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Literary Translation into English: Cultural Content

(Master Thesis)

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With love and gratitude to my parents for not letting me give up easy, and my friends for their unwavering and enthusiastic support. Thank you.

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto magisterskou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

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List of Abbreviations

ST source text

SL source language

SC source culture

TT target text

TL target language

TC target culture

TR target reader

etc. et cetera

→ into (a language; in translation)

UK United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

USA United States of America

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1. Introduction

The primary aim of this work is to explore how global socio-political environment factors into translation of culture specific items in works of fiction and the impact this has had on translation works in the publishing industry. Two seemingly similar trails which I set off to examine are the effects of eurocentrism on literary translation of languages of former colonies, and in comparison to this the effects of anglocentrism on global literature in translation. Significant portion of the work focuses on translation of Czech literature into English, and consequently on the position of translated works in English speaking countries.

The work composes of two parts. The first part is largely theoretical, and in the second part I illustrate points made in the previous part with use of critical data analysis.

The theoretical part begins with a short introduction of the basics of the topic of cultural translation and proceeds to move on to discussion of issues pertaining to globalisation and global linguistic imbalance, or to be more exact position of the English language in foreign cultures. This allows for a topical transition to post-colonial theory, eurocentrism, and anglocentrism as defined by theoreticians such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. This part focuses on establishing differences between eurocentrism and impacts of anglocentrism for the purpose of applying these concepts to translation of European languages while avoiding appropriation of the struggles of the nations affected by former colonial empires.

The distinction allows for an informed exploration of the relationship between socio-political issues and cultural items of a written (or spoken) discourse, and includes suggestions of the direction a translator's further studies should take in order to form better connection with ST and its author in cases when the translator comes from a different cultural and socio-political background (especially those which grant the translator social privilege over the ST author).

From the previous point the topic moves to explore the consequences of anglocentrism prevalent in the publishing industry worldwide and what part the dichotomy of domesticating and foreignising translation approaches plays in upholding the status quo.

To conclude the theoretical part of the work I present an overview of the place the Czech language takes in the globalised world, specifically how this position changed in the

course of the 20th century and where it is found at the start of the 21st century. Historical background of the 20th century creates a platform upon which I build the arguments for drawing comparisons between the respective positions of languages of small European countries such as the Czech Republic (or Czechoslovakia in the historical context of the 20th century) and languages of former colonies such as India. Among the theoreticians whose works I use to illustrate the Czech nation's situation are Milan Kundera, Václav Bělohradský, and Miroslav Hroch.

What follows is the practical part in which I present analyses of data collected from publicly accessible databases which compile information provided by publishing houses in order to explore the state of literary industry. Among these databases are UNESCO's Index Translatorium and organisations such as Svět knihy, Ltd. – Company of the Association of Czech Booksellers and Publishers.

First, I aim to explore general information about publishing translations worldwide, e.g. who are the top biggest translation producers, or what are the most common SL and TL. Then I present information about selected English speaking countries (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and United States of America) and the English language, and alongside this data I present information revealing the position of Czech language, the Czech Republic, and the historical Czechoslovakia on the global literary scene. The data is presented in form of illustrative tables and graphs and accompanied by analysis of the translation market development as based on these tables. To form a more diverse picture I continue to explore translation trends in former colonies and how they affect and are affected by Anglo-American publishing industry.

The methods of data analysis I employ are statistical interference (as the data is subject to observational errors or sampling variation) and exploratory data analysis. I expect to find significant imbalance between the translation trends in Anglo-American publishing industry and the industries of the Czech Republic and its historical predecessor Czechoslovakia, and languages of one of the former colonial territories of the United Kingdom (India).

The aim of this work is to establish the role anglocentrism plays in translation of Czech literary works into English, and draw parallels with points made by post-colonial translation theoreticians about the effects of eurocentrism on languages of formerly

colonised nations. All results and conclusions I make are supported by arguments and quotations as well as the consequent analysis of collected data.

2. Intercultural Translation in an Anglocentric Publishing Industry

2.1 Ensnarled by Culture

Enjoy art and culture. Embrace new cultures. That man had no culture. In colloquial use the word *culture* has come to indicate a certain social status directly linked to one's intellectual capacities and overall worth. It is no secret that whether one discusses literature, visual arts including film and theatre or music, far too often there is an underlying layer of snobbery to the conversation. We distinguish between high-brow and low-brow entertainment, with the latter being regarded as “a guilty pleasure”, something inherently shameful but acceptable in small doses and if overbalanced by the former. “Culture” acts often as a screen for ignoring discussions of class¹; in the sense that culture belongs to and is created by only the rich and powerful of the higher classes of society.

As no opinion pertaining to the human condition is formed in a vacuum, the popularity of certain notions betrays a long history of systematic institutionalised oppression that formed what despite the efforts of various human rights movements remains the power-wielding majority. *Cuius regio, eius religio*, says a well-known Latin phrase referring to a ruler's sovereign right to impose his own religious views on his subjects. *Whose realm, his religion.*

The term culture has its root in the Latin verb *colere* which conveys the meaning of *to cultivate* or *grow* but also *to live, dwell, house*. The original use of the word comes from the sphere of agriculture, referring to cultivation of land (Horáková 2012, 63 – 64). Therefore, the evolution of the word into its current meanings is only logical: the culture specific to a group of people is mostly bound to their geographical origin or/and place of residence, and exists there where it is cared for, protected, and where if uprooted the land and its products will bear marks of the damage for years to come.

What does this imply for intercultural translation?

Firstly, an academic definition of culture is needed in order for this discourse to continue. Depending on the field of interest, the meaning of the term culture shifts in more or less subtle ways. While biology defines culture as “*the growing of microorganisms [...]*

¹ Spivak 2005, 105

*in a specially prepared nutrient medium*², definitions used in psychology or anthropology are more applicable in the translation discourse.

In these disciplines the generally accepted definition describes culture as “*the man-made part of human environment*” that makes up “*the total social heredity of humankind*” in the broader sense of the word. Meanwhile the narrower definition sees it as “*a set of knowable regularities that characterise human groups*”. The essential core of culture consists of historically derived and selected ideas and their attached values which are passed onto next generations as cultural heritage, meaning that culture composes of both material objects and of more or less abstract notions (Berry 2002, 226 – 228). Ergo, all human actions and creations are informed by the cultures one belongs to and become a part of these cultures.

As translation theoreticians’ definitions go, Peter Newmark (1988, 94) defines culture as “*the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression*” which is a description intersecting and overlapping with the definitions of psychology and anthropology’s definitions.

It is important that a translator gives a wide berth to ethnocentrism in their work; i.e. cultural or ethnic bias.³ There is no culture that can serve as “the norm”, neither is one superior to others. The dangers of ethnocentrism lead to incorrect interpretations of people’s behaviours and statements. The greater the cultural and behavioural difference, the greater is the risk of the difference being evaluated negatively (Berry 2002, 8 – 9). Therefore it is of great import that the translator remains the unbiased proverbial “bridge between cultures” while at the same time taking in account any existing cultural imbalance between the cultures involved, and always examining their own pre-existing bias.

In the Victorian era, at the peak of Britain’s colonial expansion, the term *culture* was used predominantly in singular as synonymous with civilisation and the evolutionary development of humanity as whole. European societies (mainly then England) were at the top of the ladder as the ultimate goal every society should strive to achieve. This ethnocentric philosophy was perfectly embodied in Rudyard Kipling’s metaphor of “*the white man’s burden*” by which he referred to the English society’s moral obligation to

² Information available at <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/culture>.

³ Information available at <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766567/obo-9780199766567-0045.xml>.

civilise the uncivilised (Horáková 2012, 74 – 76). Simultaneously *culture* came into use as a term for distinguishing between the civilised (European) and the barbarian/primitive/savage (indigenous peoples of the European colonies) (Horáková 2012, 67). Words such as civilised and barbarian inherently imply a judgement being passed on the groups in question, one ranking higher than others.

As it was previously mentioned, nothing happens in a vacuum and neither does translation. Translation is an action informed by preceding historical, cultural, and political events and their sociocultural impact. It is because of the results of these events that we can distinguish between dominant and minority cultures (Bassnett and Trivedi [1999] 2002, 28); terms which are less tied to actual numerical quantity of people belonging to a certain culture and more to the culture's position in society.⁴ Translation, as a part of an ongoing intercultural transfer, rarely involves an equality of relations between texts, authors, or systems (Bassnett and Trivedi [1999] 2002, 2).

For example English and Czech as languages will never be on the same level in translation. The economic and influential expansion of the USA after the Second World War, together with the consequent technological development (especially that rising from the Silicon Valley) ensured the English language's rise towards replacing French's global *lingua franca* status.

Zdenek Salzman (2012, 313), a linguistic anthropologist, defines the term *lingua franca* as “a language used as a common means of communication between people who speak different native languages”. Given the historical connection between European colonialism and the phenomenon of *lingua franca* it is clear that use of language is influenced by political and cultural power of the culture this language is connected to.

Meanwhile the most significant success of the Czech language in the global context in fairly recent couple of decades was acquiring a status of a language fully recognised as official⁵ and just as worthy of protection and respect as French, English, or Japanese. While English and Czech are officially recognised as equals, the true nature of this equality is comparable with that of the Swiss National Bank's President and a street market vendor. On the global level their influence differs disproportionately.

⁴ Information available at <http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/soc437/plazad/lect2.htm>.

⁵ Czech and Slovak were made official languages of the state by the first established Czechoslovak constitution of 1920. Available in Czech at <http://ftp.aspi.cz/opispdf/1920/026-1920.pdf>.

2.1.1 Culture-Specific Items

The textual items that are classified as culture specific have been described by many theoreticians over the years of translation theory's existence. Mona Baker ([1992] 2006, 21) describes them as a range of items referring to any part of human life which are not known in the TL, whether the concept is abstract or concrete.

Peter Newmark (1988, 95) distinguishes between three types of words: universal words for which finding an equivalent in TL is not a problem (words such as *dog*, *kiss*, or *affection*), personal words (distinguished speech of an individual) and cultural words (*monsoon*, *sarong*, *vodka*). Cultural words include the following categories:

- 1) Ecology: flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills
- 2) Material culture (artefacts): food, clothes, houses and towns, transport
- 3) Social culture: work and leisure
- 4) Organisations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts
 - political and administrative
 - religious
 - artistic
- 5) Gestures and habits (there is distinction between their description and use)

The Slovak translation theoretician Ján Viličkovský (1984, 130) adds to this definition three categories of his own:

- 1) material specifics: social and material facts of the place from which the text originates
- 2) language specifics: specifics of cultural context: the text properties which are connected to a certain culture
- 3) Specifics of cultural context, concerned with the text properties connected to a certain culture

Interestingly enough, Newmark (1988, 95) does not see language as a component or feature of culture, claiming that if it were so translation would not be possible. He rather regards certain words of a language as cultural deposits, marking them as culturally specific.

This is an opinion I find difficult to agree with, even if only for the purposes of translation process. Or perhaps rather *especially* in translation. Divorcing language from culture feels ignorant of higher intersecting issues and forces which exist on the social sphere of life. Newmark made this statement nearly thirty years ago, when cultural turn in translation only started developing, and it appears to be informed by a purely linguistic point of view which does not take into consideration issues discussed by post-colonial theory writers and theoreticians.

Present day linguistic anthropology regards language and culture to be inseparable and intersecting.⁶ Contemporary translation theoreticians see the relationship of language and culture in a similar manner. To quote from the writer and interpreter Lynn Visson, “[t]he specific nature and structure of a language determine the way its speakers view the world, and serve as an organizing principle of culture.”⁷ The TL of a translation often lacks in supplying precise equivalents for words characterizing the life, culture, and history of a country of the SL, and the greater the cultural gap between the SC and TC the greater urge to simplify will the translator feel (Bassnett and Trivedi [1999] 2002, 23).

Ergo, being a man-made item specific to groups and subgroups of people, language is just as vital part of culture as the heart is a vital part of human body. One cannot exist without the other. It is therefore obvious that in order to create a good or at least adequate translation the translator needs to be more than just familiar with both the SC and SL.

Insufficient knowledge or disregard of the culture of the nation of a language in question is one of the most common causes of translation errors. In order to be able to translate well from a foreign language two conditions must be met: the translator needs to study the language, and at the same time systematically study cultural structures of the society which uses this language. No translation can be considered adequate unless these two conditions (both of which are necessary and of equal importance) are fulfilled (Mounin [1963] 1999, 214 – 215).

⁶ Haviland et al. 2013, 8

⁷ Bermann 2005, 57

2.2 Western Bias

2.2.1 Eurocentrism in Literature and Literary Translation

Eurocentrism refers to one's cultural values and attitudes, their point of origin and worldview being European-centred or Western-centred. In discussion of eurocentrism the word European would not refer only to the continent itself and its peoples but also to white people of European descent in USA or Australia. Eurocentrism stresses the importance of Western civilisation and perpetuates the myth of European-derived cultures being superior to other cultures. It sanitizes Western history while patronizing and demonizing other cultures.⁸

No matter where white Europeans (and white people of European origin) went, fear or hatred of “the other” went with them. European values heavily overlap with Christian values, which were long ago corrupted by the power-wielding church that pursued their own selfish goals under the veil of Christian values, family values, or in God's name; the very values that to this day are often used as a tool of oppression and persecution. Blinded by their righteousness the powerful would impose the customs and values of their countries on those whose lands they appropriated, aiming for assimilation as perfect as possible.

A connection can be drawn between the belief in European (and consequently primarily white) superiority and the focus on what gets “lost in translation”. There is a wide spread belief that the loss is inevitable and while that is true it does not automatically render the translated text inferior.

The idea of the “original” first occurred as a specifically significant literal concept during the era of European colonisation⁹, and continued to gain importance from that point on until it reached the glorified status it is ascribed today. Considering Europe to be “the Great Original” and regarding the colonies as copies or translations of the invading nations led the colonisers to the ethnocentric belief in European superiority.

“The notion of the colony as a copy or translation of the great European Original inevitably involves a value judgement that ranks the

⁸ Shohat and Stam 2013, 1 – 3

⁹ Bassnett and Trivedi [1999] 2002, 2

translation in a lesser position in the literary hierarchy. The colony, by this definition, is therefore less than its colonizer, its original.”

(Bassnett and Trivedi [1999] 2002, 4)

This *original vs. copy* dichotomy can be observed in the trend of renaming the areas of usurped land to reflect the origin of the usurper and suppress the history preceding the colonisation. New South Wales in Australia or New England in USA can serve as an example to better illustrate this custom.

This is where the aforementioned metaphor of the “inferior translation” can be well observed: an attempt to make Wales out of a part of Australia, a place so fundamentally different from the rolling hills and green pastures of King Arthur’s rumoured childhood home, is an impossible task, to put it bluntly. The climate will not allow it, nor will the history of the inhabitants. The target text, i.e. Australian New South Wales, will never be identical to the source text, the Wales in the United Kingdom. (Just as the British Wales will never be English, despite the efforts of its historical conquerors.) The British Wales gets “lost in translation”.

It is undeniable that the ST will have to lose a part of itself when it is being reworked for a culturally different and distant audience. However, the loss is perhaps unrightfully regarded as something detrimental to the text. This image of loss as something fundamentally bad that should be prevented at all cost reflects again the widespread collective mentality of the Western society. The example that illustrates this mind-set the best is the taboo of death, the ultimate loss.

By preoccupying oneself with the loss as a problem, the translator becomes ignorant of the opposite, i.e. what is *gained* in translation. The cultures interacting in translation have an opportunity to become enriched by each other, yet they are often treated as rivals.

The white European deep-seeded belief in the superiority of European nations as a whole led to the previously described treatment of the colonies as copies of Europe. For many of the invaded nations the languages of their colonisers had become symbols of conquest. This shameful history remains reflected in the imbalance of languages in post-colonial translation.

The colonial mind-set is reflected also in the English translation theories during the early modern era, i.e. the era that in Europe starts with Columbus' "discovering" America and ends with the Revolutionary year of 1848, when translation trends were set firmly in the practice of domestication¹⁰, i.e. removing the foreign feel of the text in favour of English values.

In direct opposition to the Western tradition is the Indian translation tradition. Ganesh Devy (Bassnett and Trivedi, [1999] 2002, 187) alludes to the Indian metaphysics of the belief in the migration of one's soul from one body to another; repeated birth or reincarnation which is in no way afflicted with loss of any of the soul's significant attributes. Devy states that Indian literary theory does not put as much emphasis on originality as the West seems to do; generations of new writers can use elements of plot, stories or characters over and over again because the true test of Indian literary excellence is "*the writer's capacity to translate, to restate, to revitalize the original*".

In contrast to this is the result of the Western literary theory: the Western publishing industry (and by extension the translation theories) which is concerned with material gain, copyrights and book promotions on the global market. The colonial mind-set of the original vs. its copy reverberates through the manner in which the translators are treated in the industry: from the near impossibility of acquiring a copyright for translation to the position the translator is given in relation to the work (reviews often omit mentions of the translator's work altogether; the translator's name is practically hidden in the publication itself, tucked away as something undeserving of attention), and of course the pay is often inadequate.

The obsession with originality is, as previously stated, a recent trend. The Western literary tradition is in fact based on the same principle as the Indian. Many of classic authors wrote what would today be called "fan-fiction" and regarded with derision, and in many cases would be prevented from becoming published by copyright laws. In The Aeneid Virgil borrowed the character of Aeneas from Homer's Odyssey. Shakespeare did not invent Richard III or Hamlet. Any adaptation of a literary work for the silver screen is unoriginal by default. This shift in literary theory came only few centuries ago. In Britain it

¹⁰ Venuti 1995, 81

is traceable to the early 18th century when the first British copyright law, the Statute of Anne, was issued.¹¹

Is there a way to break free from the colonial mind-set and its influence on translation process? Theoretically yes; by challenging and questioning internalized oppressive structures that to this day divide the many cultures and subcultures of the world into unevenly privileged fragments, the translator can uncover and consequently dismantle their own problematic bias the existence of which they were not even aware of and which have been negatively influencing their work as a translator. While this is possible on an individual level, the resulting work may hit a roadblock in the shape of the TR's response, whether the TR in question constitutes the figure of a publisher or the public audience.

As an illustration of such a case can serve an example in which the translator chooses to bring the audience closer to the author by employing foreignization methods of translation¹². If the ST originates from a culture which differs from the TR's own culture in a very distinct manner, especially if there is little interaction between the two cultures the readers will feel alienated and will have difficulties engaging with the text.

The Indian literary theorist and philosopher of the post-colonial theory school of thought Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (2005, 105) claims the dual nature of cultural translation – impossibility and necessity – allows only a trace of the SC to filter through; a trace of the other, the history, and culture. She suggests that this impossibility and concurrent necessity together create a combination which evokes the notion of an insufficient or incomplete translation, one unlike translations of texts which are not marked heavily by cultural elements of text.

Managing to transfer a mere trace of the author's work into the TT, with the knowledge that a trace is the most one can hope to ever accomplish, might have a disheartening effect on the translator. One might even ask if it is worth the effort since nothing the translator does can ever come close to accurately communicating the message of the ST to an audience from a different culture. This perfectionist “all-or-nothing” attitude does not seem to be particularly functional in any area of human activity. In a simplified definition a

¹¹ Jaszi 1991, 463

¹² More on domestication and foreignization later in the text. See chapter 2.2.3.2 *The Dichotomy of Foreignization and Domestication*.

refusal to compromise is the backbone of imperialism, i.e. the very cause of historical and continued exploitation of former colonies such as India.

When she advocates “settling” for mere traces of culture and otherness in the final version of the TT as opposed to attempts for unreduced translation, Spivak builds her stance on the political layer of text manipulation which if handled untactfully and/or forcefully creates breeding ground for assertion of simplistic notions about a given minority culture which are afterwards uncritically accepted by the general public as unquestionable truth. In other words translator’s inability to accept and respect the limitations of the languages they work with leads to misrepresentation of marginalised cultures, i.e. cultures which due to insufficient and incorrect representation face systematised oppression in countries with majority of population of white European descent. Accepting “traces of culture” as a valid (if not superior) alternative solution to forcible attempts to transfer a marginalised culture into a globally privileged culture and language (such as English) can provide for a more sensitive translation.

In a 2001 interview the Canadian poet and literary translator Anne Carson called the act of translation “a bottomless pit” separating the SL and TL. However unsurmountable this may sound, she does not see it as an obstacle in her work. In her own words:

“There’s no good way to do [translation] and you always end up throwing away all your best work, but that’s the name of the game. It does give one to think about language in a way that nothing else does, that no other practical exercise does, because you come to a place where you’re standing at the edge of a word and you can see across a gap the other word, the word you’re trying to translate and you can’t get there. And that space between the word you’re at and the word you can’t get to is unlike any other space in language. And something there is learned about human possibilities, in that space. I’m not sure what, but I like to test it. It’s humbling.”¹³

For Anne Carson the space between languages becomes a source of inspiration and motivation but also a reminder of human limitations. Accepting these limitations as an

¹³ Interview available at <http://www.lannan.org/events/anne-carson-with-brighde-mullins>.

element of translation equal in value to other linguistic values of the languages which are being translated allows for respectful treatment of the SC and TC alike.

Striking a balance between faithfulness to the ST, and catching and keeping the audience's attention is an ungrateful and most likely an impossible task. What the translator can and needs to do in light of this knowledge is make conscious decisions in handling culturally specific text; consider the relationships between the SC and TC (especially if there is a history of systematic oppression between the two) and be aware of the effects their decisions in the translation process will have on the text and its reception by the TR.

2.2.2 Anglocentrism in Literature and Literary Translation

Much like eurocentrism, anglocentrism is a type of ethnocentrism stressing the importance of Western achievements. Anglocentrism sees the world from an English or Anglo-American perspective with an implied inherent belief in superiority of English language or Anglo-American culture.¹⁴

The course of the 20th century was visibly marked by the USA's journey to the top positions on the ladder of the world's most politically and economically powerful nations. This was owed largely to the USA's role in the Second World War from which they emerged as victorious, and the war's aftermath; the scientific research in 20th century and innovations in communication technologies, as well as progress in entertainment industry. Historians even speak of the "*Americanisation of culture*", an influence that Europe worried about since at least the 1920s, therefore nearly a century of USA's cultural expansion. The United States seemed to have become a centre of "*production and organization of mass civilization*."¹⁵

USA's successes have reflected in the English language use; putting emphasis on efficiency, immediate intelligibility and the appearance of factuality as the most desired features of a writer's style. This affected both non-fiction and literary works alike.¹⁶

Indeed, clear plain style is preferred in the English-language publishing world. Many editors, literary agents and published authors themselves stress the importance of simplicity, advocating use of fewer adverbs and long words.¹⁷

This of course poses a problem for translations from Czech to English, as both languages lean more towards a different end of the language typology spectrum. For example in English the most often stressed piece of advice for literary writers is to never (or very sparingly) use other dialogue tags but "*he/she said*", on the grounds of alterations distracting from the dialogue and cluttering the text. In Czech, however, the opposite is the most common practice; repetitive use of "*řekl/a*" with no other variations would be seen as a mark of poor vocabulary and would distract the reader just as much.

¹⁴ Information available at <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/anglocentrism>.

¹⁵ Coles and Symes 2014, 955

¹⁶ Venuti 1995, 5-6

¹⁷ Examples available at <http://www.rachellegardner.com/how-to-cut-thousands-of-words/> or <http://www.creative-writing-now.com/finding-a-literary-agent.html>.

The effects of this development were observed in 1962 by J.M. Cohen who warned against “*the risk of reducing individual authors’ styles and national tricks of speech to a plain prose uniformity*”.¹⁸ Despite this awareness Cohen remained blind to his own anglocentrism, as Venuti (1995, 6) points out:

“What [Cohen] failed to see, however, was that the criterion determining the “best” was still radically English. Translating for “prose-meaning and interpretation,” practicing translation as simple communication, rewrites the foreign text according to such English-language values as transparency, but entirely eclipses the translator’s domesticating work—even in the eyes of the translator.”

Effects of this practice are numerous and far-reaching, as evidenced in the following chapter.

¹⁸ Cohen 1962, 33

2.2.3 How Anglocentrism Shapes Publishing Industry Worldwide

During the Second World War English gained the position of the most translated language worldwide and it has been holding this place for over seventy years, while at the same time it remains the language least translated into¹⁹. The state of the publishing industries of the English speaking countries (mainly then UK and USA) suggests serious imbalance in cultural exchange and international relationships. The British and American publishers are more devoted to selling rights for translations of English books into foreign languages but rarely ever are interested in buying rights for translations of foreign books into English.²⁰

In translations it is a general rule that the greater the prestige of the SC and the author of the ST, the easier it is to require of the readers to come towards the text.²¹ They are more likely to be immediately interested in the text, especially if the author is internationally well-known or if the text is connected to a current socio-political issue (e.g. Milan Kundera's novels being read in the West as a testimony of life under communism during the Cold War). Gayatri Spivak (2005, 104) even suggests that the state of the world as it is today is connected to and responsible for a failure of responsible translation.

Speaking of Kundera I want to mention his 2007 essay “*Die Weltliteratur*” in which he comments on literary success of another writer originating from historical Czech Lands, Franz Kafka:

“Although from 1918 on he was, indeed, a citizen of the newly constituted Czechoslovakia, Kafka wrote solely in German, and he considered himself a German writer. But suppose for a moment that he had written his books in Czech. Today, who would know them? It took Max Brod twenty years and enormous effort to force Kafka on the world’s awareness, and that was with the support of the greatest German writers! Even if a Prague editor had managed to publish the books of a hypothetical Czech Kafka, none of his compatriots (that is to say, no Czech) would have had the authority needed to familiarize the world with those extravagant texts written in the language of a

¹⁹ Venuti (1998) 1999, 10

²⁰ Venuti 1995, 13 – 14

²¹ Tymoczko (1999) 2002, 29

'faraway country' of which 'we know nothing.' No, believe me, nobody would know Kafka today – nobody – if he had been Czech." (Kundera 2007, 29)

What do Kundera and Kafka have in common? They both came from Czech lands and they both achieved fame in the literary market worldwide. Neither however did it by means of the Czech language. The task of modern day Czech literary translators into English (or other major language) is not unlike the task of heroes of Czech/Bohemian National Renaissance – great Czech literary works can only become noticed through the filter of a major language such as French, German, and last but definitely not least English. Gayatri Spivak puts it plainly: “[t]ranslation remains dependent upon the language skill of the majority”²².

When inquiring after the state of the translations into English in USA and UK in the 21st century, especially in the recent years, the situation is marked by several factors:

- 1) Who publishes translations into English? Emily Williams, a publishing consultant, in *Publishing Perspectives*²³ reports that the main publisher of translation into English in USA are small independent presses including Open Letter, New Directions, Other Press, Archipelago, Europa Editions and others. These however very often rely on academic or philanthropic support from bigger publishing houses.
- 2) Big publishing houses do not seek out foreign books to publish, or do so rarely. (Mostly when the author already has an established position on the English speaking market or if the book caters specifically to Anglo-American cultures.)
- 3) Williams lists language barrier as one of the reasons why there are not more foreign language books published in English. Languages of European countries with old colonial ties seem to be ones most likely to be translated into English; this concerns primarily French, Spanish, and Portuguese. The manner in which language barrier affects publishing house's decisions depends on the linguistic education of US editors, as there appears to be a limited number of US editors in command of a foreign language, and at the same time a lack of incentive to bring foreign language

²² Venuti (2000) 2004, 406

²³ Information available at <http://publishingperspectives.com/2010/01/the-translation-gap-why-more-foreign-writers-arent-published-in-america/>

authors to USA, as opposed to UK authors. While a high percentage of foreign editors can speak/read English well enough to evaluate a manuscript, the English speaking world cannot pride itself on having a comparable translation market for any one language.

- 4) The costs of translation are also often cited as a reason behind the English-language publishers' reluctance to explore literature beyond the English speaking world. It is cheaper to stick to literature written in English. Majority of the foreign books published in English enter the market either by chance or good connections. Having a literary agent representing a foreign author in USA makes a significant change in shifting the odds in the author's favour. However, literary agents are not a part of many countries' publishing industries, including the Czech Republic where the author addresses a publishing house directly. In order to be translated the author's publisher or even the author themselves would first have to seek an American representative to advertise the work in USA.
- 5) Foreign books with a good (emphasis on "good") pre-existing English translation sample are more likely to be picked up by a publishing house as the sample can be treated like a submission from a native speaker. The author (if living) should also be able to help the publisher promote the book in media, preferably in English. The author's involvement in the promotion makes a world of difference, according to Rachel Kahan, a Senior Editor at G. P. Putnam's Sons, interviewed by Williams. She adds that foreign books are harder to market (especially with commercial publishing houses) but definitely are marketable.

Williams even compares the cultural hegemony of the English literature being translated into other languages to the hegemony of US dominance of the worldwide film market. It is true that this effect can be observed over many areas of the entertainment industry, from literature and films to music, computer games and internet.

As a result the Anglo-American publishing industry has managed to impose Anglo-American cultural values on their foreign readers and isolate the British and American citizens from influence of other cultures. Venuti (1995, 15) accuses UK and USA cultures of being aggressively monolingual and unreceptive to the foreign. As he (1995, 17) points out, a number of foreign texts are ruled out when choosing a text for translation simply because the industry picks predominantly those texts which allow for fluent translation, i.e.

domestication of the text. This contributes to cultural marginalisation and strengthens position of Anglo-American cultures on global scale.

2.2.3.1 Translator's Invisibility

Invisibility of a translator within a translated text is a term coined and popularized by Lawrence Venuti. He (1995, 1) makes a point of stressing that he uses this term to refer to translator's role and activity in contemporary Anglo-American culture. It is important to pay attention to this distinction because of the glorified position the English language enjoys in comparison to other (mostly non-European) languages since translator's invisibility has its dark side.

On one hand, as Venuti describes, invisibility refers to readability of a translated text. The translation is considered acceptable by its readers, publishers, or reviewers, when it reads fluently; i.e. the reader is able to read the text with the impression as though they were reading the original. In other words they are not consciously aware that they are dealing with a version of the author's text that has been manipulated by another party. This effect is desirable in the sense that absence of stylistic or linguistic oddities ensures smooth flow of the TT on the surface level. Nevertheless, "correcting" the stylistic and/or grammatical styles of expression the original author uses always subscribes to what the domestic values are.

Underneath this layer, however, lies a layer much more susceptible to a wider array of translation decisions differing in more or less subtle nuances. It is the layer of the overall content of the work and the author's artistic choices by which they decided to communicate the intended message to the readers in the SC. At this layer translator's invisibility can become an issue surpassing discourses of grammatical correctness and syntax, and enter the realm of socio-political and cultural/national issues and controversies.

It can be said that on a certain level translator's invisibility does not concern itself with readability and accessibility of a text but with erasure of the foreign. Translator's invisibility so becomes invisibility of culture. Very often this concerns namely invisibility of SC, while TC is treated as the default. This is especially true for translations into English. Venuti (1995, 15 – 16) describes this imbalance of cultures as "*[exploitation] of the global drift towards American political and economic hegemony in the postwar period*" and "*[an active support of] the international expansion of Anglo-American culture*".

Anglo-American publishing industry does not only reap the financial benefits the current state of affairs offers but also create cultures in the United Kingdom and the United

States which are monolingual, unreceptive to the foreign, and stuck in their ingrained belief in the Anglo-American superiority. Translations which succeed in British and American book markets use massive domestication strategies, as the publishing industry and the readership alike insist on “*fluent translations which invisibly inscribe foreign texts with English-language values*”²⁴ and thus remove the foreign.

²⁴ Venuti 1995, 15

2.2.3.2 The Dichotomy of Foreignization and Domestication

As André Lefevere (1977, 74) reports, in an 1813 lecture on translation methods the German philosopher and theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher argued that there are only two possible ways of translating a foreign text: “*Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him.*” These two methods would later develop into methods known as foreignization and domestication, respectively.

It is of course debatable to what degree foreignization is possible since the very act of translating the ST into another language is a domesticating method, but it is very telling that while many European countries at certain moments in history tend to favour the method of foreignization (including Schleiermacher himself), the Anglo-American culture has long been and remains to be dominated by domesticating practices, all in pursuit of fluency.²⁵

In connection to foreignization Venuti (1995, 23 – 24) speaks of a method he calls *resistancy*. According to him foreignization as a method used in direct opposition to the Anglo-American tradition of domestication gives rise to development of “*a theory and practice of translation that resists dominant target-language cultural values so as to signify the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text*”. This sort of translation strategy challenges the TL culture and is in control of how the SL culture is presented; it makes an active and informed decision on which parts of the SC will make it into the TT and which will be simplified or erased from the text, or as Venuti says, “*enacts its own ethnocentric violence on the [ST]*”. This way the method of foreignization can alter the ways translations are viewed as well as produced.

According to Pierre Legrand²⁶ a literary translator must adapt the TL (or the host language, a term which he and other contemporary theoreticians use²⁷) in order to accommodate otherness of the SL and ST when the point of the translation is to allow a reader to partake in diversity. In such a case domestication is not a preferable approach. Fidelity does not have to be subordinated to the communicativeness of the text. Instead the translator should employ their creativity and test the flexibility of the TL. The aim of the

²⁵ Venuti 1995, 20 – 21

²⁶ Bermann and Wood 2005, 49

²⁷ Spivak among others (Bermann and Wood 2005, 95).

translation should not be to look so natural in the TL that it no longer appears as a translation.

This approach goes against everything that the Western translation theories, especially the literary branches, teach about translation. Legrand and others advocate letting the otherness of the SL shine through the TT, allow the confines of each language to stretch. Legrand (2005, 50) with his terms of a “host language” (TL) and “guest language” (SL) draws attention to the fact that language is a living structure, an entity if you will, not a mere tool for communication. (This is in opposition to the earlier mentioned Newmark’s strategy of separating language from culture.) Drawing on the host/guest metaphor Legrand demonstrates the vulnerability of language as both the guest and host language are exposed to a risk: “*the guest agrees to put herself in the hands of the host [and] the host agrees to change his ways in order to welcome the guest*”²⁸.

As Venuti ([1995] 2004, 309 – 310) says, the domestication practice in Anglo-American translation can be challenged only by developing a more self-conscious and self-critical practice. Mere knowledge of culture of the SL is not sufficient to produce a text which is both readable and resistive to domestication. All cultural translation work must be grounded on a critical assessment of culture of the TL, its hierarchies and exclusions, cultural values and relations to other cultures and/or nations. “[*T*he status of a language in the world is what one must consider when teasing out the politics of translation,”²⁹ says Gayatri Spivak.

Translation of minority languages and cultures even affords the translator with a power (however limited) to make the readers to revise and update their knowledge of marginalised cultures.

²⁸ Bermann and Wood 2005, 39

²⁹ Venuti (2000) 2004, 406

2.3 Lingua Franca: a Linguistic Gift to the “Subhuman”

2.3.1 Post-colonial Translation in an Anglo/Eurocentric World

Post-colonialism is a term referring to the study of effects that the European imperial expansion had on cultures and societies of Europe’s colonies. It is concerned with the colonial practices of conquering and control, as well as with the response and resistance of the oppressed societies in the course of the four hundred years of colonialism. Among the areas of significant importance are the prevailing effects on people originating from these cultures.³⁰

It is appropriate to mention at this point that “nation” and “nationalism” are purely European notions that were forced on peoples of other continents by European colonial expansion (Hroch 2003, 23). As Spivak ([1993] 2004, 413) writes: “*British colonialism was a violent deconstruction of the hyphen between nation and state.*”

Colonialism and war efforts were however not the only ways of interacting with different cultures known to history. Trade routes, mainly then those springing from the Middle East, feature among the main peaceful means of engaging with foreign cultures. In a 2000 interview³¹ for Central Europe Review Václav Bělohradský draws a dividing line between colonial/war expansion motivated by feelings of superiority, and the respect that travelling merchants had for the cultures they visited and with whose people they arranged mutually beneficial exchanges of information, objects, and skills. Bělohradský goes as far as to attribute peoples’ struggles for democratic freedom to the merchant’s view of the world, and there truly are spaces in which the ideals and attitudes of both do meet, respect for the other and acceptance of their differences being the most prominent ones.

Decolonisation and revolutions of the end of the 20th century certainly played their part in shaping the international relationships between former colonies and Western powers. The former colonies together with other nations had however fallen into the intricate

³⁰ Information available at <http://www3.dbu.edu/mitchell/postcold.htm>

³¹ available at http://www.ce-review.org/00/20/interview20_belohradsky.html

economic and political web of imperial powers of the West. After all the term post-colonialism in itself implies a lasting legacy of colonialism.³²

Gayatri Spivak sees translation as one of the tools used for deconstructing intellectual colonialism of the globalised modern world. It is with fully realised intent that she calls herself “*a translator into English*” as opposed to a translator from other languages. As she writes:

“Because of the growing power of English as a global lingua franca, the responsibility of the translator into English is increasingly complicated. And [...], it is of course true that the responsibility becomes altogether more grave when the original is not written in one of the languages of northwestern Europe.” (Spivak [2001] 2005, 94)

The difference between the languages of the so-called “Third World” and those of northwestern Europe is the amount of attention and respect the language receives in the English speaking countries and on a global scale. While German, Latin, classical Greek or French have their firmly established place in the Anglo-American translation tradition secure, languages of the global South go largely ignored or unnoticed. This of course contributes to limiting the level of exposure writers of these languages get, and as a result there is little growth in people’s interest in studying those languages and thus preserving them for future generations. Spivak herself describes her position of a translator from Bengali into English in a rather wistful manner:

“I myself prepare my translations in the distant and unlikely hope that my texts will fall into the hands of a teacher who knows Bengali well enough to love it, so that the students will know that the best way to read this text is to push through to the original. Of course not everyone will learn the language, but one might, or two! And the problem will be felt.” (Spivak [2001] 2005, 95)

The prospect of being instrumental in helping just one person discover the Bengali language, or rather helping Bengali be discovered by one more potential speaker, is more than enough reason to dedicate one’s life to the cause. One cannot help but be reminded of great heroes of fiction, whether the literary ones or those found on the silver screen; a

³² Coles and Symes 2014, 992

noble quest of a single person or a small group of people who are determined to accomplish the impossible. The resemblance is more than superficial; film heroes might be saving the mankind from imminent catastrophes but the strife to keep a language alive aims for the same result – to save whole cultures and their people.

Spivak's ([1993] 2004, 398) theories of translation are marked with a sort of intimacy of the translator and the text which is hard to find in Western/Anglo-American translation tradition. She sees language as a truly living entity which can be preserved only by love. This is a sentiment that could never be born in nations of former colonial powers, often just for the reason that those powers were never faced with the real feasible possibility of their language becoming endangered or even extinct. According to Spivak the translator's task is to "*facilitate this love between the original and its shadow*" and this can only be done if the translator's agency is limited and does not cater to demands or expectations of the translation's TR.

Echoing her probably best known work, an essay titled "*Can the Subaltern Speak?*", Spivak points out the discrepancy in translating a non-European woman's writing into European languages: the element of love is missing from the final product due to the translator's inability to engage with or care enough for the rhetoric of ST.

"*Can The Subaltern Speak?*" is remarkable for its discussion of how class and race factor into translation in the post-colonial era that is supposed to be also the era of equality. The essay examines how the Western civilisation represents the "other". The term "*subaltern*" is Spivak's way of describing the intersecting factors of race, class, and gender which play their part in distribution of social power and privileges. In Spivak's opinion the subaltern's status will always affect how they express themselves. Erasure of their presence in the text in favour of fluency (by use of domesticating methods of translation) is an act of oppression. It puts the dominant culture TR's need for easy readability above integrity of the subaltern's message.

This insufficient ability to engage with the ST may sound like a problem that would be easy to overcome. Sadly it is not a mere question of finding a translator who is passionate and willing/able to dedicate their time to the translation. A translator coming from a place of social privilege (e.g. a white American) is likely to practice tone-policing in their translation, to speak over the author and commit erasure of the author's voice and message to a significant degree. This happens not out of conscious disregard for the SC and ST but

out of inherent critically unexamined privileges of the translator which make the translator ignorant to the realities of authors from underprivileged (or less privileged) and therefore not as accessible cultures. The most accessible cultures are of course mono-linguist hegemonies (powerful European languages, sometimes powerful Asian languages) which are quite often force-fed to people from less powerful cultures.

In mass translation of the Third World languages into English or generally into Western languages a sort of a translatese develops, a technique of translation that does not allow for subtle nuances in writing of different cultural subgroups but instead translates them all in the same way so that, in Spivak's own example, in translation "*the literature by a woman in Palestine begins to resemble, in the feel of its prose, something by a man in Taiwan*" ([1993] 2004, 400). This is why Spivak believes that whether a translator is prepared enough for cultural translation is determined by whether their grasp of the language of the original has progressed to speaking it in intimate matters. This way language ceases to be a tool of communication and becomes a part of one's personality. Much like Legrand's use of the terms "*host and guest language*" Spivak's focus on translating with love reflects the notion of language as a living entity.

As far as the TT is concerned Eugene Nida claims that "*the receptors of a translation should comprehend the translated text to such an extent that they can understand how the original receptors must have understood the original text*"³³. Is this however even possible? Any attempt to recreate the ST in a way that offers the TT reader the same reading experience as that of the ST reader cannot have a chance to succeed. The cultural gap unavoidably affects the reader's experience of the text.

Consider the difference in the reader's experience of a literary work written in English the events of which take place in Britain. A British reader will find cultural references utterly normal and perfectly familiar but an American reader (especially if they have never visited UK) will despite their knowledge of the language find the culturally specific items in the text to be foreign and unknown. In translation to another language the TR will experience the foreign feel of the culture woven through the text even more intensely than the hypothetical American reader.

³³ Nida and de Waard 1986, 36

The Harry Potter saga can serve as an example: in the British reader, the difference between the mundane everyday Britain and its magic counterpart will evoke an idea of secrets hidden in a familiar environment. Readers anywhere else in the world, however, especially young children without any real experience of life in Britain, will not read the books in the same way. The places (Kings Cross Station), people (Prime Minister), and other cultural items which exist in the real Britain will be just as foreign to a Czech or Chinese child as J.K. Rowling's imaginary Britain will be. Rowling's world-building copies the British culture in general and thus relies on the reader's knowledge of British cultural facts, from monetary or education systems to sport and government. Readers of the translations therefore cannot experience the story in the same way as readers of the ST; the dichotomy of "the familiar" and "the other" as presented in the ST becomes a fusion of "the real life other" and "the imaginary other" in the TT.

The same would happen with a text in which two (or more) real cultures overlap, e.g. a text about an ethnic minority character in a predominantly white environment in USA. While an American reader of said ethnicity would find both the cultural details of white America and their own ethnical background familiar, a white American would find only part of the cultural items familiar, and a white European would be dealing with culture items entirely removed from their own personal experience of the world, the cultural gap made larger by translation into the TL which might not have a suitable equivalent for a number of cultural words or references to cultural facts.

What does this mean for a translator? In no way I am advocating abandoning all attempts to recreate the ST reader's experience for readers of the translation. Neither do I believe that any professional translator is unaware that creating a translation that is perfectly faithful to the ST is an impossible task. The reason for drawing attention to this fact is connected to the cultural implications a translator should consider when devising a translation strategy.

It is unfortunate that majority of translation studies as taught and accessible in Europe and the West are deeply Eurocentric and fail to take into consideration the power dynamics between individual languages and cultures. Use of the foreignization approach when translating from a majority language to a minority language (one that is insufficiently represented on the global literary market) might and probably will have unfortunate

implications; requiring the readers of the translation to make the effort to “move towards the author” plays into these power dynamics and reinforces the status quo.

For example, using foreignization when translating from English into Hindi or any other of India’s many languages is reminiscent of the violence done on the people of India and their culture by the British Empire, and any existing precondition which causes that the English cultural items or linguistic structures sound natural when retained in the Hindi translation is a direct result of the centuries of the British enforcement of the British cultural values and English language on the nations of the Indian subcontinent.

However, if the situation is reversed and it is Hindi being the SL translated into English with the translation strategy leaning towards the foreignization side of the spectre, the power dynamics can sway a little more towards becoming balanced.

Achieving actual balance between languages of former colonial empires such as English and former colonies such as the languages of India is doubtlessly an uneasy task which cannot be accomplished just by introduction of several books translated from marginalised languages into English, no matter how much the foreignization strategy challenges the TL culture. It is important to bear in mind that mending the imbalance which resulted from centuries (or, arguably even millennia) of ethnocentric violence is not a matter of decades. Any work that may have been started on undoing the wrongs of eurocentrism and anglocentrism is still only in the phase of laying down its foundations. That is just as true for cultural imbalance in linguistics as it is for race issues and other social issues as they are all interconnected. Presuming that those social issues have long since been resolved and that we live in a society where all cultures are equal is upholding and reinforcing the inequalities inherent in the system. Therefore, in order for a translator to perform their job successfully it is necessary they bear two things in mind: firstly, what the power relations between the languages and cultures involved in translation are, and secondly in what way the translator’s decisions are informed by the relations in question.

2.3.2 Czech Language and Nation in European and Global Historical Context

2.3.2.1 Central, Not Eastern

“[The people of Central Europe] cannot be separated from European history,” wrote Milan Kundera (1984, 36) five years before the Iron Curtain would fall, *“they cannot exist outside it; but they represent the wrong side of this history; they are its victims and outsiders.”* According to him it is *“this disabused view of history that is the source of their culture, of their wisdom, of the "nonserious spirit" that mocks grandeur and glory.”*

It is impossible to compose an exact definition of what “Central Europe” is, or which countries and/or nations are to be included, as these are the countries that were once parts of the Hapsburg Empire and as such were never masters of their own destinies and borders.

“They were kin to one another not through will, not through fellow-feeling or linguistic proximity, but by reason of similar experience, of common historical situations that brought them together [...].” (Kundera 2007, 32)

The term “*Central Europe*” gained world-wide recognition only in the second half of the 20th century when Milan Kundera used it as a means of educating the Western world which had classified his works as Eastern European literature and read them as a testimony of life behind the Iron Curtain, amazed by the distant but supposedly omnipresent threat of Communism and Soviet Russia.

“Eastern Europe is merely a military concept and has no historical legitimacy, Kundera told these lazy Western readers,” the sociologist Václav Bělohradský commented, and consequently pointed out there is a divide between Russia as a nation with its unique culture, and Central Europe *“with its officialdom and its multi-national culture”*, a culture that is inseparable from its historical context.³⁴

Ignoring said context and reducing the literature of the regional nations to mere testimonies of political interest is a telling sign of the reader’s cherry-picking tendencies; by dividing Europe into the simplified polarities of East and West the reader falls into the trap of seeing the world in black and white, in extremes. It also consequently impels the

³⁴ Information available at http://www.ce-review.org/00/20/interview20_belohradsky.html.

reader to take a side in a conflict between *Home* and *The Other*. Any shades of grey are ignored and labelled with whichever of the two possible titles feels most accurate. Milan Kundera (2007, 32) even goes as far as to call “*the problem of small nations*” one of Europe’s fundamental problems.

The divide of Eastern and Western Europe as it is understood today (a military concept, as Bělohradský calls it) became cemented in the Western mind by the events of Cold War, therefore the aftermath of the World Wars. End of Austria-Hungary Empire in 1918 meant a disappearance of Europe’s cultural centre and its fracturing into numerous independent but significantly weaker countries that were left at the mercy of the pre-existing and newly emerging hegemonies.

“Boxed in by the Germans on one side and the Russians on the other, the nations of Central Europe have used up their strength in the struggle to survive and to preserve their languages. Since they have never been entirely integrated into the consciousness of Europe, they have remained the least known and the most fragile part of the West — hidden, even further, by the curtain of their strange and scarcely accessible languages.” (Kundera 1984, 34)

Among Czechs it is a well-known fact that the nation dislikes being called Eastern European. However, it does not seem that the West is going to stop this trend anytime soon. With the dissolution of Austria-Hungary and the consequent events of the 20th century the Czechs have not only gained independence and autonomy. Despite their insistence that Czech Republic lies in Central Europe they have inherited the treatment the West reserves for Eastern Europe, including the bias.

For a translator from Czech into English it is going to be crucial to remember that when the West speaks of Eastern Europe, they most likely include the Czech Republic in their definition. As previously stated by Spivak³⁵, the status of a language and culture in the world must be considered when composing a translation strategy. The translator’s knowledge of the Western outlook on the Czech Republic can be used in shaping the image of the country in translation into English.

³⁵ See chapter 2.2.3.2 *The Dichotomy of Foreignization and Domestication*.

2.3.2.2 *The Czech Lands as the West Discarded*

In 2000, before the accession to the European Union, Jiří Brodský commented that Czechs have always lived in a multinational state. Whether in monarchy or a republic there always were other nations living with them, albeit usually those that had forced themselves upon the Czechs. In addition to that, “[t]he Czech lands lie between the East and the West, between Eastern emotionality and Western rationality, between Germanic and Slavonic culture”,³⁶ Brodský says. It is this multi-nationality that makes Czechs and their culture hard to define and understand. There are no clear boundaries, only a world of paradoxes.

The Czech have in the course of a century experienced a shift from being a minority culture in a greater multi-ethnic empire that was Austria-Hungary to a majority culture on a very small area of land. This shift is however only theoretical, an illusion, as in the greater European and even world-wide context the Czech Republic remains an obscure country of which little is known. It could be said that the sacrifice of Czechoslovakia on the eve of Second World War was the greatest exposure of the world to the Czech (and Slovak) culture in recent years, after which the country (or countries) dropped below the radar, so to speak, reappearing only as an occasional bleep of minimal consequence. In a way being a minority in Austria-Hungary meant inclusion in a powerful political body and offered opportunities to people such as Franz Kafka to reach worldwide recognition, although at the price of suppressing their connection to a Czech heritage. The Czech went from being a minority culture within a well-known and powerful nation to becoming an autonomous state with little to none recognition or consequence in the world. Any successes and positive outcome one might ascribe to creation of an independent democratic state in 1918 did nothing for the status of Czech language in the world and/or Europe. With its approximate 10 million native speakers, achieving recognition in the Anglo-American world is for a Czech writer/speaker next to impossible. It does not help that until 19th century Czech language was in English known only as Bohemian³⁷, and that “*bohemian*” as a term gained the meaning of

1. a person, as an artist or writer, who lives and acts free of regard for conventional rules and practices³⁸

³⁶ available at <http://www.ce-review.org/00/20/brodsky20.html>

³⁷ Phelps 2013, 213 – 214

³⁸ available at <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/bohemian>

2. a person living a vagabond life, often considered synonymous with an ethnic slur for Romani people (from French *bohemian* – referring to Romani nomads travelling to France via Bohemia.³⁹)

Both above stated definitions are inaccurate and interconnected in their inaccuracy; living regardless of conventional rules, leading a nomadic lifestyle, and the ethnic slur for the Romani⁴⁰ are generally considered to be mere lifestyle attributes without any cultural connotations to nations which exist in real life. Therefore more than one culture (or subculture) is misrepresented in the vastness of the Anglo-American culture; the Romani are considered to be nomadic peoples of a bygone age (much like Europeans in general do not fully realise the presence of Native Americans in modern American society), and “*bohemian*” no longer describes a person originating from a region of the Czech lands but a “*free spirit*”. This misrepresentation leads to cultural erasure, cultural erasure leads to lack of public awareness, and lack of awareness can easily lead to ignoring the underprivileged and contributing to their strives.

Interest in the future of the national language almost always rises with turbulent changes in the society. As for the Czech language, the last time the question of whether the language is endangered appeared in the 1990s, and prevails to current day. It is interesting that the current form of language is significantly different from the language of literary works which are translated into foreign languages, i.e. Second World War literature and works from the Communist era.⁴¹ While current Czech has been under steadily growing influence of English since 1989, the pre-Velvet-Revolution Czech was marked by centuries of influence of German, and in the 20th century also Russian (in the fields of science and politics), French (fashion, literature, modern life style, art) and beginnings of adopting terminology from English (sport, music, fashion, technology).⁴²

The events of the First World War led to the League of Nations’ effort to establish organisation that would uphold the principles of “*civilisation*” which did contain statement condemning racial discrimination in its early drafts but after the British and American objections the statement was removed. It was only the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948 that became the basic standard of the modern notion of human rights.

³⁹ available at <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/Bohemian>

⁴⁰ g*psy

⁴¹ Císařovská (2012) 177 - 178

⁴² Boušková (2012), 200

1948 was also when the crime of genocide was defined for the first time.⁴³ It is telling of the enormous power of eurocentrism that exact same crimes could go unpunished in the colonies and it took the Holocaust to raise the universal standards of basic human rights.

Milan Kundera's 2007 essay "*Die Weltliteratur*" published in *The New Yorker* presents a parallel between the treatment of colonies by their colonisers and the treatment of small countries of the Central Europe by their more powerful neighbours:

"'A faraway country' of which 'we know nothing': Those famous words by which Chamberlain sought to justify the sacrifice of Czechoslovakia were accurate. In Europe, there are the large countries on one side and the small on the other; there are the nations seated in the negotiating chambers and those which wait all night in the antechambers.

*What distinguishes the small nations from the large is not the quantitative criterion of the number of their inhabitants; it is something deeper. For the small nations, existence is not a self-evident certainty but always a question, a wager, a risk; they are on the defensive against History, that force which is bigger than they, which does not take them into account, which does not even notice them."*⁴⁴

Kundera of course refers to Arthur Neville Chamberlain, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom's sugar-coating of his decision to concede the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia to Germany. His radio broadcast from September 27, 1938 to the people of Britain is representative of the dismissive and dehumanising tendencies of large countries and nations that had been cause to horrors and injustices they to this day attempt to wash their hands off. Claiming to be a man of peace, Chamberlain declares that if the British Empire is to go in war it needs to be on account of issues larger than the fate of Czechoslovakia:

⁴³ Coles and Symes 2014, 1008

⁴⁴ Kundera 2007, 28

*“Armed conflict between nations is a nightmare to me; but if I were convinced that any nation had made up its mind to dominate the world by fear of its force, I should feel that it must be resisted.”*⁴⁵

It is questionable whether Chamberlain was aware of the hypocrisy of this statement when he made it in the safety of his homeland; a country that had gained her riches by exploitation of numerous other nations, a colonial superpower whose treatment of the colonies’ native peoples would give Hitler a run for his money. In Chamberlain’s eyes Czechoslovakia was just a territory like any other. If the inhuman treatment the people in Britain’s African and Asian colonies were at that time still subjected to was acceptable, so was sacrificing ten millions of Czechoslovakia’s inhabitants to a man who made no secret of his anti-Slavic stance. In *Mein Kampf*, published in 1925 and widely available at the time, Hitler expresses his opinions on the racial inferiority of Slavs and his plans to use them as slave labour as they were, after all, “subhuman” (Weikart 2009, 71 – 74).

Having expanded over 30% of Earth’s area and counting 25% of its inhabitants at its height between the World Wars⁴⁶ and having already committed some of the worst horrors in human history, the British Empire’s complete disregard for the plights of a small Central European country is not in the least surprising.

The centrepiece or perhaps the symbol of the Second World War, i.e. anti-Semitism, was a widely practiced and completely open political force in the West long before the War. Even the practice of eugenics, a programme of racial engineering, was practiced across the West in order to “improve” the human race and eliminate the “unfit”.⁴⁷

*“Hitler and the Nazis drew on a revived and especially violent form of nineteenth century Social Darwinism, according to which nations and people struggled for survival, with the superior peoples strengthening themselves in the process.”*⁴⁸

It is noteworthy that at the time Czechoslovakia had been twenty years old as an independent state, therefore only approximately five years younger than the Czech Republic is today in 2014. In eyes of The Allies the youth of the First Republic

⁴⁵ Chamberlain 1939, 274 – 276

⁴⁶ Information available at <http://www.atlasofbriempire.com>

⁴⁷ Coles and Symes 2014, 857 – 862

⁴⁸ Coles and Symes 2014, 857

conveniently overshadowed the history, culture, and language of its nation, and thus could be used to downplay the gravity of sacrifice of Czechoslovakia. In four years we shall celebrate a hundred years' passing since the birth of Czechoslovakia and the world is now aware of the existence of Czechs as a nation much more than it was at the eve of the Second World War.

As much as was taken from the nation it can be said the sacrifice gave it the much needed exposure to the global public eye. The power of public awareness, representation and exposure should never be underestimated since their lack was what helped Chamberlain sleep better at night after the Munich Agreement. Should a day come when fate of the Czechs falls again in the hands of a nation disposing of a significantly greater power and influence, this hypothetical nation will not be able to claim ignorance as a justification.

2.3.3 Translation in the Era of Globalisation

In a word globalisation could be described as integration. “*It is the process of creating a rising number of networks—political, social, economic, and cultural—that span larger sections of the globe. [...] Information, ideas, goods, and people now move rapidly and easily across national boundaries.*”⁴⁹

It is however important not to be fooled by the implication it carries – globalisation does not necessarily produce peace or equality. While certainly a characteristic of our time it is by no means a new concept. “*The East India Companies (Dutch and English) [...] were to the seventeenth century what Microsoft is to the early twenty-first; the premier global enterprises of the time.*”⁵⁰

Among the benefits of globalisation are the new, rapid, and even intimate forms of mass communication which the age of the Internet has brought. Blogs, social media sites and Internet-based political campaigns among others have created new forms of politics and activism in which “*the sovereignty of nation-states and the clear boundaries of national communities seem to be eroded by many globalizing trends*”. Just as satellite televisions helped speed up the sequence of revolts in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, the Internet has a massive impact on the course of political struggles around the globe.⁵¹

Unfortunately the globalisation movement is largely formed by Western ideals and cultural standards, and while the production, marketing, and management of international media conglomerates are spread widely across the globe including parts of the developing world, their corporate headquarters remain in the West. There is a distinct divide between the powerful countries and regions and the disadvantaged ones which are exploited by the former, and this divide came to being as a natural development and continuation of historic events. The end of the Second World War saw a rise of migration of people between former colonies and imperial powers, which brought both new cultural blends but also raised pressing questions of civil rights.

In his *Les Problèmes théoriques de la traduction* Georges Mounin ([1963] 1999, 215) makes a connection between the way living tongues are taught in schools and the lack of

⁴⁹ Coles and Symes 2014, 984

⁵⁰ Coles and Symes 2014, 984

⁵¹ Coles and Symes 2014, 988 – 989

recognition cultural knowledge is given as a prerequisite for adequate translation. Mounin made this observation in early 1960s with regards to the French syllabuses of the first half of the 20th century when inclusion of cultural items in the curriculum of foreign languages was mostly peripheral. In comparison to that time period the focus on the sociocultural layer of language acquisition has grown significantly stronger in the last few decades. One of the reasons why this was possible is greater accessibility to many cultures and their languages via exposure to a number of public and social media. Television allows the viewers to catch a glimpse of different cultures, however biased it may be. Not every culture is represented equally or accurately and the response of the viewership is going to reflect that: a regular Czech person is more likely to have a clearer and more complex knowledge about the culture of USA than Armenia.

Despite the relative accessibility to other cultures that the internet offers, the balance remains skewed in favour of a few dominant languages. It nevertheless still allows for easier connection to people from distant cultures, and for cultural exchange. It is something a translator can find useful in their profession: now more than ever before it is possible to contact people from foreign lands and discuss their cultures with them.

The list of possibilities in which one can get in touch with such people when individual research fails to bear satisfactory results is virtually endless; social networks such as Twitter or Facebook can serve as a platform for interaction with personal friends, blog domains like Tumblr or LiveJournal offer a possibility for more focused spaces which can be and are used to collect and share information about specific topics, including information relating to details about countries and cultures that are not as widely accessible as others.

These blogs are mostly unofficial, run by members of the culture in question in their free time and range from explanatory and educational material to simple collections of jokes and photographs relating to the culture. Finding useful and relevant information on them is not an easy task, they however often offer the option to contact the person running the blog and ask them directly about whichever issue it is that the translator is facing. Diversity of YouTube videos represents just another way of submerging oneself into foreign cultures. There are of course countless official, academic, and professional resources available but one should not underestimate the well of knowledge social networks can be when utilised to their full potential.

Readers of the current day and age read differently than the generations before them. That is caused among other reasons by technological development and the consequently shorter attention span of the younger generations. Since this has changed the way books are written (e.g. Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas' lengthy descriptions of Parisian architecture and history vs. the directness and focus on characters and plot of books written in the recent decades) there should also be a visible impact of technology on translation strategies. That is besides use of online dictionaries, internet research, and various translation tools available. It should change the way the text is presented to the TR whose attention the writer and the translator are trying to keep.

Footnotes used to be the solution to many a hurdle in a translator's work. Nowadays it is generally agreed that footnotes make a literary text appear cluttered and distract from its main body.⁵² Given how simple the internet has made research for translators, it is reasonable to assume that the reading experience has developed accordingly as well. The foreignization method (or the more culturally aware *resistancy* method) can benefit from the TR's ability to conduct a research just as quickly as the translator did. Now as literature experiences a shift from printed books to digital media, and with the accessible knowledge offered by internet at their fingertips, the TR can engage with foreign items in the text in a manner that used to be impossible.

Deciding which information can be included in the translation differently (in a manner demanding the reader to move closer to the author) will be influenced by a number of extratextual factors, which in general follow Christiane Nord's proposed analysis of extratextual factors that the translator should consider before and during the work process⁵³. The selected factors that play part in constructing a strategy pertaining to the issue of cultural items in modern translation theory are: the sender (usually the author), the sender's intention, the recipient, time and place of communication, and the medium/channel.

Since I am speaking about the possible ways of presenting the text to the reader, the recipient is the factor that deserves most detailed analysis. The other will be subordinate to it in this particular instance. The choice to leave the reader to engage with the culturally specific text in a more active way will be conditioned by the questions of whether the

⁵² Levý (1963) 1998, 127

⁵³ Nord 1991, 39 – 75

general TR can be expected to have the means to conduct research of their own (the reader's age or/and social class will play a part), whether they would find doing so to be a nuisance, whether the information to be looked up is widely accessible in the TR's mother tongue, and most importantly whether the resulting translation strategy will significantly obscure the message of the text for those readers who choose not to engage with the text in another way but reading.

3. Publishing Translations: Data Analysis

This part of the thesis presents an analysis of data provided by various organisations dedicated to exploration of the state of literary industry, as well as publicly accessible databases which compile information submitted by publishing houses and national institutes. The aim of this part is to explore how the results of data analysis reflect the translation theory, and the political and historical context discussed in the previous part.

Firstly, I will introduce UNESCO's *Index Translatorium*, the database which has shaped the structure of the whole analysis in the sense that it served as its foundation and primary source of numerical data.

Next I will present general facts about current translation trends in the global literary market which I illustrate with use of tables I created based on the *Index Translatorium* results, with additional commentary. From this I shall move onto a more focused overview of translation development in USA, UK, and Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic, namely to inquire after the hierarchy of the most common SL in every country.

Having examined the selected countries from this point of view I will next present an insight into their development in the field of translation in three sample years stretching over a period of twenty years, and therefore mapping the changes that the revolutionary year of 1989 brought onto Western literary culture.

To provide counterbalance for this I shall examine literary position of a selected former colony (India) in the Western publishing world and consequently present an analysis with focus on how anglocentrism and eurocentrism continue to influence literature worldwide.

The analytical part is concluded with data referring to the relationship between Czech literature/language and the English speaking world (specifically USA and UK).

3.1 Index Translatorium Statistics

UNESCO's *Index Translatorium*⁵⁴, a database of all translations published in all of UNESCO's member states (fiction and non-fiction alike⁵⁵), gives a glimpse into the international translation market trends and development while reflecting development of examined languages in a historical and cultural context.

The *Translatorium* was established in 1932 and its online database offers results of collected data since 1979, with references registered before 1979 available only in print in all National depository libraries and at the UNESCO library in Paris. Its reliability is sometimes disputed, however it is the only global source of data for comparison of books published in translation and as such becomes by default the world's most accurate database of this kind.

The database is regularly updated; the data from recent years (approximately 2008 - 2012) is being currently processed by the INDEX team. For the purposes of this work the most recent data submitted by

- *The Czech Republic* come from the year 2009; years 2010, 2011, 2012 have been submitted and are currently being processed;
- *Czechoslovakia* come from the year 1992;
- *United States of America* come from 2008; years 2009 and 2010 have been submitted and are being processed; 2010 being the year of USA's most recent submission;
- *United Kingdom* come from 2008; years 2009 – 2012 have been submitted and are being processed.

The data is not intended to create an completely accurate portrayal of translation in the publishing industry. Despite UNESCO's best efforts the database does not yet contain complete information about each of UNESCO's member states' translation activities and this leaves room for error. Therefore the collected data should be regarded as the best estimate that can be made with the available resources.

⁵⁴ Database accessible at <http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bsstatlist.aspx?lg=0>.

⁵⁵ Periodicals, articles from periodicals, patents and brochures are not included.

3.1.1 Introductory Information Presenting Translation Trends in Publishing Industry

3.1.1.1 Most Common SL in Translation

As evidenced in [table 1](#) which presents data collected in years 1979 – 2008, English is indeed the most translated language in the world. What follows are other European languages, with the exception of Japanese representing the vastness of non-Western world. It is also notable that all the European languages in the top ten are languages of north-western Europe, and Russian, all of which are languages of former colonial empires.

It is equally interesting that the Czech language holds the highly positioned 13th place, with 17,154 publications to its name across the world. For comparison, Slovak placed 31st with 4,289 translations from Slovak published worldwide in years 1979 – 2008.

Table 1: Most common SL worldwide

	Top 10 SL worldwide	Number of publications
1	English	1,264,944
2	French	225,744
3	German	208,060
4	Russian	103,587
5	Italian	69,538
6	Spanish	54,535
7	Swedish	39,976
8	Japanese	29,241
9	Danish	21,250
10	Latin	19,659

3.1.1.2 Most Common TL in Translation

Table 2: Most common TL worldwide

	Top 10 TL worldwide	Number of publications
1	German	301,934
2	French	240,043
3	Spanish	228,557
4	English	164,499
5	Japanese	130,649
6	Dutch	111,270
7	Russian	100,806
8	Portuguese	78,905
9	Polish	76,705
10	Swedish	71,209

In the list of most common TL Czech language placed as the 11th, with 68,921 publications from the time period between 1979 and 2008. For further information I add that the most common SL translated into Czech was English at 32,367 publications, or 46.9%. Nearly a half of all translations into Czech are translations from English. German is second at 25%, and French third at 5.2%. These results show a significant imbalance in favour of English and languages of other former European colonies.

For comparison, in Czechoslovakia in the time period between 1979 and 1992 English held the 3rd place of most common SL at 14.89% of all translations. This means that the position of English in the Czech lands has grown three times since the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. However, the Czech Republic now annually produces approximately four times more publications (translations and original texts alike) than Czechoslovakia did.⁵⁶

The Slovak language placed 25th, with 19,644 registered translations from multiple languages in the same time period. The most common SL in combination with Slovak as a TL was English, with 6,446 publications, or 32.8%.

⁵⁶ Jaroslav Císař, Czech Bookworld News Export Catalogue: autumn 2009 – spring 2010, 2.

3.1.1.3 Biggest Translation Producers (1979 - 2008)

The information contained in table 3 overlap largely with table 2: most common TL worldwide. In the both tables combined a connection can be observed; there is an intersection of languages from table 2 and the countries where the language is spoken.

While Germany is not the only existing German speaking country, major part of translations into German appears to be published in Germany. The same is true for French and Spain. It is therefore possible that publishing houses in South America obtain translations into Spanish mostly from Spain. It shows an interesting dynamic between former colonies and their historical invaders.

Table 3: Biggest translation producers

	Top 10 biggest translation producers	Number of publications
1	Germany	269,724
2	Spain	232,850
3	France	198,573
4	Japan	130,496
5	USSR (to 1991)	92,734
6	Netherlands	90,560
7	Poland	77,715
8	Sweden	73,230
9	Denmark	70,607
10	China, People's Republic of	67,304

It is also note-worthy that while in table 2 English is featured as the 4th most common TL, in the second table USA and UK do not place in the top ten. USA is 15th and UK 19th.

Czech Republic's position remains the same as in the first table; at 11th place with 62,480 publications. For a small country this is rather impressive but in the case of the Czech Republic not too surprising as the country is one of world's biggest producers of translations per capita.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Jaroslav Císař, autumn 2009 – spring 2010, 2.

USSR continues to feature high on the list despite having dissolved in 1991. Russian Federation however places as high as the 12th place, having published 58,491 titles in the period from 1992 to 2012.

3.1.2 Most Common SL in the Time Period between 1979 and 2008 in Selected Countries

To better understand the position Czech holds in Anglo-American literary world I compare the most popular SL in the UK and USA with the most translated SL in the Czech Republic and former Czechoslovakia.

As [table 4](#) shows, in the UK favours powerful European languages in translation, including English, which is however translated into minority languages on the British soil; Welsh and Gaelic.

In the given time period a total of 451 titles was translated from Czech in the UK, out of that number 447 was into English.

Table 4: Most common SL in the UK

	SL	Publications (total of 42,632)	TL
1	French	9,319	9,227 → English; 48 → Welsh
2	German	8,519	8,457 → English; 16 → Welsh
3	English	6,242	4,498 → Welsh; 321 → Gaelic (Scots); 288 → French
4	Italian	2,461	2,447 → English
5	Russian	2,427	2,396 → English

[Table 5](#) presents the same time period in the USA, and the SL overlaps with the most common SL in UK. In USA English is however translated mostly into Spanish which reflects the country's ethnically diverse background as the Spanish publications are undoubtedly for the benefit of the part of the USA's population originating from Central and South America.

As a SL, Czech makes a total of 339 titles in the USA, out of which 338 were translated into English.

Table 5: Most common SL in USA

	SL	Publications (total of 52,344)	TL
1	French	10,418	10,337 → English
2	German	9,940	9,871 → English
3	English	4,301	3,935 → Spanish
4	Spanish	3,852	3,822 → English
5	Russian	3,398	3,382 → English

Leaving the Anglo-Saxon world behind and moving to the historical Czech Lands, a shift can be observed in the stretch of time that divides the nation into Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic.

As evidenced in [table 6](#), the translation tradition in Czechoslovakia's final years was characterised by a focus on languages of its immediate neighbours and minority nations within the country (translation of Czech and Slovak into Hungarian). Presence of Russian and German is to be expected on this list due to historical context of that era. However, it is a testament to the pervasiveness of Anglo-American culture after the Second World War and the colonial achievements before that English was the third most translated language in the Czechoslovakia behind the Iron Curtain.

Table 6: Most common SL in Czechoslovakia

	SL (1979 – 1992)	Publications (total of 18,009)	TL
1	Czech	4,558	2,888 → Slovak 601 → Hungarian 314 → English 89 → Russian
2	Russian	3,554	2,015 → Czech 1,422 → Slovak
3	English	2,683	1,567 → Czech 1,008 → Slovak
4	German	1,673	960 → Czech 658 → Slovak
5	Slovak	1,305	433 → Czech 474 → Hungarian

In [table 7](#) the aforementioned shift is clear to see: after the Velvet Revolution and the following Velvet Divorce of Czechs and Slovaks, the most translated languages were no longer those of the new country's neighbours and political influences, although those still rank high; Slovak, Russian, and Polish remained among top ten languages most translated in the Czech Republic. English ST however got a massive head-start, counting more than half of all translations published in the country. Consequently this also meant that Czech became translated into English in larger numbers.

Table 7: Most common SL in the Czech Republic

	SL (1993 – 2008)	Publications (total of 57,310)	TL
1	English	32,457	32,354 → Czech
2	German	17,247	17,227 → Czech
3	French	3,644	3,639 → Czech
4	Czech	4,143	2,505 → English 942 → German 200 → French
5	Italian	1,104	1,069 → Czech

3.1.3 Comparison of Selected Countries' Development on the Translation Market

The three following tables compare trends in translation market in USA, UK, and Czech Republic/Czechoslovakia in the years 1988, 1998, and 2008. The tables are presented chronologically.

Table 8 (next page) illustrates the state of Anglo-American and Czechoslovak translation in 1988.

The UK and USA show an inclination to languages of specific minorities; for UK it is Welsh and for USA Spanish. Nevertheless, neither of these two languages approaches the strength of French and German SL, or in the case of USA Russian. While unsurprising given the political situation, it is nevertheless alarming that Russian was that year in USA translated into English more often than Spanish. Russian was also translated only into English, and mere twenty translations from English into Spanish were published that year.

In 1988 Czechoslovakian literary world was leaning steadily towards East and the Slavic world, with majority of the translations into Czech being Russian and Slovak. European languages formed the overwhelming majority of all SL in translations, the second after Russian being curiously enough English. Given the geographical proximity and historical ties with the neighbouring Germany and Austria one might anticipate finding German in a stronger position. English however already started claiming its place in the former Czechoslovakia.

It is interesting to note that in 1988 the number of publications which were translations was fairly equal in Czechoslovakia and UK and USA. As is evident in the 1998 and 2008 tables this occurrence will swiftly diminish and the following years will see a sway of balance in favour of English written literature in both the English speaking countries and the new Czech Republic.

Table 8

Total number of translations published in a given country in 1988	SL (number of publications)	TL (number of publications)	Additional notes
USA 1,846	French (439)	English (433)	13 books in Czech SL, all → English
	German (352)	English (352)	
	Russian (171)	English (171)	
	Spanish (140)	English (140)	
	English (29)	Spanish (20)	
UK 1,149	English (67)	Welsh (53)	13 book in Czech SL, all → English
	French (311)	English (307)	
	German (259)	English (258)	
	Welsh (9)	English (5)	
Czechoslovakia 1,337	Russian (265)	Czech (140) Slovak (115)	In 1988 English and even Spanish (9) were translated from Czech more often than Russian (7). In USSR that year Czech was SL → Russian in 60 publications (out of 7,520 total).
	Slovak (127)	Hungarian (44) Czech (36)	
	English (134)	Czech (84) Slovak (48)	
	German (96)	Czech (52) Slovak (44)	
	French (58)	Czech (35) Slovak (21)	
	Czech (385)	Slovak (241) Hungarian (69) German (23) English (15)	

In table 9 (next page) it is possible to see that nearly a decade after the dissolution of the Soviet Union the number of translations published in Czech nearly tripled, and while UK and USA also experienced an increase of published translations it was a fairly insignificant one that can be attributed to increase of publications in general, not exclusive to translations.

In both UK and USA German and French remained the highest represented SL. Russian however plummeted in numbers in both USA and Czech Republic. In Czech Republic English took the first place that previously belonged to Russian, and German grew significantly stronger as well.

Czech was nearly not translated at all in the Czech Republic that year. The focus shifted to bringing foreign authors to Czech audience and abandoned effort to bring Czech literature to foreign readers.

The translations into Welsh in UK and into Spanish in USA however grew in numbers in 1998, a testament to the countries' slightly increased interest in minority languages represented among their citizens. The position of Czech literature in USA was nearly identical to the one of 1988. UK did not show interest in translations from Czech that year, save for one publication.

Table 9

Total number of translations published in a given country in 1998	SL (number of publications)	TL (number of publications)	Additional notes
USA 2,023	German (457)	English (452)	15 books in Czech SL, all → English
	French (403)	English (401)	
	Spanish (139)	English (139)	
	English (124)	Spanish (109)	
	Russian (97)	English (97)	
UK 1,601	English (354)	Welsh (275)	1 book in Czech SL, 1 → English
	French (330)	English (329)	
	German (329)	English (328)	
	Welsh (20)	English (20)	
Czech Republic 3,182	English (1,712)	Czech (1,712)	
	German (1,093)	Czech (1,093)	
	French (160)	Czech (160)	
	Russian (17)	Czech (17)	
	Czech (5)	English (1) French (1) German (1) Italian (1) Spanish (1)	

As the last table, table 10 (next page), illustrates in 2008 the amount of translations published in UK and USA in a given year showed no significant change from the previous analysed years. Translations into Spanish and Welsh went through a boost. Numerically, the translation situation remained unchanged but statistically speaking the data became skewed in favour of English writing authors.

On the other hand, in the Czech Republic translations from English bloomed, counting over a half of all publications translated from a foreign language that year. The status of German as the second most translated language in the country remained unchanged in the decade since 1998, and in general the literary scene did not stray from its tradition of eurocentrism.

Table 10

Total number of translations published in a given country in 2008	SL (number of publications)	TL (number of publications)	Additional notes
USA 1,431	English (459)	Spanish (455)	3 books in Czech SL, all → English
	French (207)	English (203)	
	German (176)	English (176)	
	Spanish (107)	English (107)	
	Russian (44)	English (44)	
UK 1,069	English (465)	Welsh (418)	5 books in Czech SL, all → English
	French (148)	English (144)	
	Welsh (26)	English (25)	
Czech Republic 5,228	English (2,779)	Czech (2,768)	
	German (1,159)	Czech (1,145)	
	Czech (600)	German (133) English (376)	
	French (298)	Czech (296)	

3.1.4 Titles Translated from Czech in UK and USA in a Given Year

In the following tables I present an overview of UK and USA's publishing industries' interest in Czech literature and examine what amount of all Czech translations consisted of literature and how much were other interests.

Since I examine time period of thirty years it allows me to pinpoint the causes behind sudden bursts of interest from the Anglo-American world, and the consequent lulls.

First I look at USA publishing industry's interest in translations from Czech. This is illustrated by tables 11, 12, and 13:

Table 11

USA 1979 – 1988										
Year	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Total	17	17	7	3	9	5	19	12	6	13
Literature	3	6	4	3	5	4	9	7	3	6
History/politics	0	4	0	0	2	0	5	4	2	2

Table 12

USA 1989 – 1998										
Year	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Total	10	18	21	22	19	19	15	10	10	15
Literature	8	13	11	6	10	12	7	4	6	8
History/politics	0	4	6	8	6	3	3	3	3	3

Table 13

USA 1999 – 2008										
Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total	13	9	11	13	5	4	3	3	8	3
Literature	11	4	9	9	2	0	2	2	6	2
History/politics	1	3	1	1	0	2	1	1	2	1

Out of 339 total titles which were published in USA as translations from Czech 181 were literary titles. That is more than half of all titles, more accurately 53.3 %. Literature dealing with historic and political topics made 71 titles, i.e. 20.9 %.

The Czech authors most translated in literature in the span of 30 years from 1979 to 2008 were (in alphabetical order):

- Čapek, Karel (15 works)
- Gruša, Jiří (3 works)
- Havel, Václav (7 literary works, 18 total)
- Holan, Vladimír (4 works)
- Holub, Miroslav (4 works)
- Hrabal, Bohumil (10 works)
- Klíma, Ivan (14 works)
- Kohout, Pavel (3 works)
- Kundera, Milan (18 works)
- Lustig, Arnošt (12 works)
- Páral, Vladimír (3 works)
- Seifert, Jaroslav (8 works)
- Škvorecký, Josef (22 works)
- Volková, Bronislava (4 works)
- Weil, Jiří (6 works)

Tables 14, 15, and 16 show results of the same research applied on UK's publishing industry:

Table 14

UK 1979 – 1988										
Year	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Total	23	27	26	15	26	20	15	21	16	13
Literature	4	5	4	3	6	6	8	11	7	4
History/politics	0	3	1	0	1	1	2	1	3	1

Table 15

UK 1989 – 1998										
Year	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Total	21	32	22	28	29	36	7	8	5	7
Literature	9	15	10	11	8	15	1	6	3	6
History/politics	1	3	0	3	1	1	0	0	1	0

Table 16

UK 1999 – 2008										
Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total	8	7	5	6	4	6	4	5	2	5
Literature	3	3	2	2	2	5	4	5	1	2
History/politics	1	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	1	3

Out of the total of 449 UK publications translated from Czech in the 30 year time period ranging from 1979 to 2008 literature made only 171 titles (38 %). The number of titles dealing with historical and political affairs was 35 (7.7 %).

The subject British publishers were most interested in were Natural and Exact Sciences together with Applied Sciences, counting 193 titles (42.9 % of all titles). Interest in these disciplines was at its peak before the revolutionary year of 1989, after that it shifts in

favour of literature for a short period until 1995 when interest in Czech literature of fiction and scientific literature alike drops massively.

In literature Czech authors most translated in UK were (in alphabetical order):

- Čapek, Karel (7 works)
- Hašek, Jaroslav (5 works)
- Havel, Václav (10 literary works, 14 total)
- Holan, Vladimír (3 works)
- Hrabal, Bohumil (9 works)
- Klíma, Ivan (17 works)
- Kundera, Milan (18 works)
- Lustig, Arnošt (11 works)
- Macourek, Miloš (3 works)
- Seifert, Jaroslav (3 works)
- Škvorecký, Josef (25 works)

3.1.5 Translation trends in former colonies vs. USA/UK publishing

The languages I have selected for this comparison are official/national languages of the former British colony India. The years inspected are 2003 and 1986, therefore there is a seventeen years long gap.

People of India speak over 600 living languages, many of which do not have written literatures.⁵⁸ For the purposes of this work I am going to focus only on India's official and regional languages and their translations into English in UK and USA.

The aim of this comparison is to learn how the translation market changed for these languages as India gained independence in 1950, and English is its official language alongside Hindi. As India is a multilingual country there is not one Indian publishing industry, instead the publishing industries in India are divided in accordance with the regional languages.

As mentioned earlier, Indian literary tradition differs from the Western/European tradition by its attitude to the concept of originality and translation, among other differentiating factors. With its many languages India is a country where coming across “monolinguals” is rare and as such appears to be an ideal nation for translation. Major part of classic Indian literature was founded on direct or free translations and retellings.⁵⁹ This plural nature of the communication channels in India has to be taken in consideration when making comparisons with monolingual nations.

This is evidenced in tables 13 and 14 (next two pages) where it can be seen that majority of works published in India in Hindi or English are translated mostly into a number of other Indian regional languages. The translational exchange appears to travel mostly along these tracks and the seventeen years between the sample years did not see India and its languages through any significant changes in relation to English and Anglo-American publishing industry.

⁵⁸ Information available at <http://publishingperspectives.com/2012/10/confronting-the-big-issues-in-indian-publishing>.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Table 17

Total number of translations published in a given country in 1986	SL (number of publications)	TL (number of publications)	Additional notes
India 463	Hindi (30)	English (9) Malayalam (6) Telugu (6)	85 publications in other Indian regional languages as the SL, all → English or other Indian language.
	English (155)	Hindi (41) Malayalam (35) Bengali (32)	
	Sanskrit (75)	English (31) Hindi (15) Malayalam (15)	
	Bengali (40)	English (9) Hindi (13) Malayalam (6)	
USA 1,717	Hindi (1)	English (1)	2 in other Indian regional languages as the SL, all → English.
	Sanskrit (11)	English (11)	
UK 1,305	Hindi (3)	English (3)	11 in other Indian regional languages as the SL, all → English.
	Bengali (4)	English (4)	

Table 18

Total number of translations published in a given country in 2003	SL (number of publications)	TL (number of publications)	Additional notes
India 487	English (152)	Hindi (36) Bengali (25) Kannada (23) Malayalam (21)	121 publications in other regional languages as the SL, all → English and other languages of India.
	Bengali (73)	Hindi (27) English (25)	
	Hindi (33)	English (12) Kannada (6)	
	Sanskrit (46)	English (22) Hindi (9)	
USA 1,356	Hindi (2)	English (2)	5 in other Indian regional languages as the SL, all → English.
	Sanskrit (17)	English (17)	
UK 1,585	Hindi (1)	English (1)	11 in other Indian regional languages as the SL, 10 → English, 1 (Urdu) → Arabic.
	Bengali (8)	English (8)	
	Sanskrit (10)	English (10)	

3.2. Evaluation of the Analysis Results

As the analysis proves, the position of Czech and Indian literature on global market may be incomparable in terms of number of works produced by each nation and the number of native speakers each language has, both the Czech language and the official/regional languages of India are however similarly positioned in translation into English.

Numerically speaking Indian literature surpasses the Czech by far in terms of representation in the English language. This is of course caused both by India's size and by the status of English as India's official language. If I were to attempt a comparison to Czech it would have worked only in the times of Austria-Hungary when Czech itself was a part of a multilingual empire.

Having acquired independence the Czech only find their literature represented in English in relation to the political events of the 20th century, as evidenced by information in chapter 3.1.4 *Titles translated from Czech in UK and USA in a given year*. This information coincides with what can be found in 2.3.2.2 *The Czech Lands as the West Discarded* about the literature which is being translated into English: the body of literature composes mostly of literature of the Second World War and Cold War. This is reflected as well in the names of Czech writers most translated into English.

The tables which explore the state of published translations in USA and UK serve as evidence of the Anglo-American publishing industry's strong Eurocentric bias, as well as its favouritism of English-written literature.

Despite their differences and factual inequality the Czech and Indian publishing markets have one thing in common. They are all dealing with translation of minority languages in a globalised anglocentric world. On this level I find theories of post-colonial translation applicable to languages of small European nations which historically (although not now in most cases) dealt with European imperialism as well.

4. Conclusion

In this work I set out to explore the state of translations in publishing industry in the globalised world. Based on analysis of post-colonial translation theories and socio-historical context of small European languages (namely the Czech language) I examined how global socio-historical and political environment influence transfer of culture specific items in works of fiction.

The work comprised of two parts. The first part contained discussion of post-colonial translation theory in combination with Central European historical context. I focused on how north-western European colonial expansion affected and continues to affect the literature and languages of small European nations which have their own experience with imperialism of their more powerful European neighbours. The post-colonial theoreticians whose works I leaned most onto were Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Ganesh Devy. As for the Czech literary and historical context my main sources counted Milan Kundera's essays on languages and literatures of Central Europe in relation to the Western political and linguistic hegemonies, as well as works of the Czech sociologist Václav Bělohradský and the historian Miroslav Hroch.

In the second part of the thesis I presented analysis of data collected from UNESCO's Index Translatorium and additional sources like the organisation Svět knihy, Ltd. – Company of the Association of Czech Booksellers and Publishers. The analysis was focused mostly on the position of English in the world as a SL and Czech as a SL, the changes the Anglo-American and Czech publishing went through in the time period of 1979 – 2008, and details of translations from Czech published in UK and USA. Just as expected the analysis showed an imbalance between translation publishing in the Anglo-American literary market and the Czech market. The data reflect Anglo-American culture's rise to power in the centuries since the European discovery of America and beginnings of an era of colonialism.

Combining the information obtained from the theoretical and analytical parts of the thesis have shown that there are common spaces in which post-colonial translation theories meet small European languages. Based on these facts it is my belief that Czech translation theory (as well as other Central and Eastern European translation theories) can benefit from an approach to translation similar to the post-colonial approach.

In no way do I advocate indiscriminate application of strategies developed by theoreticians from the “Third World” countries to the Czech language as such practice seems rather culturally-appropriative. However, re-evaluating the Czech nation’s place in Europe and the world, while taking in account the social privileges the nation enjoys due to the Czech Republic’s status of a European country as opposed to the “Third World” nations, can lead to development of translation strategies which are more aware of the imbalances and inequalities in the global cultural and linguistic sphere of life. Taking the state of publishing industries of dominant TC into account, Czech translation strategies would become more focused in the result. The topic leaves room for more research in the area discussed in this work.

Shrnutí

Tato magisterská diplomová práce se zabývá vlivem socio-politického prostředí na překlad kulturně specifických prvků v literárních textech. Na základě analýzy post-koloniálních teorií překladu a socio-historického kontextu malých evropských jazyků (zvláště pak češtiny) v práci zkoumám změny ve světovém i regionálním vydavatelském průmyslu s ohledem na stav překladu cizích jazyků v dané zemi. Časový rozsah těchto změn je měřen v letech 1979 až 2008.

Práce je rozdělena do dvou částí, teoretické a analytické. První část se zabývá diskuzí post-koloniálních teorií překladu v kombinaci s historickým kontextem jazyků střední Evropy. Zaměřuji se na vliv severozápadních evropských jazyků (tj. jazyků dřívějších koloniálních mocností jako je angličtina, španělština, francouzština, němčina a v souvislosti s Českou republikou také ruština) na literaturu a jazyky malých evropských národů, které mají vlastní historickou zkušenost s útlakem ze strany imperiálních mocností.

V oblasti post-koloniální teorie překladu mým hlavním zdrojem byly práce indické překladatelky a teoretičky Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak a literárního kritika a aktivisty Ganeshe Devyho. Pro analýzu stavu češtiny ve světě jsem použila zejména eseje Milana Kundery napsané v letech 1984 a 2007, které mapují proměny situace českého jazyka a národa od dob Rakouska-Uherska, kdy čeština byla pouze regionálním jazykem etnické menšiny, po období komunismu v druhé polovině dvacátého století kdy byl národ pod silným vlivem ruštiny a Sovětského svazu. V období komunismu a Studené války se právě utvořil současný západní náhled na Českou republiku, a sice utvrzení v názoru, že jde o národ východní Evropy. Komentuji pak následky tohoto utvrzení na současný stav češtiny v západním (zejména britském a americkém) vydavatelském průmyslu.

V druhé, tj. analytické části diplomové práce se nachází výsledky sběru dat z databáze Index Translatorium organizace UNESCO. Tato databáze slouží k shromažďování informací o ročním počtu publikací v překladu v členských zemích a jako taková je jediná svého druhu. Na základě průzkumu vybraných jazyků a zemí jsem sestavila sérii tabulek, které přehledně zobrazují proměny překladatelských tendencí v anglo-americkém a českém (respektive i československém) vydavatelském průmyslu.

Výsledky zobrazené v závěrečné analýze jednoznačně prokázaly, že vliv bývalých koloniálních mocností na své bývalé kolonie a ostatní národy není věcí minulosti. Ve

výsledcích se odráží minulost Velké Británie jako koloniální mocnosti a vzestup Spojených států amerických k moci po skončení druhé světové války.

Druhá světová válka je také důležitým mezníkem pro průzkum britsko-českých vztahů, neboť to bylo právě v předvečer tohoto posledního celosvětového konfliktu, kdy došlo k neslavně známému obětování Československa nacistickému Německu. V části 2.3.2.2 *The Czech lands as the West discarded* (České země jako odvržený západ) porovnávám historický kontext Mnichovské dohody s praktikami, které Velká Británie prováděla na národech zemí, které obsadila, a docházím k tomu závěru, že stejně jako Adolf Hitler i Velká Británie byla tehdy ochotná zacházet se slovanskými národy jako s podřadnými, „neúplnými“ lidmi. Tento fakt se pak stává důležitým faktorem v hodnocení názorů anglo-amerického knižního trhu na českou literaturu.

Jak prokazují výsledky datové analýzy, Američané a Britové čtou českou literaturu v překladu do angličtiny převážně v případě, že jde o literaturu týkající se druhé světové války nebo komunismu v období Studené války. Zájem o českou literaturu v těchto anglicky mluvících zemích výrazně stoupl v letech po Sametové revoluci a pádu Železné opony. Tento přístup čtení zavání zájmem o senzace, o současné politické konflikty, který ovšem rapidně vymizí, jen co se politická scéna uklidní. Nabízí se zde srovnání se zájmem o bulvární tisk. Tento prchavý zájem má pak vliv na podobu povědomí anglických rodilých mluvčích o národech jako je Česká republika. Není pak divu, že velká část západního světa stále mluví o Československu jako o současné existující zemi.

Velkou část pozornosti v práci věnuji Venutiho teoriím o „neviditelnosti“ překladatele v textu a strategiím domestikace a exotizace v překladu kulturně specifických textů. Lawrence Venuti popisuje proces domestikace jako strategii, která víceméně ovládá anglo-americkou teorii překladu. V angličtině se důraz klade na plynulost textu, na odstraňování cizích prvků, které by čtenářovi mohly působit potíže při čtení. Tím pádem se velké množství textů, které jsou výrazně kulturně specifické, k anglicky mluvícímu čtenáři ani nedostane, protože je nakladatelství buď vůbec nezvažuje jako reálnou možnost publikace nebo je zvaží a následně zavrhne.

Podle Venutiho musí být tedy veškerá překladatelská činnost v případech překladu z menšinových kultur do kultur dominantních zahájena kritickou evaluací vztahů mezi dvěma danými kulturami. Pouhá znalost kultury výchozího jazyka není dostačující, neboť neodráží politickou a sociální realitu ve vztahu výchozího a cílového jazyka. Z tohoto

důvodu je pro překlad z češtiny do angličtiny relevantní zevrubná znalost vztahů České republiky s Velkou Británií a Spojenými státy, jako výše zmíněná Mnichovská dohoda nebo skutečnost, že Česká republika je západem považována za zemi východní Evropy.

Zajímavým rozdílem v přístupu k překladu kulturně specifických textů mezi západní tradicí a post-koloniální teorií překladu je vztah překladatele k jazyku. Gayatri Spivak a Pierre Legrand s jazykem zacházejí jako se živou entitou, kdežto například Peter Newmark odděluje jazyk od kultury a označuje jej za „depozitář kultury“. Spivak tvrdí, že člověk je připraven k překladu děl v cizím jazyce teprve, když začne daný jazyk používat v osobním životě a vytvoří si k němu intimní vztah. Spivak zdůrazňuje, že překladatel musí mít úzký vztah k výchozímu jazyku a textu, a že právě tato láska k danému jazyku může vést k úspěšnému překladu. Pierre Legrand se k překladu staví podobně: pro výchozí a cílový jazyk používá metaforu hosta a hostitele. Tato metafora názorně ukazuje, jak zranitelný jazyk je. Podle Legranda host (tj. výchozí jazyk) důvěřuje svému hostiteli (tj. cílovému jazyku), že se o něj dobře postará, a hostitel se zase uvolí přizpůsobit se svému hostu, aby se ten cítil vítán.

V závěru diplomové práce hodnotím vliv eurocentrismu a anglocentrismu na vydavatelský průmysl a jak se ten odráží v západní překladatelské tradici. Na základě získaných a zanalyzovaných informací usuzuji, že post-koloniální tradice překladu nabízí styčné body pro překlad malých evropských jazyků. Varuji před nebezpečím aplikace post-koloniálních přístupů na evropské jazyky přímo, neboť hrozí riziko kulturního přisvojování, tj. rasistická praktika vykrádání menšinových kultur, které jsou ve vztahu k bělošské/západní většině v nevýhodě. Namísto toho navrhuji, že pro lepší a kulturně citlivější překlad z češtiny do angličtiny (případně jiných velkých jazyků západního světa) je třeba následovat příkladu post-koloniální teorie a přehodnotit pozici České republiky a české kultury ve světě a při překladu brát v úvahu nerovnosti v globální sociální a lingvistické sféře. Nabízí se tak prostor k dalšímu výzkumu v této oblasti.

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Abstract

The thesis explores current trends in literary translation and how they relate to the publishing industry worldwide, with focus on Anglo-American publishing. It explores cultural content in translation and the problematic aspects of domestication approach in regards to the uneven distribution of social and cultural influence between languages of former colonial empires and minority languages. Works of post-colonial theory scholars together with historical context are used to examine the state of Czech language on the global literary market. The work is concluded by a data analysis of development of the translation market in regards to Czech and selected languages of former colonies.

Key words: translation, culture, culture-specific items, foreignization, domestication, cultural translation, post-colonial theory, minority languages, publishing industry

Anotace

Tato diplomová práce se zaměřuje na současné trendy v literárním překladu a jejich vztah ke světovému vydavatelskému průmyslu, obzvláště pak angloamerickému. Popisují v ní negativní dopad domestikační překladačské strategie na překlad menšinových kultur do jazyků bývalých koloniálních velmocí. Za použití průzkumu styčných bodů postkoloniálních teorií a socio-historického kontextu českého národa a jazyka analyzují pozici česky psané literatury na mezinárodním knižním trhu. Práce je zakončena analýzou vývoje překladu literárních děl psaných česky a jeho srovnáním s vývojem vybraných jazyků bývalých kolonií.

Klíčová slova: překlad, kultura, kulturně specifické prvky, exotizace, domestikace, postkoloniální teorie, menšinové jazyky, vydavatelský průmysl