

LEATHERSTOCKING TALES: 20th CENTURY SLOVENIAN TRANSLATIONS

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Abstract

This article examines Slovenian translations of James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* published from 1926 onwards. By analysing the domestication and foreignisation procedures, it uncovers how these translations testify to the narrowing of the gap between Slovenian and American cultures. The notes in particular are highlighted since they are revealing also about the importance of each translation for Slovenian cultural context.

INTRODUCTION

The first translation of the *Leatherstocking Tales* which took place at the threshold of the 20th century represents an important landmark in the bridging of the gaps between the culture of the source text and that of the targeted Slovenian readers.¹ The importance of these translations results primarily from three facts. First, James Fenimore Cooper was the first American author who was introduced to Slovenian readers with a whole series of novels. He therefore became the first widely known author from the New World. His status with Slovenian readers was to some extent similar to the status he gained in the United States of America where the creation of the "*Leatherstocking* saga cemented his position" (Reuben: 2008) as America's first great novelist. Second, these translations were of major importance for the Slovenian audience since they continued the familiarisation process started in the 1830s by the works of the Slovenian missionary Friderik Irenej Baraga. However, even though Baraga lived among the Ottawa and Ojibwa Indians and studied their culture, his perspective was that of an 'outsider'. Cooper, as an American, offered a new standpoint, that of an 'insider'. Hence the translations of his novels revived the interest in Native Americans and in those aspects of American reality which were linked with multicultural coexistence. In addition, despite the pronounced abridgement of the texts, these five translations, published in 1900 and 1901, widely

¹ The article "The first translations of *Leatherstocking Tales* in Slovenian" by Darja Mazi – Leskovar in *Acta Neophilologica*, 40, 1-2 (2007): 75–88 provides more detailed information on the earliest translations of this James F. Cooper's series.

expanded the range of themes which the later development of the fiction in the USA established as typically American. On the other hand, these adaptations convey only a few of the many ethical issues which are also a distinctive feature of *Leatherstocking Tales* and which were to be fully revealed to Slovenian readers only in the later translations of these novels.

The 20th century translations of *Leatherstocking Tales* will be analysed as to the “translation of culture which aims at making the experience of other peoples understandable” (Di Luzio, Guenther, Orletti 2001) to the target readers. The term culture in this context refers to the complex literary context in which the narrative is set, and also to the entire personal and social framework which determined the life of the author, James F. Cooper, and his source readership (idem.). Since throughout the 20th century an important section of American culture has been progressively losing its foreign connotation for Slovenian audiences, it is expected that the analysis of translations will show to what extent the translations testify to the changed relationship between foreignisation and domestication translation strategies. The former strategy refers to the keeping of the elements foreign to the target culture and the latter evokes the replacing of the unknown and strange with the elements familiar to target readers. It will be thus of particular interest to establish if the translations are increasingly faithful to the original texts and at the same time accessible for the contemporary readers.

THE 1926 TRANSLATION OF *THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS*

The Last of the Mohicans, the narrative in which Natanael Bumppo, the main hero of the *Leatherstocking Tales*, is called Hawkeye, presents the scout in his manhood. The most popular novel in the series with American readers thus proved to be the favourite also with the Slovenian audience. However, like the whole saga, *The Last of the Mohicans* also ranks among novels praised on the one hand and despised on the other. Among the authors who considered it a masterpiece are Alexander Dumas and Joseph Conrad. Opposing views are also held by literary critics; Denis Donoghue, for example, argues that he finds this novel, together with the others of this saga, “nearly unreadable” (Donoghue 220). However, the same critic quotes renowned literary figures who argued the opposite, thus in favour of his work. (Donoghue 219). Twenty century critics reconsidered in particular *The Last of the Mohicans* and uncovered “the book’s general artistic direction” (Merchant 87) which was exploited also by the film industry.

The 1926 translation of *The Last of the Mohicans* is titled *Zadnji Mohikanec* which is a literal translation of the English title. Hence, the first novelty is the deforeignisation of the previous title of the Slovenian translation which read *Poslednji Mohikanec Natanael Bumppo*². The omission of the hero’s name Natanael Bumppo brings the Slovenian title in line with the original and in addition it eliminates the unnecessary reinforcement of the foreignisation effect which is achieved already with the indication of the main hero’s ethnicity. The translator Alojz Benkovič introduced a subtitle, *Indijanska*

² The Slovenian term ‘poslednji’ is a synonym with ‘zadnji’ hence the 1900 and the 1926 translations of the English adjective ‘the last’, appearing in the title, perfectly correspond to the context of the title of this narrative.

povest iz leta 1757 (An Indian tale from the year 1757), which gives the temporal and spatial framework to the narrative. This subtitle may be considered as another proof of the translator's intention to prepare the prospective reader to tackle a narrative distant in place and remote in time.

The translation is an adaptation, which is stated on the title page. The term 'adaptation' has no negative connotation since closeness to the source text may not always assure the necessary balance between comprehensibility and foreignness. (Anderman and Rogers: 2003). However this translation of *The Last of the Mohicans* clearly shows that the foreignness of the source text for the targeted readers decreased considerably from the beginning of the century. One of the consequences of this new situation is the length of this translation: it is double the length of the 1900 translation. Notwithstanding, it is obvious from the Contents page, which opens the book, that the text is still significantly reduced from the original: the 33 chapters of the source text are rendered in 18 chapters of the translation. The new, adapted chapters are not introduced by quotations, which is understandable since the quotation introducing each of the original chapters refers to the content of that particular chapter. Another difference regarding the chapters is that the original chapters are only numbered, while those in the adaptation are numbered but in addition each has also a title. For example, the first chapter is entitled "Odhod" (Departure), the second "Izdajalec" (Traitor) and the third "Pribežališče" (Refuge). These titles may be viewed as a domestication device, uncovering the basic points of the plot of this frontier adventure story set in the context of the war. There are battles between English and French forces for the new territories, the constant rivalry between Indian tribes and the confrontation of combinations of the two races with other combinations. Hawkeye tries to bring two daughters of Munro, the commander of the English fortress, to a safe place while also helping the Mohicans in their fight with the Delawares. Nevertheless, the only protagonists mentioned in the titles of the chapters are Indians. The titles of the last two chapters, "Delavarsko maščevanje" (The Delawares' vengeance), and "Žalovanje" (Mourning), clearly predict the tragic end where the English father mourns one of his daughters and the Mohicans' chief Chingachgook deplores the loss of his only son Uncas, the last of the tribe.

The adaptation of the novel required blending of the main passages of the original chapters. For example, the first significant exchange between an Indian and a white man in the source text occurs in the third chapter, while in the Slovenian translation the dialogue between Hawkeye and Chingachgook is included in the second chapter. Nevertheless, despite the reductions, the target text contains several passages which are not needed for the mere development of the story. Even though this article deliberately bypasses an analysis of translation devices and concentrates exclusively on the presentation of foreignisation and domestication devices, the example below is given to illustrate that the adaptation enables the readers to share a few stylistic features of the source text. In the third chapter of the original, there is a longer speech in which Chingachgook meditates upon the fate of his tribe. Among others, he says, "Where are the blossoms of those summers! – fallen, one by one: so all of my family departed, each in his turn, to the land of spirits" (25). The translation includes the rhetorical question and the comparison which are translated as "Kje je cvetje preteklega poletja? Odpadli so cvetovi drugim za drugim. Tako so šli tudi moji sorodniki, drug za drugim v deželo

duhov“(11)³. The retranslation into English shows that the point is made and that the only difference in meaning occurs in the question, which in Slovenian asks about the blossom of the ‘last’ summer. Thus the plural noun ‘summers’ is put into the singular and, accordingly, ‘those’ is replaced by ‘last’.

Another important novelty of this translation is the introduction of notes which have a double function. Most perform a domestication role, however a longer note has another purpose since it refers to the specific Slovenian context. In line with the goals of this paper, I will give first the overview of the most important types of notes which testify to the domestication strategies applied in this translation.

On the first page the key information about historic facts which Cooper used for the setting of his novel is given in the form of a note. The readers are informed that the war between England and France on the American continent lasted from 1688 to 1763 and that the Independence of the USA was proclaimed in 1776. The note has been given an additional domestication stress, since it connects the year 1926, e.g. the year in which this translation was published, with the Declaration of independence. It reads, “150 years ago the USA proclaimed its independence”. The translator did not translate the two notes that Cooper wrote for his source American readers, the first explaining why several geographical names were in use for certain geographical entities and the second highlighting the issues related to the recognition and honour bestowed on individuals who fought wars in that period. Contrariwise, the Slovenian notes bring the explanation of the realia (Robinson: 222), i.e. of the words and phrases that are grounded in a specific culture and which are typical of the original and its target culture. In the case of *Leatherstocking Tales* this is the North American culture, including the Native Americans’ and the white Americans’ cultures. These terms are either translated with Slovenian words, like ‘blockhouse’ which became ‘kladara’, or with words which are a kind of adaptation of the terms used in the target culture. The latter are mostly related to Native American expressions which have been adopted by White Americans. They retain the foreignizing function despite the adaptation to the Slovenian alphabet. Hence, tomahawk is written as ‘tomahavk’, moccasins become ‘mokasine’ and a scalp appears as ‘skalp’. The pronunciation of the slovenized terms⁴ follows the Slovenian pronouncing pattern of the vowels and consonants in question. All these terms are also explained so that their meaning and function became obvious to the then average Slovenian reader. The explanation of the term ‘moccasins’ illustrates the explanation pattern applied in the novel. The term is translated as indicated above and explained in footnotes as “Indian boots with a zipper” (10). The word ‘mokasin’ entered the Slovenian language and so did most of the other translations of the realia encountered in this adaptation. They contributed to the extension of the zone of translatability between the Slovenian and English languages⁵ and thus to the expansion of the cultural space which is a prerequisite for the expansion of the dialogue between the two literatures and cultures, as Apter explains in the Introduction of her book *The Translation Zone* (Apter, 2006).

³ All translations of the Slovenian passages by the author of this article.

⁴ A few have been slovenized already in the first translation of *Leatherstocking Tales*.

⁵ These terms, however, did not appear exclusively in the translation of the narratives of James F. Cooper but also in the translations of other authors of the so called “western stories”. E. g. in Karl May’s *Eri* (1901) and in the later translations of Zane Grey.

In addition to the footnotes explaining historical and geographical data and the realia which were alien to the Slovenian culture, the translator introduced a footnote that refers to the Slovenian cultural history. He connected a specific, target culture commentary to the content of the third chapter of the source text. In the context of the original, Hawkeye and Chingachgook talk about their traditions and about the ways in which two cultures met. In the target text this section is included in the second chapter where it is introduced with the following words:

Potem ko sta se prijatelja že dolgo časa razgovarjala o dogodivščinah svoje dežele, je nazadnje rekel belokožec:**)

»Povej mi kaj o svojem rodu. Pravičen mož si med Indijanci. Ker sem prepričan, da si podedoval njih dobre lastnosti, potem so morali biti tvoji očetje pač pogumni vojščaki in modri možje« (10).⁶

The term “belokožec”/paleface which is marked with two asterisks, calls attention to the following footnote:

Slavnoznaní slovenski misijonar, škof Friderik Baraga, ki je 25 let živel med Indijanci (rodu Čipeva in Otava), je izdal leta 1843 pri Blasniku v Ljubljani molitveno knjigo za Indijance v čipevanskem jeziku. Iz nje navajam kot vzgled Češčena si Marijo: Kičitva Marie, gaganodamavihin, či vi mahkavendamiid-Kije – Manito, kaginig či mino – ijivebisiian”, to je: Češčena si Marija, milosti polna, Gospod je s teboj, blažena si med ženami. – Op. prel (10).⁷

The translator thus established a comparison between the Hawkeye’s attitude towards Indians and the standpoint of Frederick Baraga. The views of the literary hero who has been considered as the first mythic frontier individualist are hence compared to the positions defended by the Slovenian missionary, linguist, ethnology researcher and writer. Such a reminder of the facts related to Slovenian history has a strong domestication effect and it may be perceived as a kind of translator’s intervention aiming at convincing the reader that the white scout was right to use the respectful tone when talking to Chingachgook. The flashback view of the note from the perspective of the subsequent chapters and of the end of the narrative, additionally confirms that the note is not out of context. Particularly the closing paragraphs of the novel prove that both men share similar values. The last pages of the adaptation provide the wording revealing the spirit of brotherhood that unites the two representatives of the two races. Hawkeye can console his mourning friend by saying that “he who made us all, whatever may be our color or our gifts, has placed

⁶ After the two friends have talked for a long time about what had happened in their country, the paleface** finally said, “Tell me something about your tribe. You are a man of honour among Indians. Since I am convinced you have inherited positive traits from your forefathers, they surely must have been brave warriors and wise men” (My translation).

⁷ The famous Slovenian missionary, bishop Frederick Baraga, who lived for 25 years among the American Indians (with the Chippewa and Ottawa Indians), published a prayer book in Chippewa in 1843 at the Blasnik printing house in Ljubljana. I quote the start of The Hail Mary, as an example: Kičitva Marie, gaganodamavihin, či vi mahkavendamiid Kije – Manito, kaginig či mono – ijivebisiian” which means: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. You are blessed among women – note of the translator (10). (My translation).

us to journey in the same path” (373) because they are united through a similar vision of life and death.

The footnote about Baraga is particularly significant since he was the one who put the Chippewa language in a written form. In the light of today’s endeavours to prevent the disappearances of languages, his contribution to world culture is invaluable. The fact that today Chippewa is used also in other media is the sign of vitality that was evoked also with Baraga’s linguistic work.⁸

THE 1960s TRANSLATIONS OF *LEATHERSTOCKING TALES*

The 1960s saw the translation of the entire *Leatherstocking* series, translated with the title *Usnjena nogavica*. In 1963, *Stezosledec ali morje sredi kopna* (*The Pathfinder or Inland Sea*) was the first to be published. In 1965 it was followed by *Prerija* (*The Prairie*). In 1966 *Lovec na jelene ali prvi bojni pohod* (*The Deerslayer or The First War*) was published. All these translations were the work of the same translator, Gojmir Kokol, therefore it suffices to present one of them in order to uncover the domestication and foreignisation strategies applied. Thus the application of the two translation strategies in the translation of *The Prairie* will be presented. The translator introduced *The Prairie* with the author’s introduction, though this was not the one which James F. Cooper wrote for the first publication of the novel (1827)⁹, but the one which accompanied the 1832 edition. It is the introduction that also accompanies the text of the 1964 Signet Classics edition. A good reason for the selection of this foreword is also that it discloses James F. Cooper’s vision of the *Leatherstocking Tales*. By learning from the author that *The Prairie*, *The Pioneers* and *The Last of the Mohicans* represent a unity within the larger entity, the translator is able to present the series as a whole and therefore more accessible for critical consideration. The domestication of the text, seen from the author’s standpoint, thus becomes possible.

On the other hand, the translator must have been aware that the average Slovenian reader could not be expected to be familiar with the geographical and historical facts which seem to play a relatively important role in the novel. Among these are particularly the ones related to the fictional setting. However, related to such a documentary background that appears to be used by James F. Cooper, it has to be stressed that despite the fact that contemporary perceptions of history allow us to see history also as a story¹⁰, the readers are expected to be aware of the borderlines between myth, history and literature. Even books which have been praised for historical accuracy remain fiction and “reinterpret the past” (Schwebel: 195). Thus *The Prairie* reinterprets the period in which the story evolving on multiple layers is set. The travelling of a group who would have been lost in the wild nature and massacred by the hostile Indians, had they not

⁸ Ojibwe—otherwise anglicized as Chippewa, Ojibwa or Ojibway and known to its own speakers as Anishinabe or Anishinaabemowin—is an Algonquian language spoken by 50,000 people in the northern United States and southern Canada. (<http://www.native-languages.org/ojibwe.htm>).

⁹ More information regarding this introduction can be found in the article “The first translations of *Leatherstocking Tales* in Slovenian” by Darja Mazi – Leskovar in *Acta Neophilologica*, 40, 1-2 (2007): 75–88.

¹⁰ Stressed in the contributions at the 2008 IBBY World Congress entitled “Stories in History – History in Stories”.

been helped by Natty and his Native American friends, is much more than a movement in space and time. Despite the many factual details related to geography, history and biology, this novel presents also a mythical journey, a journey inwards that is made by the characters.

This complete translation is characterised by three novelties. It inserts the literary quotations that introduce each chapter, it contains all the notes that James F. Cooper included into a text that was aiming at American source readers, and additionally it includes the notes that the translator considered to be helpful for the target Slovenian audience. The literary quotations in the translation keep the role they have in the original. Although the citations in the translation keep the role they were assigned in the original, that is, to trigger interest, some contribute to the domestication and others to the foreignisation of the translation. The ones taken from the literary sources which are well known to the educated Slovenian readership, as for instance, from Shakespeare's plays, have a domestication function. Conversely, the few whose authors are not generally known in Slovenian cultural context, reinforce the foreignizing effect.

James F. Cooper's footnotes reflect the author's expectations regarding the understanding of the novel's cultural context by a domestic audience, however, from the standpoint of the non-source readers they can be divided into two groups. The first group represents those notes which seem to be essential for the in-depth understanding of the narrative, regardless of the cultural background of the reader. The second type of annotations appears to address the cultural context of source readers that has hardly any connotation with the cultural framework of Non-American readership and, additionally, does not seem to be essential for the understanding of the narrative. Both types appear throughout the text. For example, in Chapter 1, Cooper incorporated three notes. The first addresses the issue of the naming of the river Mississippi and its importance, hence the geographical aspect that plays its role in the story. The second, clarifies the term 'New States' and the admission of member states in the American Union. The third one conveys the information about Colonel Boone, "the patriarch of Kentucky" (10). All three appear on page 10 of the original, published by Signet Classics in 1964. The first two footnotes may be ranked among those which may be worth considering since they deliver information that appears to be part of the general knowledge about the USA. The third one, on the contrary, may not be of particular interest for non-source readers, however, it does appear in the Slovenian translation. In the following chapters, Cooper explains only a few terms, among these rank the words 'trapper' and 'to plunder' that apparently were not generally known by the source readers.

The notes included by the translator can also be ranked in several categories. Besides those which are culturally marked there are others related more to the author's style, which is characterized by the frequent usage of latinized terms and technical expressions. This foreword is a perfect example of these two types of footnotes. First, it brings the explanation of the term 'alluvial' (5), which exists in Slovenian in the form of the word of Latin origin, and which has also a Slavic synonymous counterpart. The second footnote explains the word 'prairie' by giving the Slovenian translation first, i.e. *prerija*, and then follows a detailed explanation:

Prerija – za angleško *prairie*. Beseda, sposojena iz francoščine, ta pa jo je prevzela iz latinščine *pratium* (lat.) – travnik. Vulgarno latinsko *prataria*, starofrancosko *praerie*, dandanašnji torej *prairie* (Op. Prev.) (6)¹¹

Such a thorough etymological explanation presents the translator as a linguist who is aware of the importance of the meaning of terms for real cultural encounters of literary works. The translator's footnotes also involve the explanation of the many technical terms from the realms of zoology, botany, geology, for instance: *belua* (133), *ferae* (137), *ursus horridus* (137). In the context of discussions on natural sciences in Chapter 17, it presents very briefly the importance of the founder of the Liné classification: Linnaeus Caroulu – the Swedish botanist Linné (1700-1778). Then there are terms related to law and order, such as *compactum* (136) and ethics and religion, such as *profanation* (314). Among the cultural annotation that the translator considered necessary are also a few items related to European history, like the one presenting the importance of the Spanish king Ferdinand V (1452-1516), under whose flag Columbus 'discovered' America (330). Moreover, the translator did not only manage to render the humour that is based on the word-plays, puns and cultural context but also succeeded in 'explaining' the gist in the footnote, as it is the case with the term 'physical', in Chapter 17.

The translator's notes contribute to the domestication of the text so that expansion and clarification (explicitation) are well grounded (Hansen, Malmkyaer, Gile: 5). Without a further close analysis of the translation, which would undoubtedly be extremely interesting, it can be concluded that the 1965 *Prerija* is an important contribution to the literary encounters between Slovenian and American literatures. Even more, since the translations of the whole of the *Leatherstocking Tales* series follow a similar pattern, it can be claimed that the 1960s translations contribute significantly to the cultural encounters between the Slovenian literary audience and American culture.

THE 1970s TRANSLATIONS

In the 1970s a new translation of the *Leatherstocking Tales* was published. Compared to the advances achieved in the 1960s, the 1973 translation presents a step backwards. The 1960s translations provided a balance between domestication and foreignisation and thus intercultural referencing between American and Slovenian traditions. Hence, they undoubtedly satisfied the expectations of various types of readers, also the most demanding ones. The 1970s translations, on the contrary, cannot satisfy the expectations of Slovenian readers, primarily because they are not based on the original but on the German adaptations of the originals. The Slovenian publisher decided for the adaptation done by Fritz Steuben and published by Herder KG Freiburg.

It is not the content and the spirit of the texts that are to be questioned, even though the original texts are considerably reduced to a third of the original length, but what surprises the reader are the references evoking German cultural sphere. For example, in the book *Naseljenci* (1973), which is the translation of the German book *Die Ansiedler*

¹¹ *Prairie* – English *prairie*. The word is borrowed from French which borrowed it from Latin: *pratium* (Lat.) – prairie. Vulgar Latin *prataria*; Old French *praerie*, consequently, modern *prairie*

(the adaptation of *The Pioneers*¹²), Slovenian readers can read that the narration took place in 'the state of New York which is approximately as large as the Federal Republic of Germany'¹³ (5). Such an adaptation of the original can be relevant only for German speaking readers and is rather irrelevant in the text addressing Slovenian readership. Another example of German culture oriented adaptation can be found in the translation of *Der letzte der Mohikaner* (the adaptation of *The Last of the Mohicans*) entitled in Slovenian *Zadnji Mohikanec* (1973). The opening sentence reads:

Medtem ko se je Friderik Veliki sedem let vojskoval za Šlezijo, so se onstran Atlantskega oceana borili za posest polovice zemeljske celine.

Translated into English:

While Frederick the Great was fighting for seven years for Schlesien, a battle for half the globe was taking place on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean (5).

James F. Cooper, on the contrary, started his narrative with the following sentence:

It was a feature peculiar to the colonial wars of North America that the toils and dangers of the wilderness were to be encountered before the adverse hosts could meet in murderous contact (1).

Such German references present a double foreignisation of the text and are therefore a hindrance to the reception of the narrative. Translation and the (re)production of culture go hand in hand; therefore domestication in the form of a target text-oriented approach is necessary, as it is obvious also from the contributions in *Translation studies* (Munday: 2002). Accordingly, the German adaptation may be good reading for the targeted readers rooted in the German tradition, especially since classics reduced to a size more accessible for non-demanding or non-mature readers tend to be read more than in the complete editions. Since translation theories claim that readers have the right to be offered translations that facilitate encounters with texts containing cultural signs foreign to domestic semiotic place, Slovenian audience cannot be expected to confront two foreign cultural contexts. Besides, the introduction of the German 'intermediary' causes an additional distortion of the original. If it is a truism that translating requires not only the knowledge of the source and target languages, but also a deep insight into the source and target cultures, the 1970 edition can be considered a failed attempt at international cooperation.

In the 1990s, the 1970s process was 'corrected' by another publisher. Individual books from the *Leatherstocking Tales* were edited anew. They are based on the 1960s translations which are in turn based on the American original. In 1993, *Lovec na Jelene ali prvi bojni pohod* (*The Deerslayer*) was published in the series "World Classics" which proves that James F. Cooper's work reached the place it deserves also in Slovenian.

¹² Even the original title is not given in the correct form: *The Pioneer* instead of *The Pioneers*.

¹³ Dogodki se odigravajo v državi New York, ki je približno tako velika kot Zvezna republika Nemčija.

CONCLUSION

The survey of translations of *Leatherstocking Tales* reveals that from the threshold of the 20th century to the last decade of the millennium, the Slovenian quality book market drew attention to James F. Cooper's work in 1926, and in the 1960s, 1970s and 1990s. The relative scarcity of publications of this American saga may appear surprising, but it should be seen in the larger socio-political framework which was marked by the First World War and the passage of Central Slovenian territory from the Austrian monarchy to the Old Yugoslavia; and later by the Second World War and the integration of Slovenia into the communist Yugoslavia. The period between the two wars was characterized by a relatively small number of translations from American literature, as is stated in the Slovenian Encyclopaedia¹⁴. The duration of the post-WWII period, marked by its anti-Americanism, may be one of the reasons why the translation of the entire text of the *Leatherstocking Tales* was not published before the 1960s. The 1970s abridged edition is the result of international cooperation between a Slovenian and German publisher. Although this edition may be visually more attractive due to its vividly coloured cover and smaller format, it cannot address the Slovenian audience properly since the adaptation is a translation of the German adaptation. Hence, it does not comply with the basic principle of translation requiring that the text be adapted to targeted readers. This translation can be considered as a proof that also in the history of translation of *Leathersocking Tales*, as elsewhere, new translations are not always synonymous with more reader friendly and technically better translated texts.

According with the goal set in the introduction, this article highlights only the domestication and foreignisation strategies and avoids a close analysis of other translation devices. Particular stress is set on the nature and function of footnotes which reveal the possibility of intercultural communication between Slovenian readers and the American author. The 1926 translation of *The Last of the Mohicans* is presented in detail since it involved a considerable extension of the text and the introduction of the cultural information aiming at the general public and younger readers. The translation testifies that the third decade of the twentieth century saw an important opening of Slovenian literary space to American classics. The 1926 edition does not particularly address younger readers..

The five narratives included in the saga were first translated in their integrity in the 1960s. The entire translations are a good proof that the zone of translatability between English and Slovenian expanded so much that the cultural repository stored in one of the most influential series in American literature could become also an integral part of the Slovenian literary environment (Stanovnik 18-19). These translations are a perfect example of the work of a translator who did not only transpose the narrative into another cultural environment without sacrificing the original, but also enriched the original text with several multi-disciplinary commentaries. The domestication was limited to the necessary minimum and translations have also become interesting reading for a demanding mature audience. Consequently, the need for a new abridged adaptation

¹⁴ Janez Stanonik, "Ameriško-slovenski odnosi. Kulturni odnosi", 69-73.

that could address a less demanding readership arose in the 1970s. However, the edition did not meet the expectations of the Slovenian reading public since it was a translation of the adaptation targeting German cultural sphere.

The Leatherstocking Tales may have lost their topicality but the translation of the series remains important not only for Slovenian literary lore but also for Slovenian cultural history. Each of the translations repositioned the subject of Native Americans, so intrinsically linked with American history, even though not mirroring it more than can be expected from literature. All translations make it possible to reconsider the Slovenian involvement with the history of the USA, and particularly that of Native Americans. The translations of *Leatherstocking Tales* may thus be considered as “a means of rendering self-knowledge foreign to itself” (Apter 6). It can also be seen as a way of taking Slovenian readers out of the “comfort zone of national space” (Apter 6) where certain facts related to the cultural history of the nation have been evaluated according to the “pre-given domestic arrangements” (Apter 6). In this light the 1990s edition of *Leatherstocking Tales*, based on the 1960s translations, can also be seen. The fact that the novel *Lovec na Jelene ali prvi bojni pohod (The Deerslayer)* (1993) was published in the series called “World Classics” proves that *Leatherstocking Tales* can powerfully address the contemporary audience. It furthermore demonstrates that the series has been acknowledged as deserving to be placed among canonical works in Slovenian cultural context, as well as in an American context, even though today the books are read particularly by young readers.

Despite the fact that the start of the 21st century was not marked by any new edition of *Leatherstocking Tales*, the interest in American Indians was considerably revived in the year 2007, when Slovenski etnografski muzej (The Slovene Ethnographic Museum in Ljubljana) organized the Edward S. Curtis’ photographic exhibition of North American Indians. The event was of particular importance also from the point of view of national cultural history, due to the presentation of Frederick Baraga’s collection of objects from North America in its most ‘natural’ context. Baraga’s collection is entitled *Kabinet čudes (Cabinet of Curiosities)* since it was called so at the time when the museum artefacts were sent by Baraga to the Museum of the Province of Carniola in 1836. The collection comprises handicrafts, household equipment, vessels and war-related items, all illustrating the objects mentioned by James F. Cooper in *Leatherstocking Tales*. These objects had been made and used by the inhabitants of the Ochipwe from the Lake Superior, one of the regions presented by the exhibition and also one of the literary settings in *Leatherstocking Tales*. From a literary standpoint the most interesting exhibits were Baraga’s books, among which also the book in Chippewa, mentioned in the 1926 translation of *The Last of the Mohicans*.

Since the exhibition was well covered by the media and aroused considerable public and expert attention, it is obvious that the interest for Native Americans is still alive¹⁵. Hence, the contemporary convergence of the media which allows the featuring of old issues from a 21st century perspective, may contribute to the revival of interest in

¹⁵ This was proven also on the occasion of the screening of a feature length documentary *The Strange Case of Bunny Weequod* (Drew Hayden Taylor, 2000) at the Media Institute of the University of Maribor in April 2009. The film in Chippewa was followed by an animated discussion about the image of Native Americans in Cooper’s novels and in contemporary films.

literary works featuring Native Americans. Among the latter, Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* rank particularly high.

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