, which anticipates the fate of the German city, is thus followed by another: Poland is presented as already under German police control, when in fact the Nazi occupation only began in 1939. An attentive reader with even a minimal knowledge of twentieth-century Polish history would find themselves somewhat confused. Nevertheless, it seems that the intention of the Greek publisher, who published the book in the Αστυνομικό (Police) series, is to market the book as a thriller (hence the mention on the cover that the city is in the grip of fear), rather than to "teach through entertainment". This intention probably also explains the decision to remove the name Breslau from the novel's title, which, for the Greek reader, becomes *To sīmádi tou skorpioū* (The Mark of the Scorpion).[7]

Compared to the translations presented so far, the Spanish translation stands out for its "documentary" focus. The back cover informs us that the action takes place in Silesia at the moment when the Nazis came to power and contains a reference to the Night of the Long Knives as if to underline the chronological and historical framework of the story. The Spanish translator uses very few footnotes, but the titles of the lists of place names accompanying the text have been written with a striking precision, indicating that such places belonged to Germany before becoming Polish: *Nombres de calles y plazas de Breslau (**ciudad alemana hasta 1945**) con sus correspondencias actuales en Wroclaw (**Polonia**)*, *Otros toponimos alemanes correspondientes a lugares de la actual Polonia con sus equivalencias en polaco* (my emphasis).

There are no such details in the English version. The information about the Gestapo's power as presented on the back cover (*But uncovering the truth is no straightforward matter in Breslau, a city already in the malevolent grip of the Gestapo*), confirms the sensational nature of the novel. Given the time of the action (1933, 1934) and the omnipresence of German toponyms

[7] The initial title of the Polish version was to be *Skorpiony* (Scorpions).

and names of offices and positions, the reader is presented with a novel set in Germany at a specific time, in a German city whose Polish future is not mentioned.

Both the Italian and French translations have, on their cover, an image that alludes to Nazi Germany. On the cover of the former, a photograph of a railway station with a swastika flag hanging from it announces the place and time of the action. Such information is also reaffirmed in the back cover text:

> Dalle magioni della vecchia aristocrazia cittadina ai nuovi bordelli frequentati dai nazisti, le indagini porteranno il commissario a ficcare il naso in tutti gli ambienti di una città che di lí a poco la guerra cancellerà dalla carta della Germania, trasformandola in territorio polacco. [From the mansions of the city's old aristocracy to the new brothels frequented by the Nazis, the investigation will lead the commissioner to investigate every layer of a city that the war will soon wipe off the map of Germany and turn into Polish territory].

This last sentence, together with the systematic use of the Italian name *Breslavia* in the novel, underlines the continuity of the city regardless of historical changes of borders and governments.

The French translator, as mentioned above, has chosen to distinguish between German and Polish names; the Germanness of Breslau is highlighted on the cover peritext: the front cover bears a red stripe with a white circle – an allusion to the swastika flag's background – and on the back cover, in addition to a summary of the novel, appears the following sentence: *"La mort à Breslau" est une remarquable description d'une ville, mais également d'un pays – l'Allemagne – où s'installe l'hitlérisme* [*Death in Breslau* is a remarkable description of a city, but also of a country – Germany – where Hitlerism takes hold].

Głowa Minotaura

Krajewski's eighth novel, published ten years later, again features Mock and presents a description of the city in January 1937, where the commissioner undertakes his investigations, or rather the descriptions of three cities in total, because the crime committed in Breslau is linked to a series of murders investigated by commissioner Popielski in the Polish city of Lwów. Their joint pursuit of the murderer also leads the protagonists to Katowice, which passed from German to Polish rule in 1922. As a result, the two investigators

are forced to travel between these cities, crossing the borders between the two countries. This element of the plot is an opportunity to present information about the towns and their history and, above all, an image of Poland as uncovered by Mock during his travels. The first journey is particularly important, because the change in the composition of the train at the border is also indicative of a change in worlds: *Herr Hauptmann* Mock discovers other landscapes, the beauty of young women, Polish culinary specialities and the otherness of the Jews, who, *easily recognizable by their gabardines, round peaked caps and long beards,* (…) *in no way resembled the Jews of Breslau, who were distinguished from their fellow German citizens by certain physiological characteristics alone*, and whose *discussions and arguments were a clear indication to Mock that he now found himself in some transitional country at the border of Europe and the East, where these rather odd people used a language that belonged to the West while their gesticulations and expressions placed them rather in some Oriental marketplace* (*The Minotaur's Head*, eBook).

But it is Lwów (which, in German Breslau, is called *Lemberg*, the German form of the city's name) that plays the main role in the novel as the place where the investigation is concluded. As in the case of Breslau in *Śmierć*, Krajewski's description of the city abounds with realistic details: topographical elements, such as the names of streets and squares (*Mickiewicza*, *Zygmuntowska*, *Gródecka* streets, *Bilczewski Square*), typical buildings and premises (the Greek-Catholic seminary; the *beautiful corner tenement with its huge, semi-circular terraces where the famous Helena Bodnar shop [was located]*; the *large edifice of the Politechnik*; the *church of St Teresa*; the Ukrainian secondary school; *the Wassermann's haberdashery on the corner of Żulińska and Łyczakowska Streets*, descriptions of local meals, and *bałak* words (Lwów's dialect) in the speech of some characters.

The main function of these elements is to portray the realities of the places where the action takes place (and thus their authenticity is used in literary tourism). They also serve to highlight the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious character of the city, inhabited by Poles, Ukrainians, Jews, Ruthenians, Armenians and many others. This is reflected in the text by the characters' names, which are characteristic of their communities: Popielski's colleagues include policemen Wilhelm Zaremba and Herman Kacnelson, and forensic scientist Ivan Pidhirny, who all speak different languages (this is mentioned in the text; for example, the Polish policemen speak German with their German colleague). This coexistence is not without its difficulties,

however, and multiple echoes of discrimination are found in the novel. For example, in a conversation with Mock, Pidhirny complains that he was practically forced to change his name: *I was forced to change my name to a Polish one, you know* (…). *To 'Jan Podgórny'! A university lecturer cannot be called Ivan Pidhirny!*[8] (*The Minotaur's Head*, eBook).

The mathematicians of the famous Lwów School play an important role in the investigation conducted by the two commissioners. They are mentioned by name, and their meeting places, such as the "Scotch House" café or the rooms of the university where the Lwów circle of the Polish Mathematical Society meet, appear in the text. Thanks to his knowledge of this environment, Popielski is able to identify a person when, in Katowice, he reads a letter written by a mysterious count, the client of a dating agency: *Do you know what our count is called? How he introduced himself in his letter? Count Hugo Dionizy von Banach. And do you know who Professor Hugo Dionizy Steinhaus and Professor Stefan Banach are?* (*The Minotaur's Head*, eBook).

As noted above, such realist detail in the novel has given rise to literary tourism, but is also convenient for the translators: the information given in the narrative, alongside the intricacies of the plot itself, which are communicated via the translation, are an opportunity to "teach" the foreign reader. The "lesson" is enhanced by linguistic markers, i.e., the characters' names (existing persons or fictional characters) and street names, which – as in the translations of Śmierć – retain their original form in the English translation (*Lemberg*, *Popielski*, *Aniela Skarbkówna*, *Pirożek*, *Stefan Banach*, *Legionów* and *Gródecka* Streets) or which – in the Greek and Russian translations – are subject to transliteration: *Λεμπεργκ, ο Ποπιελσκι*, *η κυρια Ανιελα Σκαρμπκουβνα*, *ο Πιροζεκ*, *ο Στεφαν Μπαναχ*, *Λεγκιόνουφ*, *Γκρουντετσκα*; *Лемберг, Попелъский*, *Пирожек*, *Анеля Скарбкувна*, *Стефан Банах*, *Легионов*).

However, this rule does not apply to the names of different types of institutions, which have been translated in all the versions, or to the names of positions or offices, as shown in the following examples:

[8] The English translation, quoted here, is not clear about the effect of this name change. In the original, this character was pressured to change his name, but seems to still bear the name of Ivan Pidhirny.

Table 1. Names of types of institutions – a comparison of translations

Original	English translation	Greek translation	Russian translation
Kawiarnia Szkocka	Scotch House Café on the corner of Łoziński and Fredro Street	καφε «Σκοτσεζικον» ζτη γονια των οδων Λοζινσκιεγο και Φρεντρι	Кофейня «Шотландская » на углу улиц Лозинского и Фредро;
Antoni Świda, dyrektor Miejskiego Domu Sierot	Mr Antoni Świda, Director of the Municipal Orphanage	Αντονι Σβιντα, διευθυντη του Δημοτικου Ορφανοτροφειου	Антоний Свида, директор Городского дома сирот

Source: own study.

The English translation, by the same translator as *Śmierć*, is characterised by a similar absence of translatorial interventions: there are few notes and no introductory comments to explain the subtleties of history. The publisher is equally "discreet": the note on the back cover focuses on the character of *Abwehr* Captain Mock and the investigation that takes him from Breslau to Polish Lwów, thus relieving him of the burden of collaboration between the SS, the Gestapo and the police.

The authors of the Greek and Russian versions take a different attitude. Unlike the translators of *Śmierć*, the Greek translator of *Głowa* has added an introductory note to the translation (Σημείωμα της Μεταφράστριας) in which she explains the nationality of Breslau and Lwów during the interwar period; she also points out that the action takes place just before the outbreak of World War II, which subsequently changed the map of Europe and shifted the Polish borders westwards, turning Breslau into the Polish city of Wrocław. The Russian translation includes fifteen pages of translator's notes at the end the book, preceded by an explanation that the pre-war multinational city of Lwów, as described by Krajewski, has long since disappeared. Today Lviv is an important city, but a different one, indeed as different from the old Lwów as present-day Odessa differs from the city described by Isaac Babel. Because of the importance of the places and people of old Lwów mentioned by the author, the translator thought it appropriate to include a list of names of people and places with explanatory notes (*Голова*, p. 317); the reader is thus provided with more or less detailed information about streets, buildings, districts, institutions, famous Lwów mathematicians, but also explanations about police ranks, literary figures, and even the *Batiar* subculture.

Conclusion

In the epigraph at the beginning of this article, Dominique Defert, a French translator of popular and highbrow literature, emphasises the need to accommodate all readers, who need to be provided with the right "reading keys" in order to be "intrigued, surprised, enchanted" by a book.

The translations of the two Krajewski novels presented above show the variety of ways in which the reader is helped to understand the relevant historical aspects. One way is to assume that the story itself provides a sufficient history lesson, and as such, the attention paid to the transfer of details in the narrative and to the preservation of marks of cultural specificity is enough. This was the option adopted in the English translations, as confirmed by the translator:

> Crime novels which immerse the reader in the culture, traditions and atmosphere of another country, too, are of interest. People are – hopefully – becoming more open to other cultures, other ways of thinking and behaving, and a gripping novel which offers a reflection of these "other worlds" is an attractive way of learning and experiencing this "otherness". I, for one, find I can retain and learn more from a historical, let us say, crime novel in translation, than from a textbook (*Mystery People Q&A with Translator Danusia Stok*).

The other way of "accompanying" the reader is to enrich his or her "encyclopaedia" via numerous translator's notes, as in the Russian translations, or by discreet "allusions" in the peritexts (such as we find in the Spanish and Italian translations of *Śmierć* and the Greek translation of *Głowa*), or small additions in the text of the translation itself (as in the French translation of *Śmierć*).

The comparison of translations into different languages raises a question: does the choice of strategy depend on the geographical and cultural distance between Poland and the countries of the translations? The example of the Greek translations of these two novels, published in the same collection, Αστυνομικό, by the Athenian publishing house Μεταιχμιο, would tend to invalidate this hypothesis, while the example of the Russian translations, made by different translators for different publishers, might lead to the conclusion that certain cultural or editorial norms are at work here, including the use of footnotes, a technique usually considered inappropriate in the case of popular fiction.

Finally, on returning to our question in the introduction concerning the "didactic" function of the translations of Krajewski's novels, we can assume that, whichever techniques are used, they provide the reader of historical crime novels with an opportunity to delve not only into the crime itself, but also into history.

Trans. by Xavier Chantry

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