

Form as Problem: Style, Literariness and Translation of High Fantasy Fiction

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**Form as Problem: Style, Literariness and Translation
of High Fantasy Fiction**

Master's Thesis

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Abstract

The thesis focuses on the question of style in the genre of high fantasy, which has been disregarded as plain or unimportant. It suggests that there is such a thing as literariness, that it is present in high fantasy fiction, and that it is manifested in the tight-knit relationship of form and content. Starting from the definitions of literariness and high fantasy, the formal structure of high fantasy is described with regards to how language is used to present content. An analysis of four high fantasy texts is conducted based on salient stylistic features, and how they reflect on themes, characters, and atmosphere of the novels. It is further suggested that literariness, being a specific relationship between form and content, is revealed in translation. The novels are compared to their Croatian translations with regards to style. It is maintained that while some features can be translated, translation of others significantly affects the overall sense of the novel. It is concluded that, due to the style of high fantasy being layered and purposeful, there is no justification for its being dismissed as poor. Furthermore, due to literariness being a result of the relationship between form and content, high fantasy is not less literary than other genres.

Key words: high fantasy, literariness, translation, style, form

Introduction

In the history of critical responses towards fantasy literature, and especially high fantasy as its subgenre, one can trace overtly negative, or at best apologetic undertones. Fantasy fiction now enjoys more respectful attitudes in academic circles than ever before. Whereas in the past it was dismissed on the account of being silly, escapist, and childish, today it is lauded for its potential to challenge dominant systems of meaning-making (Mandala 12). However, what is now respected are the thematic possibilities of the genre. The all-important plot is generally taken as an excuse for what is claimed to be poor style. The language of fantasy is deemed plain, “frivolous,” “weak or uninspiring” (Mandala 17, 19). But this can supposedly be tolerated since it covers important themes. Jane Mobley claims that in fantasy the style is secondary to material, and as such the aesthetic quality of it should be excused on account of it dealing with “large” themes, namely myth (Mobley 126). Samuel R. Delaney criticizes the sub-genre of sword-and-sorcery for its “adjective-heavy, exclamatory diction that mingles myriad archaisms with other syntactical distortions meant to signal the antique: the essence of the pulps” (Delaney 62). While the style of individual literary works may in fact be poor, this is not the universal truth for any literary genre. Claiming that the style of an entire genre is poor in quality, that there is only a small number of exceptions which then transcend the limits of the genre, is questionable. Another problematic presumption of a large number of discussions on fantasy is that subject matter exists separately from the style in which it is rendered. Even positive views of fantasy literature, such as those of Kathryn Hume (1984) and Brian Attebery (2014), tend to regard language as secondary and focus on discussing theme¹. The aim of this paper is to test the premise that content cannot be separated from form on the example of high fantasy. It will be discussed how certain stylistic features of the genre build the narrated world, portray characters, and propel plot. The third, connected assumption to be examined is the unliterariness, or lack of literary merit, of high fantasy fiction, which is inherent in the distinction between *genre fiction* and *literary fiction*. Literary fiction is generally understood as fiction in which style has higher importance, is more elegant, in which language may be more obscure, in which the focus is on the character rather than plot, and there is more description than dialogue; in general, the style is more “elegant,” “lyrical,” and “layered” (Saricks 128). The presumption that the style of high fantasy fiction is not important or

¹ For a more detailed overview of critical responses towards fantasy literature, see the introduction to Susan Mandala’s *Language in Science Fiction and Fantasy: The Question of Style* (2010).

layered will be examined on a number of stylistic features from four different works. Based on the definition of literariness, it will be suggested that works of high fantasy do have literary merit, insofar as their form and content cannot be treated in isolation. The premise that form and content cannot be treated separately will be tested further by examining translations of high fantasy works. Of major importance is not to shift the conversation from content to form, but to explain how the two converge into a work of literature. This shall be done on the example of high fantasy for the following reasons: first, high fantasy is treated as a highly formulaic, plot-driven example of genre fiction, and thus a polar opposite of literary fiction; second, as mentioned, fantasy as a genre has continuously been under attack or dismissed for poor style. The aim is to show how style works in high fantasy, and how it makes the texts instances of literature.

The style of high fantasy will be analyzed in four novels written in English. They are specifically chosen for their mutual similarities and differences. They cover a range of genre possibilities, and as such provide a fruitful ground for an analysis of what can be done with the genre in terms of language. The first novel is *Elric of Melniboné* by Michael Moorcock, first published in 1972. The novel has seen many revisions; the one analyzed here is from the 1993 edition. The second is Philip Pullman's *The Golden Compass*, the first installment of *His Dark Materials* series, published in Great Britain under the title *Northern Lights* in 1995. This one is chosen for its structure, as well as for the fact there are currently two different Croatian translations in publication, which can then be compared. The third novel to be analyzed is *A Game of Thrones* by George R. R. Martin, from 1996, which has been published in multiple editions in Croatian. The fourth and final novel is *Gardens of the Moon* by Steven Erikson, first published in 1999. The first part of the *Malazan Book of the Fallen* series is chosen for its stylistic elements and for its not yet having a Croatian translation, so that conclusions drawn from the analysis of the other three may be tested.

The thesis is largely based on Susan Mandala's 2010 literary-linguistic study titled *The Language in Science Fiction and Fantasy: The Question of Style*. Mandala focuses on tracing salient stylistic features in what she calls secondary world fiction, and the function of said features in characterization, theme development, and evocation of atmosphere. She starts from the premise that style in secondary world fiction has been misunderstood and underrated, which is why scholarly attitudes toward it need to change. The definitions of style and the methodology for its analysis come from *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose* by Geoffrey N. Leech and Michael H. Short (1981). The authors list and explain a significant number of possibly salient stylistic features of a literary text, which has

proven a useful starting point for discussing style in fiction. Stylistic features of high fantasy are taken from Farah Mendlesohn's *Rhetorics of Fantasy* (2008), one of the rare studies of fantastic texts which emphasizes the importance of form and language. The concept of literariness is taken from the Formalist theory of such scholars as Roman Jakobson, Yury Tynyanov, and others. The analysis of translations is based on Antoine Berman's theory of language deformations. His theory is relevant for the degree of attention it accords to the language used in prose, and for addressing the relations between form and content.

Key concepts

1. Literariness of high fantasy fiction

The concept of literariness was first introduced by the Russian Formalists, namely Roman Jakobson and Viktor Shklovsky, who advocated what they considered to be a more scientific study of literature. Jakobson claims that, instead of wasting their time on thematic, social, and aesthetic aspects of literary works, literary scholars should primarily concern themselves with, and focus their efforts on, "the uses and justification of device" (Jakobson 179). A device is here understood as a special way of giving form to particular content. In the focus of academic research should be the very relationship between form and content. What matters is not *what* a given work deals with, but *how* (with what devices) does it go about doing it. Yury Tynyanov mentions constructional functions of elements, which refer to "the interrelationship of each element with every other in a literary work and with the whole literary system" (Tynyanov, *Evolution* 68). A phenomenon is considered literary or extraliterary with regard to its function in the overall structure of the work. In the first chapter of his *Theory of Prose*, titled "Art as Device," Shklovsky has argued that an artistic quality, in this case literary, is a direct result of the mode of perception of the work; artistic works are "created by special devices whose purpose is to see to it that these artifacts are interpreted artistically as much as possible" (Shklovsky 2). This means that works of literature draw attention to their very existence as an art form. In literary works, greater attention is awarded to the very construction; sound and meaning are more tightly knit than in other types of discourse (Jakobson 178), and they both contribute equally to the overall sense of the work. A literary work is one in which the reader is aware of its form. This palpability of form is a result of special devices which force the reader to perceive and experience form (Ejxenbaum 13). Literary periods replace one another by changes brought about so as to make the form strange, obvious to the reader, when its overtness is lost due to overexposure. The Formalists have termed this phenomenon defamiliarization (Ejxenbaum 13): effacing and making strange

what the senses have ceased to consciously experience. Shklovsky states that “[b]y ‘enstranging’ (*sic*) objects and complicating form, the device of art makes perception long and ‘laborious’” (Shklovsky 4). This estrangement is a process of making the form of the work prominent. A literary work is supposed to prolong perception, to make the reader aware of the form; when one way of doing that becomes commonplace, another pushes it in the background and becomes dominant. Old devices are put to new use, and given new constructive significance (Tynyanov, “Literary Fact” 35). When one way of presenting content becomes customary and thus ceases to demand special attention, the dominant changes and new forms take center place. Due to the temporal changes, literary “value” should be measured in the evolutionary context (Tynyanov, “Literary Fact” 67): what has literary merit in one particular period may not have it in another. To determine the literariness of a given work, one should turn to examining the functions of its constituent elements. They differ between epochs, across periods, even among genres.

In the Structuralist period, it has been determined that literariness is in fact a result of reading, and not an attribute of the text itself (Culler 113). There are certain conventions which a text must adhere to, and the (knowledgeable) reader must recognize in a work so as to read it as a piece of literature. Based on previous experience with said conventions, in which they have gained sufficient literary competence, the readers perceive particular devices as literary and evaluate them as such. In addition to the conventions, there is always innovation as well. Literariness is an effect realized differently in each and every text, upon each and every reading. It is a relationship of conventions and innovations, of the functions of particular textual elements. Each text partly fulfills, and partly diverts from reader expectations: it plays differently with the established conventions. Its literariness is a direct result of the said “play.” Thus, literariness is essentially the relationship between form and content. It is not an “element” which is present in some, and absent in other fictional works². It is a dynamic interrelationship between the material and its form of delivery. In this context, material and form are not opposing concepts, since they are both constructive materials of the text, and thus both formal (Tynyanov, “Literary Fact” 37). They are both building blocks of a literary work and cannot be extricated from one another. In order to shed light on a given work of literature, one should pay attention to the functions of literary devices within a text. Whether or not one includes the aspect of human perception of said devices, i.e., their recognition in the process of reading, may be a matter of perspective. However, to determine

² This is why the term *literary fiction*, as opposed to *genre fiction*, is problematic. All fiction is both literary and bound by genre conventions.

the literariness of a text, it is important to examine the work as a construct, and to bear in mind that the type of relationship between form and content which is considered literary is dynamic and changeable across time, periods, and genres. Not everything that was literature yesterday is literary today, and not everything that is literature today will still have literary merit tomorrow. What is constant is the fact that a literary work will always draw attention to its form, in one way or another. Any work of literature is “intentionally removed from the domain of automatized perception” (Shklovsky 12). It draws attention to itself. To determine the degree of success of a literary work, one should focus on the devices used to present content, and their function in the overall structure of the work. In the words of Jacques Derrida, there is no essence, no substance of literature: no element of discourse is literary in and of itself (Derrida, *Demure* 28). It is rather its function, a highly unstable and changeable effect, that may or may not make it literary. One of the aims of this paper is to show that, due to literariness being an effect, rather than an attribute, the genre of high fantasy should not be so easily dismissed on account of being non-literary. In the following chapters it will be explored whether there are devices associated with the high fantasy genre, along with those not specific for fantastic literature, but nevertheless employed in high fantasy fiction, which repeatedly and insistently draw attention to the formal aspects of a text and thus present the text as construct. It will be shown how tightly form and content are knit. Stylistic devices will be traced with consideration of their textual functions, and later explored with regards to translation. However, at the outset it is important to determine what kind of literary phenomenon high fantasy is.

2. Definition of high fantasy

The term *fantasy* does not have a fixed definition. In the introduction to their 1997 *Encyclopedia of Fantasy*, John Clute and John Grant have commented that fantasy has quite disparate theoretical connotations for different scholars (Clute and Grant viii). In fact, there are almost as many definitions of fantasy as there are critics who have tried to define it. The definition is largely dependent on what criteria one takes as fundamental. By some scholars, such as Farah Mendlesohn, *the fantastic* is understood as a mode of writing, while for others it is a literary genre. In the latter case, fantastic literature is usually distinguished from *fantasy*. The two differ in their attitudes toward the fantastic elements of the narrative. In fantastic literature³, the fantastic elements are treated as mysterious; there is a sense of ambiguity to

³ For one discussion on fantastic literature, see Tzvetan Todorov's *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1973).

their being real or imagined. At the core of the genre are hesitation and uncertainty in distinguishing the real from the unreal (Ziolkowski 125). Thus, certain short works of Edgar Allan Poe could function as an example. On the other hand, in fantasy, the fantastic elements constitute an acknowledged part of the narrated world and are not questioned in terms of their reality. The rest of the paper shall be concerned with fantasy proper, whose numerous definitions can provisionally be put into two classes, much like the definitions of the fantastic: those which treat fantasy as a distinct literary genre, and those which take it for a mode of writing that is not specific to one, but can be employed in any genre. As a result, one work may for one critic constitute a prime example of the genre, while another critic may disregard that same work entirely. Thus, C. S. Manlove takes for fantasy those works of fiction which evoke wonder in the reader and contain within them “a substantial and irreducible element of supernatural or impossible worlds, beings or objects with which the mortal characters in the story or the readers become on at least partly familiar terms” (Manlove 16-7). The supernatural or impossible that the protagonists and readers come across must not be easily explainable, as, for example, being only a dream. In this case, Lewis Carroll’s *Alice* books are not to be considered fantasy, since at the end of the story Alice’s adventures are revealed to be a dream (Manlove 21). Eric S. Rabkin also takes fantasy to be a distinct literary genre, namely one in which the fantastic predominates. However, his definition of the fantastic differs from Manlove’s, which in turn changes what constitutes fantasy literature. For Rabkin, the term *fantastic* denotes “a diametric reversal of the ground rules within a narrative world” (Rabkin 42). This reversal is recognized by the readers in the reactions of characters, the narratorial statements, and the very structure of the literary work (Rabkin 41). Fantasy thus becomes the genre “that makes consideration of fantastic reversal its very heart” (Rabkin 217). In light of Rabkin’s theory, the *Alice* books are not only examples of fantasy, but fantasy par excellence. On the other hand, Kathryn Hume takes fantasy to be not a genre, but a literary impulse opposed to the mimetic one, marked by deliberate departure from the everyday, and which can occur in any literary genre (Hume xii). However, she still observes the *Alice* books as effective fantasy (Hume 160). This genealogical quagmire makes it challenging for scholars to communicate precisely what literary phenomena they are dealing with. For the purpose of this paper, fantasy is understood as a distinct literary genre dealing with various occurrences at odds with what is consensually understood as reality, and in which the “realness” of the fantastic occurrences is not questioned. To this definition it may be added that of Farah Mendlesohn, for whom the fantastic is “an area of literature that is heavily dependent on the dialectic between author and reader for the construction of a sense of wonder” (Mendlesohn

xiii). As such, the fantastic is a mode, and fantasy the genre in which the mode predominates. One of its many forms is *high fantasy*, a subgenre whose stories are set in alternative worlds. The term suggests that there is such a thing as *low fantasy* on the other pole of the genre. The difference between them is a difference of setting, which brings into play a whole array of possibilities and impossibilities within their respective narrated worlds. Thus, low fantasy is set in what may be called the ordinary world, the world of everyday experience. The fantastic can already be part of it (but not considered “normal”), it can intrude upon it from another world, or the protagonists can be transported onto another world and encounter the fantastic while there (Hunt and Lenz 11). In a work of low fantasy, the world is as we know it, but the story is impossible (Clute and Grant viii). An example of low fantasy fiction may be J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* novels, in which the fantastic coexists with the “normal” in what readers recognize as the world of their reality. The exact location and time period in which the story takes place may differ from the location and point in history in which they are reading the story, but the setting is nevertheless recognizable as commonplace. In John Clute and John Grant’s *Encyclopedia*, under the entry of *high fantasy* the editors have put: “fantasies set in otherworlds, specifically secondary worlds, and which deal with matters affecting the destiny of those worlds” (Clute and Grant 466). In contrast to low fantasy, the world of high fantasy is separated from what we consider real; it is an alternative world in which the fantastic constitutes the norm. “The fantastic” here refers to “creatures or events [or other phenomena, such as atmosphere,] that cannot be explained scientifically or rationally according to our norms of what is real” (Zahorsky and Boyer 56). In a work of high fantasy, the world is fantastical, i.e. impossible, but the stories set in it are possible, only not on our terms (Clute and Grant viii). This is an *otherworld*, a world which is “impossible in terms of our normal understanding of the sciences and of history” and “self-coherent in terms of story,” meaning it exists in the reality of the story and is governed by its own rules (Clute and Grant 738). While the forms of otherworlds are multiple, one specific for high fantasy, and which determines its way of operating, is a *secondary world*. Coined by J. R. R. Tolkien, the term refers to autonomous worlds separate from consensual reality (Clute and Grant 847). What differentiates a secondary world from another form of otherworld is its being governed by a fixed rule system, as opposed to more random or inconsistent structure of other types of alternative worlds; it gives off an impression of completeness. In secondary worlds, the happenings are regarded as true when they are in accordance with their governing laws (Tolkien, “On Fairy-Stories” 36). This accordance, and consequently the truthfulness of the happenings, generates a sense of belief, which is of key importance for high fantasy fiction.

The crucial characteristic of secondary worlds is their self-coherence: their reality is governed by specific rules which are never arbitrary, and which the reader must adjust to in order to be part of the story. A secondary world can be believed in because it accords with its own laws. Being an otherworld, it delivers “arresting strangeness” (Zahorsky and Boyer 57), but this does not undermine its credibility. The possibility of acceptance of the ground rules of narrative is, as it shall be shown, largely dependent on the style in which the narrative is written, and it is of utmost importance for participation in a high fantasy text.

As a side note, in the publishing industry high fantasy is not always distinguished from *epic fantasy*. However, the two differ in the general framework. While the first refers to the setting, the second refers to the scope of the story. As Clute puts it, an epic fantasy tale deals with “the founding or definitive and lasting defense of a [land]” (Clute and Grant 319); thus, a high fantasy tale may be, but does not necessarily have to be epic.

Structure of high fantasy texts

The definitions given above may be useful to delineate the general plot of the works in question. However, plot is not the only defining aspect of a narrative. Every criterion mentioned in the definition cannot exist outside language. This is what makes literary works possible in the first place: language used in a certain style. Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short define style as a particular way of using language in a given context, for a particular purpose (Leech and Short 9). Among scholars of fantasy fiction, the stylistic aspects of high fantasy tend to be ignored, written off as mostly poor in quality, and, when the overall attitude towards fantasy is positive, excused for the sake of more important themes it touches upon (Mandala 16-9). What is more, in one of her essays on fantasy literature, Ursula K. Le Guin argues against what Leech and Short call the dualist approach to language (Leech and Short 13). Le Guin bemoans the fact that literary scholars in general tend to treat style as if it were “something added on to [a] book, like frosting on [a] cake” (Le Guin 90), when in fact the style is what makes a story that particular story. A literary work without its style is merely a synopsis of the plot (Le Guin 90). The potency of *what* is written depends on the *way* in which it is written. Style is here not meant only as a set of mannerisms of an author, but his or her voice and understanding of the world. Since fantasy relies heavily on an author’s imagined world, the importance of style is highlighted even more (Le Guin 91). J. R. R. Tolkien has also touched upon this in his essay “On Fairy-Stories,” maintaining that a successfully constructed, credible secondary world requires skill, and constitutes “storymaking in its primary and most potent mode” (Tolkien, “On Fairy-Stories” 45).

Secondary worlds merely foreground the fact that all narrative worlds, in all of literature, are constructed with words, and cannot exist outside language. In her study on the language of high fantasy and science fiction, Susan Mandala maintains that the believability of an alternative world rests on the style in which it is rendered (Mandala 31). She disagrees with the prevalent critical practice of disregarding style for the sake of plot, claiming that this has led to the negative attitude towards style in high fantasy and science fiction (Mandala 33). It is this attitude that may need revising, for while the style of a given text may indeed be poor or inadequate, this is by no means true for any genre in its entirety. Furthermore, assertions that a genre has literary merit only with regards to the themes it explores are equally questionable. As mentioned, one of the aims of this paper is to show that the overall style of a high fantasy narrative is more than suitable for what it is trying to achieve, and thus not poor, but highly effective.

In the context of style, it may be useful to look at the categorization of fantasy literature that Farah Mendlesohn proposed in her 2008 book *Rhetorics of Fantasy*. Mendlesohn has offered an alternative approach to differentiating between the fantastic subgenres. For a work of fantasy, it is crucial not only *where* it is set, but also *why* and *how* it is set there (Schlobin in Mendlesohn xiv). This is what her categorization is based upon. She does not provide a limiting taxonomy of the genre, but rather a toolkit for discussing its language. The “rhetorics” mentioned in the title refer to the way in which a fantasy narrative functions as a text. It is about the coexistence of implied author and implied reader as functions that make up a narrative, and about their interplay within a given text. Her “types” are authorial strategies and corresponding reader positions which the text demands for its full realization. They are derived through the questions of where the reader is positioned in relationship to the fantastic, how this position affects the language of the text, and how the language affects the construction of the fantastic (Mendlesohn xviii). It is argued that the reader must accept the rhetoric of a given text, demanded by the implied author, in order to comprehend its significance. The construction of belief for Mendlesohn is the product of joint efforts of author and reader (Mendlesohn xiii). The building up of a cohesive and functional narrative world demands a consensus between the two instances of literary communication; they both need to acknowledge and accept the rules, as well as understand the consequences of their breaking. In the forefront of Mendlesohn’s analysis is not the type of plot or character, but the literary techniques involved in the creation of a fantasy narrative. Thus, in the context of defining how a (sub)genre erects a narrative world, content gives precedence to style. Rather than content, the focus of the analysis is the form; or, more precisely, their mutual

dependence. The author offers four provisional categories of fantasy fiction: the portal-quest, the immersive, the intrusive, and the liminal. What sets them apart is how the fantastic enters the fictional world (Mendlesohn xiv). Liminal fantasy is connected to Tzvetan Todorov's understanding of the fantastic as evoking uncertainty in the reader. The fantastic is intrusive and disorientating⁴ (Mendlesohn xxiii). What causes disorientation is not the fantastic origins of the event in question, but the oddness of the situation; it is a matter of balancing at the very edge of belief (Mendlesohn xxiii). An example may be Neil Gaiman's short story "Chivalry," from the 1998 collection *Smoke and Mirrors*. In intrusion fantasy, the fantastic enters the everyday, it brings chaos into the organized normality, and it continues to evoke astonishment (Mendlesohn xxii). *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997) is one of the examples. The other two categories will be discussed in more detail below. Each category has its own set of stylistic demands. Authors may shift between them within the course of a single text but must then resort to corresponding literary techniques as well (Mendlesohn xv), whether they be aware of the change or not.

1. Immersive fantasy

Mendlesohn's category which is of most interest to the following discussion is *immersive fantasy*, as this is the category which concerns secondary worlds in and of themselves. They are structured in a way that heightens the illusion of depth, of existence of the world beyond what is physically written on paper. Mendlesohn argues that the sense of depth, which is crucial for the immersion of the reader into the narrative to work, is achieved, among other means, by tying the reader's view to a single perspective (Mendlesohn 83). The readers can see only what the characters see - what they do not is equally important, but the very fact that they do not see it is crucial for interpretation (Mendlesohn 72). When one is conditioned by a single worldview, there is always the question of what is not being said, or thought of, or explained, as well as of the attitude of the character towards what actually is said. Although some immersive tales, such as George R. R. Martin's *A Game of Thrones* and Steven Erikson's *Gardens of the Moon*, are narrated from multiple points of view, this is not contradictory to the single-perspective structure described above. If anything, this multiplicity of perspectives highlights the fact that the reader's view is restricted. The narratives do not shift from one perspective to another arbitrarily within and between passages, but are sectioned off into chapters or segments each of which has a single point-of-view character,

⁴ Thus, for Mendlesohn the fantastic is a principle, a mode of writing, of which hesitation is only one of possible manifestations.

often with contrasting ideas. Each offers only a glimpse of the big picture, which is to be deduced by the reader on the basis of what is said and what is not, what is seen and what is not, what is done and what is not.

The reader gathers impressions of the constructed world through the lenses of a point-of-view character who is a denizen of that world and, most importantly, familiar with the ground rules of existence. The fantastic world of immersive fantasy is assumed to be known and (up to a point) understood, both to the protagonist and to the reader. Its fantastic elements are not wondrous; on the contrary, they appear commonplace and familiar (Mendlesohn xxi), and thus seem real. This effect of familiarity is largely due to the literary techniques employed in the text. In immersive fantasy, the fantastic must not be questioned. The world acquires a sense of realism because the fantastic is taken as a given. For the characters, and consequently for the readers, it constitutes reality. It is as much a part of the intratextual world as the air we breathe is a part of ours. This does not mean the characters are impervious to it. However, when the fantastic elicits a response, the response is one of (dis)interest, rather than amazement (Irwin in Mendlesohn 59). In *Gardens of the Moon*, at the very beginning there is a scene in which a young boy and a military commander stand above a city in riot. They notice sorcerers and mages in the midst of it, but mention them only in passing, focusing rather on the tactics employed to suppress the riot (Erikson 5). Furthermore, twenty or so pages after there is the first mention of the Warrens, again an unexplained phenomenon, given as a casual remark by a sergeant (Erikson 29). The premodifiers *eerie* and *magical* are the only information the reader is provided with. While the adjective *magical* may be seen as explanatory, it does not really enhance the reader's understanding of the noun it modifies. What is more, *eerie* is not explanatory at all: it does not elaborate the meaning of the noun to the reader, but rather reflects the character's feelings with regards to the Warrens. The point-of-view character is the child of his or her world, and therefore does not need extensive elaborations of commonplace matters and explanatory interventions from the narrator in order to exist in it. For this reason, explanatory narrative is, in this category, reduced and redirected. The readers are not typically provided with lengthy expository passages, which they may need in other categories in order to get a grasp of their intratextual surroundings. They do not enter into the fantastical world but are assumed to already be part of it (Mendlesohn xx). Precisely due to this acceptance of the fantastic as a matter-of-fact element of the story, the world which the readers are invited to share becomes enveloped in the misleading veil of realism. Mendlesohn argues that immersive fantasy is "both the mirror of mimetic literature and its inner soul" (Mendlesohn 59). It puts to the fore the often-overlooked fact that all literature

constructs worlds (Mendlesohn 59), with words as building blocks, and narrative techniques as mortar.

Another key factor for building an immersive world is comprehensiveness. The world is structured purposefully, not arbitrarily, so that certain actions, or lack of them, lead to certain consequences. The world of immersive fantasy is “a coherent world, one that makes sense in its own terms, and within which the actors can predict the consequence of their actions on the world” (Mendlesohn 63). The readers’ ability of immersion largely depends on how successfully the coherence is achieved. The rules and principles governing the fantastical world cannot be arbitrary. In order for the heroes to be able to make sense of them, they need to be structured and comprehensible. When they know the rules, the heroes may choose to follow them, disregard, or rebel against them. Their choice, however, is not made out of ignorance, but is an informed decision based on personal principles. Among the plethora of characters that inhabit the world of Erikson’s *Gardens of the Moon*, each is an antagonist to the world as understood by someone else. For example, the Bridgeburners, when they begin to understand their unfavorable position in the Malazan Empire under the new empress, decide to disregard their orders and to continue working independently. They act against the way the Empress runs her empire. Even though the heroes are antagonists to the world, they are still *of* the world (Mendlesohn 66). What they do or fail to do has repercussions. This creates the impression of depth. The above-mentioned position of hero-as-antagonist is a way in which the world can be unfolded, its secrets laid bare, without overexposing it by questioning its fundamental structure. Although the heroes do question certain aspects of the world, they do not question what is happening, but rather the morality of it. Antagonism allows for questioning while staying immersed (Mendlesohn 67). The perspective of the point-of-view characters shapes the world for the reader; the characters do not focus on describing, but analyzing and interpreting what is experienced, what that means for them. In *A Game of Thrones*, in one of the first chapters told from the point of view of Jon Snow, Benjen Stark and Jon discuss Jon’s entering the Night’s Watch (Martin 53-5). It is in their going back and forth on whether Jon should join it and why that the vision of the Watch is presented for the reader. The question is not *what* is seen and heard and experienced, but *what that means*, what the sense of it is for the hero and for the reader, and whether it has to be precisely that way. Of course, the heroes’ stance on certain issues can change. They can change their take on certain aspects of the world, which may in turn require additional explanation of said aspects (Mendlesohn 70). When that happens, the explanations are tied to the perspective of the character, not given as comments from an omniscient narrator. To return to the example of

Jon and his service in the Night's Watch, in the above-mentioned chapter Jon is enthusiastic about it, and tries to convince his uncle to take him along. Two "Jon" chapters after, he is at the Wall, mulling over the unpleasant cold and the sheer size of the Wall itself, as well as his uncle leaving him to fend for himself, which he was unprepared for (Martin 178, 183). The descriptions of the Wall and the situation at Castle Black are part of Jon's pondering of his condition. The readers are not treated as passive audience, whom information needs to be passed on to but, being privy to the characters' thoughts, their focus is merely shifted to what has now become relevant.

The claim that the fantastic is taken for granted does not imply that it is never described. Since a narrative world can only be constructed with words, in order for the fantastic to indeed become part of the story, as any other of its elements, it must somehow be rendered. Yet the exact words used for description and the context in which it is described play the key roles in making it seem matter-of-fact. The flow of information is reversed: the vision comes first, elaboration later (Mendlesohn 112). An issue is first taken for granted and explained later, in a different context. At the onset of the narrative, there is little to no minute expositions of the fantastic. The supposed realism negates the need for explanation. In fact, the story often begins *in medias res*, thus allowing for the impression of depth, of an entire world with history and future, right from the start. Erikson has exaggerated this aspect of his stories by starting the plot in the midst of an ongoing war, framing the first book in the series as a found manuscript, and prefacing each chapter with (sometimes) dated epigraphs presented as quotations from various characters and/or presumably already existing texts. These techniques serve to heighten the supposed realism and underline the fact that the meaning of certain entities and happenings is to be deduced from their overall context. When given at the beginning, the descriptions of the fantastic resemble passing remarks more than elaborate definitions. Knowing the ground rules of the world they inhabit, the heroes do not need them. As the readers are restrained by the perspective of the protagonists, they are also deprived of detailed explanations. What they do get are glimpses tied to a specific perspective, little snippets which combined make a cohesive whole. The more elaborate explanations come at a later point, when the reader can already account for the fantastic, and they come in a context in which it would be justified for the character to take a deeper interest into the matter. This can be done in a number of ways: one is the already mentioned hero-as-antagonist, to which can be added the position of a stranger from another land, in which it makes sense for the character to muse on the workings of the world, and to dwell on its mode of existence. Thus, in *A Game of Thrones*, Catelyn Stark, herself a member of the Tully

family from Riverrun, compares the trees surrounding her home estate to the darker, more sinister woods around Winterfell, her husband's home (Martin 22). The context of her being a stranger allows for the more detailed description of Winterfell's godswood. Another way is what Mendlesohn calls "rational fantasy" (Mendlesohn 63), in which the hero for one reason or another has the need to engage with the world to uncover some of its deeper secrets. Erikson's Bridgeburners are required to dig deeper into the machinations of the Malazan Empire because they feel their lives are continuously threatened. In this context, some explanations of the Warrens, as well as certain relevant happenings from the Empire's history that are withheld at the beginning of the story, become warranted at a later point in the novel (Erikson 123-4). The third possibility is presenting the world in the stage of "thinning," connected to the antagonist position of the hero. Thinning is defined by Clute as "a fading away of beingness" manifested through loss of magic, dwindling away of gods, landscape transformation, and/or other fundamental changes (Clute and Grant 339). In *A Game of Thrones*, this aspect of the world is encompassed in the ubiquitous Stark saying "winter is coming"; the seasons are changing, there is some ominous stirring beyond the Wall, and an overall sense of dark forces approaching. The thinned world allows for its secrets to be spilled out; it becomes arguable for the character (Mendlesohn 65). The hero wonders at their relationship to and position in the world, thus conjuring it into life for the reader⁵. In all the above, the gaze of the reader is directed "farther up and farther in" (Mendlesohn 89), deeper into the cogwheels of the constructed world. It is the framing of the explanation that makes it immersive. Furthermore, the language in which is rendered what is considered normal in the extratextual world is often more elaborate, more lavish, more *baroque* than that of the fantastic. Mendlesohn calls this "synesthetic" language, one that "shuts out the distraction of reality with [its] noise" and does so by engaging all senses (Mendlesohn 80, 86). The following sentence from the beginning of *Gardens of the Moon* may be a suitable example: "The wind shifted again, making the iron demon groan on its perch – a smell of cool stone from the Hold itself" (Erikson 6). The verb *to groan* refers to sound, there is a visual impression of an edifice on a perch, the stone which it is made of is referred to in terms of both how it smells (*a smell*) and how it feels to the touch (*cool*). Thus, a single entity is referenced in terms of four senses. This helps to "close off" the fantastic world (Mendlesohn 86), to pull the reader deeper into the story. Successful immersion is entirely dependent on the language used for narration.

⁵ See again the above-mentioned example of Jon and his service in the Watch.

2. Portal-quest fantasy

Portal fantasy is another category that may concern secondary worlds, albeit in a different manner. While pure high fantasy narratives do not deal with the world of external reality, and therefore the protagonists do not need actual portals to travel between the primary and the secondary world, Mendlesohn claims that high fantasy texts of the *quest* type are in fact structured as portal fantasies. In quest fantasy, the hero, an average and inexperienced figure, leaves a known place of security and steps into the outside world in order to pursue a quest. Under counsel and guidance of wiser figures, he or she gradually becomes more experienced, and gains knowledge needed for the completion of the task (Senior 190). Unlike in the immersive fantasy, in the portal fantasy the world which the protagonists inhabit is not taken as a given. Both the characters and the readers enter it without knowing what fantastic matters await them once they become part of it; they are considered naïve (Mendlesohn 2). In Philip Pullman's *The Golden Compass*, Lyra is overtly characterized as such:

As for what experimental theology was, Lyra had no more idea than the urchins. She had formed the notion that it was concerned with magic, with the movements of the stars and planets, with tiny particles of matter, but that was guesswork, really. Probably the stars had dæmons just as humans did, and experimental theology involved talking to them. (Pullman 26)

The fantastic is met as something out of the protagonist's ordinary experience, and therefore needs background information. This newness of the fantastic is not conditioned by its entering from a different plane of existence, but rather its not being what the point-of-view characters are accustomed to (Mendlesohn 8). The heroes explore the world, gaining deeper understanding of its ground rules as they go. The world comes into being gradually, through what the heroes themselves see and experience, and through histories told by other, more knowledgeable characters (Mendlesohn 7), who are themselves rooted in the world they inhabit. In Michael Moorcock's *Elric of Melniboné*, Elric is repeatedly guided by the Chaos Gods and the Lords of the Elementals, who provide him with essential information on how to deal with his enemies, as well as what awaits him on his journey. The readers take the position of companions, of observers who are "dependent upon the protagonist for explanation and decoding"; the reader depends on the hero for interpretation of the situation (Mendlesohn 1, 8), and this interpretation is uncontestable (Mendlesohn 6), as it is made based on information given by figures of wisdom and authority. In portal fantasy, the fantastic must be accounted for. Much of the world has to be unveiled, described, historicized. Neither

the hero nor the reader is familiar with their surroundings, which is why the language must be highly descriptive. The same is true, Mendlesohn argues, for quest fantasies:

The portal fantasy is about entry, transition, and exploration, and much quest fantasy, for all we might initially assume that it is immersive (that is, fully in and of its world), adopts the structure and rhetorical strategies of the portal fantasy: it denies the taken for granted and positions both protagonist and reader as naïve. (Mendlesohn 2)

Thus, the crucial difference between the two types of high fantasy narratives, as conceptualized by Mendlesohn, is the attitude of the protagonist, and consequently the reader, towards the fantastic and their comprehension of the world around them, as well as the treatment of explanatory and descriptive passages, the need for which arises from the said attitude. Two better-known texts by J. R. R. Tolkien, which Mendlesohn also mentions, may exemplify the difference. *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-5), while set entirely in a secondary world, is a quest narrative structured as portal fantasy (Mendlesohn 2). In it, Frodo goes from the familiar Shire to the more fantastical “big wide world” in order to complete his quest of destroying the Ring, gradually changing his response to the surroundings. *The Silmarillion* (1977), on the other hand, is an immersive fantasy, due to its being “told from within the world” and being “about people who know their world” (Mendlesohn 2). While in immersive fantasy the protagonist and the reader are assumed to be of the world, familiar with its fantastic elements, and understanding of their implications, in portal fantasy, which the narrative structure of quest fantasies may be equaled to, both the protagonist and the reader gradually enter the fantastic, familiarize themselves with the world around them, and gain understanding through interaction with it; in immersive fantasy knowledge must be generated, but in portal-quest fantasy it is to be discovered (Mendlesohn 16). In immersive fantasy the world is already structured and cohesive. In portal-quest fantasy, as long as it is set in a full secondary world, the cohesion is equally important, if revealed more gradually. Since they both deal with “creating a satisfactory and entire otherworld” (Mendlesohn 30), the ways of worldbuilding of the two types, as it will be shown, may in some respects be similar, but are nevertheless different.

Martin’s *A Game of Thrones* and Erikson’s *Gardens of the Moon* are immersive fantasies, while Pullman’s *The Golden Compass* and Moorcock’s *Elric of Melniboné* belong to the portal-quest category. These specific titles are chosen deliberately. They contain relevant, but sufficiently diverse matter to base the analysis on. To achieve the same ends, Moorcock and Pullman have conceptualized their stories in a markedly different manner;

Martin's epic tale offers a variety of linguistic phenomena specific for high fantasy, and it has already been translated into Croatian; Erikson potentiates all that immersive fantasy is as a genre, and has not yet been translated. Choosing them is an attempt at presenting how diverse the formula of high fantasy may be when put to practice. What is more, while the same goes for all subcategories of fantasy, it is perhaps most clear on the example of the immersive that there should be no direct correlation between the presence of the fantastic and poor style, or, consequently, lack of literary merit. Due to their structure, immersive fantasies are paradoxically the most fantastic and the most "realist" forms of fantasy, since the fantastic is regarded as uncontestedly real. Mendlesohn claims that the point of constructing a world in immersive fantasy is "to create something that can be existed in" (Mendlesohn 71). They are supposed to evoke an illusion of reality, much like what is generally understood by the term *literary fiction*. The fantastic constitutes the very core of that reality. Therefore, the subgenre that is the most overtly fantastic is also the most similar to what is taken as its exact opposite. Furthermore, portal-quest fantasy is arguably the most discussed type of fantasy⁶, and on the basis of it the general readership may form the impression of the genre as a whole. This is why delving deeper into precisely these two types of fantasy literature may help to elucidate the point that there is no justification for regarding high fantasy as a genre less creditable than those which claim higher status in the literary canon.

Style analysis

The works chosen for analysis each have a distinct setting and atmosphere, brought about by different use of language. While all are set in a secondary world with fantastical elements, the worlds are constructed in a different style. In this context, the term *style* denotes "the linguistic characteristics of a particular text" (Leech and Short 11). Now that the theoretical framework has been established, the language as it is used in a given work may be analyzed in more depth, as it is precisely the language that shapes the plot, or the content, into a story. For the purpose of examining the language, it may be useful to turn to Leech and Short's systematization of possibly salient linguistic features of literary fiction. In their overview of style in English fiction works, the authors have proposed a list of textual and discursal elements of a work of literary fiction that may be used for various artistic purposes. Even though it is by no means complete, the list may act as a provisional guide for stylistic analysis of a work of fiction. As it is quite comprehensive and it neatly systematizes most of

⁶ See, for example, the numerous studies on Tolkien and C. S. Lewis.

the points discussed elsewhere in the study, the list provides a useful reference point for a stylistic analysis. The following passages on specific literary examples are largely based on the list, as well as other relevant points discussed in Leech and Short's study. They are not intended to be all-encompassing handbooks for each of the novels, but merely to exemplify, by identifying a number of key features, some ways in which a secondary world of high fantasy may be rendered in written language.

1. *Elric of Melniboné*

Michael Moorcock's *Elric of Melniboné* is set in the court of a pseudo-medieval empire. Its protagonist is the emperor himself, along with other high-born or high-ranking characters. One of the most prominent features of the text is the marked usage of archaic linguistic forms, to which the aristocratic setting owes a great portion of its plausibility. Geoffrey N. Leech defines archaic forms, or archaisms, as "words or constructions retained from an earlier period of the language but no longer in general use" (qtd. in Mandala 71). Their purpose in literature is to distance the portrayed world from the one which the reader considers real (Le Guin 85). Archaic forms are metonyms for the past: they are meant to suggest that the work in question belongs to the time when such forms were in everyday use (Sonmez 28). Since their purpose is not to pinpoint a specific time in human history, but merely to suggest "a time in the past," they are often chronologically contradictory (Sonmez 31), meaning not all of them belong to the same period. However, this does not detract from the effect they are supposed to evoke, which is "characteri[zing] the language as 'old'" (Sonmez 31). They are meant "to create the illusion of a living past" (Mandala 85). Archaisms are usually manifested at multiple textual levels: Mandala lists lexical, semantic, syntactic, and grammatical (Mandala 72), while Margaret Sonmez mentions discoursal and genre elements (Sonmez 29). In English, some more often used archaic forms are second person singular pronouns *thou* and *thee*, possessives *thy* and *thine*, verb inflections *-(e)st* and *-(e)th*, irregular verb forms, the modal auxiliary verb *must* used with the meaning of *may* or *might*, adverbials and demonstratives such as *hither*, *thence*, *yonder*, imperatives with stated subjects, as in *begone you creatures*, negative expressions without the auxiliary *do*, as in *speak not too hastily*, and others (Mandala 72-3). All of the listed examples occur in *Elric*. They appear along with other linguistic features that serve the purpose of distancing the textual from the extratextual world. Mandala argues that the texts that rely on archaic language to evoke an atmosphere of the past must choose the language carefully so as to achieve convincing difference, without the narrative becoming so distant as to be inaccessible (Mandala 85). This

is often done by varying the archaic forms with deviant clause patterns and/or formal style of contemporary English (Mendlesohn 85, 91). Features of formal style include complex sentence and clause structure, precise and/or technical vocabulary (Campbell et al. 172), elevated lexis and avoidance of contractions (Mandala 91). By using formal style, a text may be distanced from the contemporary world of the reader, as it is less immediate. Deviant clause patterns are various clause structures that differ from the norm, such as the occurrence of subjects in clause final position and their delay by abundant and complex modifiers (Mandala 85). Using these elements together achieves balance: the text does not become incomprehensible, which may happen with extensive usage of less familiar archaic forms. Syntactic deviations aid in challenging the reader, without the matter becoming inaccessible, while the formal style tones down the archaic (Mandala 94). All three elements are used in *Elric* to suggest a world of the past. Apart from their archaic quality, the sentences in *Elric* tend to be long and complex in structure. This is especially true for physical descriptions, as if the narrator were trying to capture every detail of the scene in a single moment. As it will be argued, such amassing of detail may enhance the sense of immediacy of the narrated world. In the opening chapter of the novel, said “immediacy of experience” is reinforced by the usage of the historic present, meaning the present tense referring to past events (Leech 31). In fiction writing, which is predominantly written in the past tense, the historic present is used for “dramatic heightening” (Leech 31). It reinforces the impression of immediacy, presenting a scene as if the reader were actually witnessing it. In *Elric of Melniboné*, it is used to identify key characters, social relations, setting, and the overall atmosphere of the subsequent narrative. As early as the second chapter, once the setting is established, the narratorial passages switch to past tense, and later do not deviate, except in direct speech. Overall, the presence of the narrator can be strongly felt throughout the novel. The third person omniscient narrator most often addresses the reader directly, rather than through words and thoughts of the characters. The vast majority of the story is described, instead of inferred from the context. Conversations between characters occur rarely, thus leaving less information to be inferred by the reader. Direct and free direct speech, literary devices in which there is little to no overt narratorial presence (Leech and Short 318, 322), are used sparingly. They are mostly reserved for exchanges between Elric and the figures of authority, who act as guides. In such cases, isolation occurs on the level of form, as well as content. So that the information crucial for the completion of the quest flows freely and uninterruptedly, such exchanges occur in isolated spaces: a cavern, a bare hall, a room emptied of other spectators, a sealed underground chamber. Moreover, in those examples the exchanges are given mostly in direct

or free direct speech, meaning the narratorial presence is also reduced. The speech of the guiding figures is informative and straightforward, leaving only enough unsaid to allow for the story to move forward. In other circumstances, indirect speech, indirect thought, and narrative reports of speech and thought acts, devices in which the narrator acts as interpreter (Leech and Short 318), are used more often. In the end, the narrative gives an overall impression of coherence and completion. In the translation section, a number of representative passages will be discussed in more detail, in order to explain how the form affects the content of the novel.

2. *The Golden Compass*

Another frequent element helping to construct secondary worlds in high fantasy narratives are neologisms. Described in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD) as new words or expressions, or new meanings of existing words, neologisms serve the same purpose as archaisms, namely distancing the portrayed world from the readers' own. They are not meant to be flowery decorations, but meaningful deviations from the ordinariness of everyday life. In a given narrative, they may be in or out of focus, depending on the type of narrative. Sometimes, the overall plot structure may be centered around them.

Phillip Pullman's *The Golden Compass* is the first installment in the *His Dark Materials* series. It is a quest fantasy revolving around a young protagonist named Lyra who, while on a mission to save her friend and find her father, gradually gains knowledge and understanding of the world(s) around her. Her surroundings range from the familiar Oxford to fantastical Lapland, from school corridors to skies above ice planes, from riverside playgrounds to backs of armored bears. As she learns more and more about the nature of Dust, the philosophical and theological driving force of the universe as given in the narrative, the reader learns with her. Both are (treated as) children who, in order to understand how the world around them functions, must be led and instructed by figures of higher authority. Lyra's world is constructed with marked usage of deviant lexical collocations, graphological deviation indicating strangeness, compounds, wordplay, and other strategies of neology. Interestingly, none deviate greatly from expressions in common usage, but are nevertheless sufficiently extraordinary to be picked up by the reader. The fact that the strangeness is reduced to a minimum has its justification in the setting. Lyra's immediate surroundings is Oxford, England. However, this is not the Oxford as we know it today, nor is it an entirely reimagined city with the same name. Lyra's Oxford and England are steampunk versions of their real-world counterparts. *Steampunk* is an aesthetic movement characterized by the usage

of Victorian-era materials and technology, such as brass, copper, wood, leather, cogs, wheels, hydraulics, and steam (Onion 139). Given that it is not meant to be a precise reconstruction, but a type of reimagining of the Western life in the nineteenth century, it can be marked by conspicuous anachronism, such as space travel in the Victorian era (Onion 141), or intertwined with fantastical elements, such as Dust in *The Golden Compass*. The zeppelins, steamboats, naphtha lamps, the alethiometer (or “the golden compass”), as well as power dynamics between clearly differentiated social ranks, are supposed to evoke a “familiar-yet-unfamiliar” world of nineteenth-century England. This is why the neologisms should not be too deviant; as such, they would not fit the overall atmosphere of the setting, and therefore may not be able to successfully conjure an alternative version of a familiar world. Thus, the neologisms used in *The Golden Compass* are subtle and vary between compounds, deviant collocations and spelling, and semantic changes of existing expressions, i.e. between lexical and semantic neologisms. Among the neologisms significant for the plot, there are: *alethiometer*, a clock-or-compass-like device which points to the truth; *gyptians*, a nomadic people living mostly on and by water; *Dust*, a type of elementary particle settling on conscious adults. The first is a compound, i.e. one word consisting of two elements (Plag 176); it consists of a root (alethio-) and a grammatical word (-meter). The second example is a variation of an existing word *Gypsies*, while *Dust* is a case of semantic change of a word in common usage. Some examples of deviant collocations used in the text are: *anbaric lights*, a type of lighting using electrical power; *projecting lantern*, a device used for showing pictures on a surface; *New Denmark*, a locality in the fictional world. Another case of semantic change is *daemon*, an animal-like companion of a human. The *Gobblers* is a play on words, derived from the *General Oblation Board*. All of the above-mentioned linguistic inventions serve the purpose of bringing about a structured, coherent world, aesthetically similar to a bygone era of the reader’s own. Examples will be analyzed later, with regards to translation.

Most of the story is told with Lyra, a child, as the point-of-view character. In addition, the narrative is of the quest type. Consequently, it is given in relatively simple syntax. There is little usage of sentence adverbs, and more of inferred connections; there is a preference for coordinating conjunctions; there is little deviation from the subject-verb-object structure. The narrator has the role of guide. Its presence is overt, palpable in many explanatory passages, such as the one in which the Master of Jordan College and the Librarian discuss Lord Asriel’s motives, introduced with a note from the narrator about their regular conferences (Pullman 22). The third chapter, “Lyra’s Jordan,” would not have been possible in immersive fantasy, as a great portion of it is the narrator’s portrayal of Lyra’s circumstances. The overall layout

of discursal elements is unmarked. Events are told in a presentational sequence, meaning that cause precedes effect, behavior is usually clearly motivated, later events are told only after those which preceded them in fictional time. In order to create some tension and to bring the story to a climax, this is slightly varied in the cases of Mrs. Coulter and Lord Asriel, whose motives are not revealed until further in the text. Despite this slight manipulation, the storyline is relatively easy to follow.

As stated previously, the world portrayed in *The Golden Compass* is one of sharply delineated social relations. This is visible not only in the characters' actions, but also in their manner of speech. The result is a marked and consistent variation of more formal and colloquial style. The discourse of most of the grown-up characters with academic, theological, or political ties is neither highly formal nor informal. However, the fact that there are groups of characters whose speech is markedly informal makes it more formal in comparison. Furthermore, in some instances the vocabulary used to refer to the same entities varies between the groups. Thus, *the Gobblers* of the children and the gyptians are *the Oblation Board* of the formally educated. For the sake of illuminating the differences between the ways of speech of the groups mentioned, it may be useful to examine passages containing larger portions of direct and free direct speech of said groups, which will be done in the translation section.

3. *A Game of Thrones*

The setting of *A Game of Thrones* is in a way similar to that of *Elric*. A large set of characters is of noble descent, residing in court, or otherwise in connection to the aristocracy. However, their relations, motivation, and courses of action, together with the language used to bring them to life, produce a different effect. In order for the immersion effect to work, the characters' way of speech is on many occasions overtly formal, indicated by certain linguistic choices which are to be discussed below. The plot involves court intrigue, the notions of honor and duty, familial relations, but it does so in a seemingly deeper and wider space. The world of Westeros is rich in localities, whose names reflect their geographical position, climate, or other characteristics. The characters are numerous, the map is vast, the descriptions are lavish. The setting is not meant to be a backdrop for a character's personal journey, but a place genuinely lived in. Proper names and titles are oftentimes descriptive. Such names and titles as *prince Aemon the Dragonknight*, *Barristan the Bold*, and *Ser Arthur Dayne, the Sword of the Morning*, provide a sense of untold history. They suggest there is an entire story behind them, waiting to be unfolded in the course of the narrative. They produce

depth, a sense of life lived, without overburdening the narrative with details of the past. The story begins *in medias res*, with personal relations already established, institutions of society firmly erected, individual, familial, and societal ways already being “of old.” Some of the names, such as *Greyjoy* or *Stark*, underlie certain personality traits of the characters, making them more prominent in the storyline. A number of proper names and titles, such as *Greyjoy* and *Dragonknight*, are compound words, which are otherwise a prominent stylistic feature of the text, as will be discussed further on. The characters and the landscape are intertwined by virtue of the name of the one referring to the other, such as *Stark* and *Winterfell*, *Snow* and *Winterfell (the North)*, *Flowers* and *Highgarden (the Reach)*. They make up one story, one world, which the reader is assumed to already be familiar with the workings of.

4. *Gardens of the Moon*

Stylistic features discussed with regards to specific titles, as given above, are in no way tied to a single context within the high fantasy genre. They can be employed in many ways and for various ends. In another literary instalment, the same stylistic feature may be more pronounced or less pronounced, have diverse undertones, and can produce entirely different effects. In *Gardens of the Moon*, many of the already discussed stylistic features come into play on multiple levels of the story, sometimes with similar, and other times with changed effects on the experience of reading. Some of the salient features of the novel are the narrator(s), toponyms and proper names, inserts, and the variation of speech styles.

Similarly as in *A Game of Thrones*, some toponyms and proper names are motivated by the characteristics of the entities they stand for. Some of the place names are descriptive in nature (*Fort by a Half*, *Dead Man’s Story*, *Exile...*), while proper names, and especially nicknames, may refer to a character’s personal feature (*Hood*, *Fiddler*, *Quick Ben*, *Tattersail*, *Dujek Onearm...*). Said features are not always easily discernible or explicitly mentioned, at least not in the first volume of the series. In *Gardens of the Moon*, rarely does a name get explicitly accounted for⁷. However, these exceptions are enough to direct the reader’s attention to the importance of names, and imply that other, unexplained ones may be similarly motivated.

Interjections and expletives occur on a regular basis in the speech of the characters, again for the sake of immersion. Their structure is often reminiscent of everyday expression from the readers’ world, such as “for Hood’s sake,” they are used consistently, and they occur

⁷ See, for example, the case of Dujek Onearm (Erikson 61).

in appropriate settings, such as in unbelievable, strenuous, or otherwise surprising situations. They contribute to the sense of familiarity, of recognizable human relationships and believable interactions.

The depth of the fictional world is further enhanced by metaphors and similes. A case in point may be the following simile: “The Barghast had attached his entire collection of charms, trinkets, and trophies to various parts of his burly body, looking like a bedecked leadwood tree during the Kanese Fete of the Scorpions” (Erikson 149). The simile consists of a topic, vehicle, simile marker and ground (Fishelov 5). The topic is the subject, in this case *the Barghast*. The vehicle is the analogous image, *a bedecked leadwood tree during the Kanese Fete of the Scorpions*. The marker is the preposition *like*, which indicates comparison. Lastly, the ground determines how the topic resembles the vehicle, or what features they have in common; in this case, they look similar. The simile cannot work if the vehicle is not a known phenomenon to the reader, since there would be no comparison to be made. In the above-quoted example, the reader is presumed to know what the leadwood tree and the Kanese Fete of the Scorpions in fact are. There are no explanations anywhere else in the novel, but the simile is still possible due to the immersive structure of the rest of the novel. The reader is treated as an inhabitant of the portrayed world, and as such is presumed to be familiar with its customs.

Where Moorcock’s *Elric* is monologic and narratorial, *Gardens of the Moon* is character- and dialogue-based. Significantly more space is given to exchanges between characters, often relayed in direct and free direct speech, from which the reader is to infer much information crucial for the development of the story. Every word a character utters carries meaning; his or her manner of speech provides information on the said character (Le Guin 83), which is to be inferred by the reader following narratorial clues. In *Gardens of the Moon*, variation of formal and less formal/informal style is used to aid in characterization. As it will be shown in the translation section, more formal and archaic expressions are used to suggest that a character has a past, has lived for a long time, and does not in truth belong to the here and now. Those characters maintain a certain loftiness and inaccessibility in relation to others. Less formal style, with numerous expletives and interjections, is part of exchanges between “small people,” men and women in the military ranks, on whose back the imperial strategy is carried out. One character in particular, Kruppe of Darujistan, has his own peculiar idiolect, his own speech habits, which prove important for how the character, and consequently the story as a whole, is understood by the reader. Throughout the novel, the fact that characters are not flesh-and-blood people but narrative functions, devices performing a

specific textual function, is put to the fore, challenging the reader to accept a particular way of reading the story. The very notion that what they are reading is a *story* is crucial.

5. Note on “plain” style

Not all salient stylistic features of a text are immediately recognizable as such. Not all of them are grand inventions and obvious deviations. When it comes to high fantasy, its style does not solely comprise of imaginary names, titles, and complex, flowery speech patterns. As Susan Mandala argues, much can be (and is) done with a seemingly “plain” style (Mandala 95). By digging a little deeper, and paying closer attention to the grammatic structure of a high fantasy text, one can uncover covert machinations which, combined with other linguistic features of the text, instill in the reader a particular willingness to believe in the story. Such patterns are not always obvious.

In his seminal essay “On Fairy-Stories”, J. R. R. Tolkien claims that a genuine fairy-story, one set in a secondary world, and which may thus be called a high fantasy narrative, has to be presented as *true* (Tolkien, “On Fairy-Stories” 19). That is, what is presented is treated as fact. It is an uncontested part of the narrated world. One of the ways in which it is possible to produce this “inner consistency of reality” (Tolkien, “On Fairy-Stories” 45) within a text that largely deals with imaginary entities is the deictic use of definite noun phrases. Deictic words refer to the situation in which the speaker is speaking (Biber et al. 456). A definite noun phrase is a phrase with a noun as the main element, and the article *the* as determiner (Biber et al. 67). The definite article refers to something that is already known to the speaker and the hearer, an element that needs no explanatory introduction in order to be understood what is meant by it. In high fantasy, especially in the immersive type, it may be used to help present an actual and credible secondary world. Another seemingly ordinary aspect of style which reinforces the credibility of the imaginary is the scant usage of modification (Mandala 101). Especially at the beginning of the narratives, the noun phrases in which the fantastic elements of the story occur may have relatively few modifiers, meaning they are quite bare. This strengthens the impression of ordinariness – what is already known does not need extensive elaboration. Examples of deictic usage of demonstrative pronouns and modification shall be discussed below, in the context of each of the texts analyzed.

Problem of translation

Form is essentially untranslatable. This conclusion can be drawn from decades of theorizing over literary translation. Since the early days of translation theory, there is talk of

separate treatment of form and content⁸. It now appears to be common knowledge that they coexist inextricably. The meaning of an utterance is derived from its physical inscription on a page. The body of the word carries semantic weight and cannot be overlooked for the sake of its sense. This is especially significant in the case of literary translation. One other reason to admit the form of high fantasy literary merit, and to acknowledge its status as (good? challenging? proper?) literature is its resistance to translation. The very fact that it is an instance of literature is what prevents it from being (fully) translatable in the first place. What is untranslatable in literature, no matter the genre, is the relationship between style, or the physical inscription, and meaning, or the referent. Since the concepts are inherently codependent, any attempt at translation is doomed to be faulty. One of the principal theses of the theoretical works of Jacques Derrida is that there is always a remnant, an aspect of the work that will not lend itself to transposition into another language, while paradoxically being the only aspect of the work that is in need of translation⁹. This is the element that makes a given work literary, and that ensures its individuality among the whole of literature.

Lawrence Venuti defines translation as “a process by which the chain of signifiers that constitutes the foreign text is replaced by a chain of signifiers in the translating language which the translator provides on the strength of an interpretation” (Venuti 13). Significations of the literary texts are always multiple; the translator merely chooses one among many, on the basis of their literary and social experience, while simultaneously eschewing certain structural, semantic, acoustic, and cultural features of the text. The plethora of semantic possibilities of a given literary text is necessarily reduced in translation. Furthermore, meaning is relational – it arises out of differences between signifiers and their interrelations (Venuti 13). A signifier carries meaning only in relation to other, potential signifiers in a chain of possibilities, to the other signifiers surrounding it in a text, as well as to various extratextual factors of the original context. Building on linguistic theory of Ferdinand de Saussure, Jacques Derrida proposes the idea of *différance* as a governing principle in signification. *Différance* is “the condition of possibility of meanings” (Davis 14). Derrida maintains that meaning is a result of difference: “every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refers to the other, to other concepts, by means of the systematic play of differences” (Derrida, “Différance” 11). A signifier has no signified concept in and of itself. It acquires it in relation to other signifiers, both present and possible in the infinite chain of signification. In the term *différance* it is suggested that meaning is always differed

⁸ See, for example, Eugene Nida's *Principles of Correspondence* (1964).

⁹ See *Glas* (1974), *Des Tours de Babel* (1985), *What Is a “Relevant” Translation?* (2001).

and deferred, always elusive. When a given signifier is replaced with another in translation, the chain of signification is broken. Relations are reordered, added on, erased. Plucked out of its original context, a signifier means something else. As it has been established, meaning is not “before or beyond language” (Davis 18). Here, again, form and matter are inextricable. Without the form, the language, the inscription, meaning is nonexistent. A text means what it means only the way it is written: every text is “an irreducibly singular performance with a meaning that effectuates from a systematic play of differences in a specific context” (Davis 21). Outside of said context, the signifiers making up the text lose their reference. Vladimir Nabokov claims there is no such thing as a “literal translation.” He maintains that translation is only exact reproduction of the entire text exactly the way it is written; all else is an imitation, adaptation, or parody (Nabokov 121). This all-encompassing transposition is, however, unattainable. In translation, the signifying potential of the text is altered and effaced. This is not to say that nothing in a literary text is translatable. While the singularity of the text is irreducible, it is not absolute, as that would make it utterly incomprehensible (Davis 22). Every text repeats some patterns recognizable to the reader, based on previous experience with language systems. Each and every piece of literature is encoded in language (a system the reader uses daily and is thus familiar with its rules and limitations) and genre (recognizable conventions the text must adhere to, disrupt, or in other ways put itself in relation to in order to be at all readable). However, at the same time, there is always an aspect undeniably singular, unrepeatable, and thus inextricable from its original context. Paradoxically, this is what denies, but at the same time demands translation. The singular, “the unfathomable, the mysterious, the poetic,” the non-informative (Benjamin 75) is the literary, the untranslatable. It is what makes the text sacred. A sacred text is an untranslatable text. Sacralization of it occurs when a translator admits his or her incapability of transposition of what the text requires to be transposed; it becomes sacred when it becomes literary, and it becomes literary when translation becomes a doomed venture (Derrida, *The Ear* 148). The sacredness of the text is beyond content, beyond form in the traditional sense. This “nucleus” of a literary work (Benjamin 79) is the physical quality of words in relation to their meaning in the overall context of the work. In translation, this relation is generally lost. The form always suffers. To use the metaphor proposed by Walter Benjamin, from being one with the content, as the skin is one with the fruit, the form becomes ornamental, more resembling a kingly robe enveloping its master (Benjamin 79). In a misguided attempt to retain meaning, or sense, form is regarded secondary. However, as discussed above, meaning depends on form and cannot be retained without it. In the words of Kathleen Davis, meaning is an effect of

language, not preexisting it, and thus cannot be taken out of it (Davis 14). This is why tampering with formal aspects of the work, or its style, which is inevitable in any translation, alters its meaning. The following sections will exemplify a number of alterations of form typical in translation of fictional prose and trace their occurrence in translations of the works analyzed earlier in this discussion. It will be suggested that by rearranging the formal structure of the novels, their meanings as texts have likewise been disrupted.

Building on the German translation practice in the Romantic period, French translation theorist Antoine Berman introduced the theory of translation as a trial *of* and *for* the foreign (Berman 241). A translation uproots the foreign work from its original context and transports it into an alien environment. In the new surroundings, the translation presents the foreign text by revealing its strangeness; it presents it as different, as foreign. At the same time, in the new linguistic environment that foreignness is put “on trial,” meaning it is under risk of being effaced and overpowered by the domestic linguistic forces. The risk is greater in literary works, in which language, or the form, is inextricably tied to meaning. Berman further argues that in translation the foreign should be identified as foreign, and not “naturalized” (Berman 242), i.e. subsumed under and obliterated by the domestic. Whether or not this obliteration should or should not happen is the question of the aim of translation. What is important, however, is that it does happen, and that it occurs in each and every translation. Tracing the process of naturalization in French translations, Berman detected a “series of tendencies or *forces*” (italics in the original) which form a “system of textual deformation that operates in every translation,” and which obliterates what is foreign in the text (Berman 242). Berman lists twelve deformations in total. Rationalization refers to the rearrangement of the original syntax, recomposing of the sequence of sentences and tenses with accordance to a specific discursive order, and other manipulations of syntactic elements. Clarification means making things clearer, the unfolding of what in the source text remains suggested. Expansion is semantically empty addition to the text, happening as the consequence of the first two tendencies. Ennoblement is making “clearer” sentences in order to uncover meaning. Qualitative impoverishment refers to the loss of the iconic aspect of words; their sound and its effect on meaning are changed. Quantitative impoverishment is lexical loss. Destruction of rhythms is a consequence of reworked punctuation and word order. Destruction of underlying networks of signification means erasure of certain meanings of the text, which happens with a change of signifiers. Destruction of linguistic patternings means altering the systematic employment of specific sentence types, tenses, subordinators, and other syntactic and lexical elements. Destruction of vernacular networks and their exoticization is an erasure or change

in significance of the multiple foreign vernaculars employed in a text. Destruction of expression and idioms happens with replacing idioms from the source with idioms from the target language. Effacement of the superimposition of languages refers to the changes in the relations between the various sociolects, idiolects and other languages in the source text (Berman 244-51). While Berman does call them “tendencies” at one point, and they can indeed seem as arbitrary decisions based on the translator’s preference, these deformations are inherent in all translation. The forces of deformation are an inescapable hurdle every translator faces. They are part of the translator’s being, determining the very desire to translate (Berman 242). As such, each of them may be predominant in translations of certain types of literary works, and less noticeable in others, they can be consciously potentiated in a given translation as part of a specific translation strategy, but they can never be eschewed entirely. Every translation, precisely because of its being a translation, necessarily suffers on the level of the signifier. Berman’s analysis is focused on the translations of prose works, whose language may appear less susceptible to deformations than that of poetry, with its rhythmical patterns and abundant polysemy. Berman claims this is not in fact so: novels are marked by a certain polylingualism (Berman 243), a network of intertwined languages which relate to one another. The seemingly amorphous, and yet tightly knit heterogeneous structure of the novel poses numerous challenges to translation. While deformations of language in poetry appear to be more obvious, those in prose works are present in equal measure. They merely operate on different, less immediate levels. Berman’s list is not extensive. Cases can be found in which what has happened to the language of the source text in translation cannot be described in terms of either of the twelve deformations. However, they are a useful starting point for bringing to the fore how form manipulates meaning in prose texts because they focus one’s attention on those lexical and syntactic elements which are mostly taken for granted. When the body, the form of the novel is put under close scrutiny, it is revealed not only how the form has been changed, but also how said changes affected the meaning, and how jarringly the sense of the work was altered.

1. *Elric od Melnibonéa*

The following five sentences, uttered by the narrator and two different characters, are representative of the style of *Elric of Melniboné*. The elements that may be considered archaic, deviant, or formal in style are italicized:

1. “*By magic potions and the chanting of runes, by rare herbs had her son been nurtured, his strength sustained artificially by every art known to the Sorcerer Kings of Melniboné.*”

(Moorcock 5)

1.a) “*Čarobnim napicima i zapijevanjem runa, rijetkim travama othranjen je njezin sin, a snaga mu je održavana umjetno, svim vještinama poznatima vješcima-kraljevima Melnibonéa.*” (Benini 16)

The example is what Leech and Short would call a periodic sentence (Leech and Short 225). It is a deviant sentence structure with anticipatory constituents, in this case two prepositional phrases expressing instrument (*by magic potions and the chanting of runes, by rare herbs*), followed by a discontinuous or interrupted verb phrase (*had been nurtured*), and a noun phrase (*her son*); the prepositional phrases function as adverbials, meaning clause elements that, among other functions, express the circumstances related to the clause (Biber et al. 354). Anticipatory constituents are dependent structures, i.e. structures that cannot stand on their own, that are placed before the main clause (Leech and Short 226). In a normal pattern, the subject (S) would come first, then the verb (V), and lastly the adverbial (A), which would go as follows: Her son (S) had been nurtured (V) by magic potions and the chanting of runes [and] by rare herbs (A). By placing the adverbial in the initial position, the sentence becomes more suspenseful. As it cannot be interpreted on its own, the anticipatory constituent has to be held in memory until the end of the main constituent in order for it to be comprehended, which creates tension in the reader (Leech and Short 226). This order of sentence elements reinforces the principle of end-focus that is part of English sentence structure, which refers to the fact that normal English sentences tend to reserve the final spot for the parts with most semantic weight, i.e. which carry most of the information (Leech and Short 224). By putting the main part of the clause at the end, the final element gains in significance, as it is needed for interpretation of the first, subordinate element. This way, not only does the sentence differ from the reader’s everyday language, thus aiding in distancing the intratextual world from the reader’s reality, but it also creates suspense on the syntactic level. The experience of reading becomes more complex by strategically reordering sentence elements.

A similar pattern with anticipatory constituents is maintained in the translation. The word order is marked: the sentence starts with an adverbial consisting of two phrases separated by a comma, which is followed by the verb, and the subject comes last. This differs from the unmarked, S-V-O word order of standard Croatian (Katičić 31). Thus, the syntax does aid in creating suspense. Furthermore, it is dissimilar with the everyday language, which

helps seal off the narrated world. However, in Croatian, instead of prepositions of instrument preceding the noun phrases, there are nouns in the instrumental case (*čarobnim napicima i zapijevanjem runa* for *by magic potions and the chanting of runes*, *rijetkim travama* for *by rare herbs*). As a result, the noun phrases appear to be less complex. Berman's deformation which plays the key role in this example is quantitative impoverishment; certain lexical elements (prepositions) have been lost in the translation. In this case, instrumentality could not have been rendered differently in standard Croatian. The language itself required a change in the syntactic structure. The verb phrase is kept continuous in translation (*othranjen je njezin sin* for *had her son been nurtured*), again slightly lessening the complexity of the sentence. The deformation employed is rationalization, as the order of sentence elements has been changed. However, it was not a necessary change, since there are ways to make the verb phrase discontinuous in standard Croatian as well. Overall, the anticipation effect is present, but in a somewhat lesser degree. In the second clause of the sentence, more changes have been made. A conjunction is added (*a*), the verb phrase is given with the auxiliary verb (*mu je održavana* for *sustained*), a comma is added between the adverbial of manner and adverbial of instrument (*umjetno, svim vještinama* for *artificially by every art*), the compound noun is rendered as a semi-compound, without capitalization and with a hyphen (*vješcima-kraljevima* for *the Sorcerer Kings*). There are multiple deformations at play here. The added conjunction is expansion, which slackens the rhythm of the novel; the added comma is a result of rationalization; the reworked compound means destruction of linguistic patternings took place; and the entire sentence suffers from ennoblement, as it is made to be "clearer" and closer to the standard. The result is a clause simultaneously more specific and less specific than the original one. On the one hand, what is initially left unsaid is elaborated on in translation, which may in fact be more in accordance with the novel's strategy of feeding the reader every little piece of information. On the other hand, from being a kind of their own, by rendering their name with a semi-compound the kings of Melniboné have turned into a mere subtype of kings. To sum up, the information given in the translation is the same, but the structure of their presentation appears slightly less complex.

2. "It was easy to imagine how men of the Young Kingdoms hated Melniboné and its inventions, *for* it did seem that the battle-barges belonged to an older, alien age, as they bore down *upon* the fleeing galleys now sighted on the horizon." (Moorcock 38)

2.a) “Bilo je lako zamisliti koliko ljudi iz Mlađih kraljevstava mrže Melniboné i njihove izume, jer doista se činilo kako bojne skele pripadaju nekom starijem, stranom dobu, dok su se obrušavale na galije u bijegu, na rubu obzora.” (Benini 50-1)

The above-quoted sentence is formal in style, which is visible in its use of prepositions and conjunctions. Conjunctions are function words that connect clauses, which are the main structural units of English sentences, with verb phrases at their core (Biber et al. 455-6). While some grammar books do not even list *for* as a conjunction (Collins Cobuild), others deem it literary, i.e. less frequent and reserved for written language (Eastwood 339). It can seldom be heard in everyday speech and therefore has a distinct formal quality. In the quoted sentence, *for* has the meaning of *because*. It is used in this sense consistently throughout the novel, in order to help establish the setting as archaic. The same is true for the preposition *upon*. Prepositions introduce prepositional phrases, which often function as adverbials, giving additional information about the verb (Eastwood 290). The preposition *upon* has the same meaning as *on*, of which it is a more formal variant (OALD). Together with the conjunction *for*, it elevates the sentence without resorting to any genuinely archaic forms.

In the Croatian translation, the formality of the original is lost. Using the terms of theoretician Eugene Nida¹⁰, *jer* is a formal equivalent of *for*, i.e. it corresponds to it in both form (a conjunction) and content (expressing reason). The same is true for *na* as the equivalent of *upon* (both prepositions meaning *on*). However, the style of the sentence in translation is neutral rather than formal. Croatian does not have more formal expressions which would signify the same concepts. *Jer* and *na* occur both in everyday, as well as in more formal discourse¹¹, and do not contribute to changes in style. *For* and *upon* appear regularly in the novel, contributing to its formality, which is significant for establishing the setting. In contrast, the Croatian equivalents maintain a neutral style, neither overtly formal nor informal. What has happened in this case is the destruction of expression. In addition, with the loss of formality, which plays an important role in characterization and establishing the setting, the underlying networks of signification have been erased. Consequently, the setting has lost part of its credibility.

3. “It will be better *thus, for* I cannot personally direct the barges into position.” (Moorcock 30)

¹⁰ From “Principles of Correspondence.” *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti, 2nd edition, Routledge, 2004, pp. 141-55

¹¹ They can easily be found both in online magazines, for example, and in theoretical literature.

3. a) “Tako će biti bolje, jer ne mogu osobno upravljati skelama dok zauzimaju položaje.”
(Benini 42)

Along with the already discussed conjunction *for*, the novel makes ample use of the adverb *thus*, both meaning *this way*, as in the above example, and as a linking adverb, connecting elements of discourse. What is more, other sentence adverbs, such as *therefore* and *moreover*, are frequently employed in the novel. Such linking words are abundant in archaic texts, while modern ones more often rely on inferred connections (Leech and Short 245). They subtly, yet effectively raise the degree of formality of the novel.

Thus is rendered in Croatian with the adverb *tako*. The degree of formality is lessened, especially since again the two lexemes which make the original sentence formal are neutral in translation. Again, this is a question of destruction of expression of the source text, which could not have been avoided.

4. “Straasha answers *thy* summons, mortal. [...] How may I *aid thee*, and, in aiding *thee*, aid myself?” (Moorcock 45)

4.a) “Straasha odgovara na tvoj poziv, smrtniče. [...] Kako ti mogu pomoći i, pomažući tebi, pomoći samome sebi?” (Benini 58)

The fact that *aid* is used instead of *help* in this specific context is significant. In neutral language, *aid* is typically used as a noun¹². It occurs as a verb more often in more formal contexts. The second person singular pronoun *thee* is the archaic form of the contemporary *you* when the pronoun functions as the object of the verb (OALD). *Thy* is its possessive form. The archaic form of the pronoun is not used as a mere pretense. Along with other elements of the narrative, it serves the purpose of evoking a world decidedly separate from the reader’s own. As other archaic expressions used in the text, it is sufficiently transparent not to hinder understanding of what is meant by the utterance, while at the same time it is known to be part of the vocabulary of older speech communities.

There is no equivalent of the signifier *aid* in Croatian which would similarly affect the degree of formality of the text. Thus, the destruction of expression is unavoidable. The verb *pomoći* is neither formal nor informal, and as such maintains the neutrality of the sentence. The archaic pronouns are rendered in standard, contemporary Croatian in translation. This is inevitable, as Croatian does not have equivalents of the same archaic quality. With the two languages having different paths of historical development, and different linguistic practices

¹² A search in Sketch Engine, English Web Corpus, brings examples such as *student aid*, *legal aid*, *first aid*...

in the present, such a gap is hardly surprising. However, the fact that in this particular case no equivalent can express the formal and archaic nature of the original carries substantial weight when it comes to characterization and novel structure. Certain lines of signification have been severely damaged. The character of Straasha speaks precisely in this manner because he is one of the ancients, one of the Lords of old. His manner of speech reflects his narrative function. He is one of Elric's guiding figures, an entity which possesses knowledge of his fate and the workings of the world. Both Elric and the readers trust his knowledge because he is rooted in the world he inhabits and carries its secrets. His ancientness and the status of an authoritative figure are reflected in his speech. All this is lost in the translation. The function of the character of Straasha in the quest fantasy, which relies on figures of authority to pass the knowledge on and guide the protagonist in making decisions, is understated. In the translation, his speech is in standard Croatian. He is uprooted from his world, so to speak, and made closer to the world of the readers. There is no distance between him and the readers, and between him and Elric. His authority is questionable, as it appears to have no plausible source. The knowledge he supposedly carries has no place, or time, of origin. As a consequence of his speech being neutral, rather than archaic and formal, the character of Straasha loses credibility.

The archaic lexis of the novel has significance for the believability of the setting. Archaicity contributes to the credibility of the characters' stiff, almost rehearsed behavior, their moral codes, and personal decisions. It makes the characters constituent parts of the narrative world. Translating *begone* as *odlazi*, *aye* as *da*, *shall* with the modal verb *ću* (from *htjeti*), which is necessary in this context in Croatian, separates the characters from the narrative world. They lose their initial soundness and become an unintegrated narrative element.

The following example demonstrates the characteristic sentence structure in the novel:

5. "The artist was tall and very thin, almost like a skeleton in his stained, white garments. His lips were thin, his eyes were slits, his fingers were thin, his hair was thin and the scalpel he held was thin, too, almost invisible save when it flashed in the light from the fire which erupted from a pit on the far side of the cavern." (Moorcock 24)

5.a) "Umjetnik je bio visok i vrlo mršav, skoro poput kostura, u umrljanoj bijeloj odjeći. Usne su mu bile tanke, oči izrezi, prsti su mu bili tanki, kosa mu je bila tanka, a i skalpel koji je držao bio je tanak, skoro nevidljiv osim kad bi bljesnuo na svjetlu vatre koja je sukljala iz grotla na suprotnom kraju špilje." (Benini 35)

The first sentence is made complex by introducing subordinate elements, namely two prepositional phrases as complements to the adjective *thin*: *almost like a skeleton* and *in his stained, white garments*. The prepositional phrases are themselves complex in structure; the first has the adverb *almost* modifying the head of the phrase, which is the preposition *like*, while the second has two adjectives, *stained* and *white*, acting as premodifiers in the noun phrase following the preposition *in*. The second sentence is a listing of four independent clauses separated by commas and one by the coordinating conjunction *and*. The final independent clause, starting with the noun phrase *the scalpel he held*, exhibits complexity on multiple levels, starting with the relative clause *he held* as a postmodifier in the noun phrase, and ending with the prepositional phrase *on the far side of the cavern*. This tangled structure is potentiated by formal (subject + verb + subject complement) and lexical repetition (*thin*).

In translation, the syntax is somewhat reworked. A comma is shifted (*in his stained, white garments* to *, u umrljanoj bijeloj odjeći*), which is a case of rationalization. One repetition is cut out (*his eyes were slits* to *oči izrezi*), which is an example of ennoblement. Because of the comma being in a different place, in the first sentence discursive pauses occur in different places. Separating the two prepositional phrases (the heads being the prepositions *like* and *in*) in the translation subtracts from the impression of everything being told at once, segmenting the sentence into parts of more moderate lengths. Cutting out the redundant parts in the second clause of the second sentence has a similar effect, providing the reader with a chance to take a breath before the onrush of the lengthy description that is to come. This is done in order not to overburden the reader, which is an ideal in the Croatian literary syntax (Katičić 163). The changes affect the rhythm of the sentences, subtly making the information presented more accessible to the reader by lessening the pressure to process everything at the same time. The same reworking of complex and unusually structured sentences occurs throughout the translation, as can be seen in the other examples. While it may seem unobtrusive and barely of any significance, it covertly but successfully changes how the information is perceived in the process of reading. The experience of reading sentences in which various elements have been piled up on top of each other in order to be “digested” simultaneously may be demanding. In *Elric*, the complexity is manifested on the structural level. The vocabulary is descriptive, specific, and fairly simple, while the frequent usage of subject and adverbial complements, prepositional phrases and other modifiers, as well as subordinate clauses, provides additional information. Here, the ubiquitous narratorial formula “show don’t tell” is disregarded. In building the world, not only does the narrator provide most of the details of the story, but it also appears as if he were trying to do it all at once.

However, this amassing of circumstantial detail has a function. The narrator's repeated "infodumps," as Mendlesohn would call them, and all the seemingly unimportant details that get thrown at the reader may in fact contribute to verisimilitude of the narrative. When trying to conjure a credible world, details may reflect the individuality of the experience, thus enhancing the realistic effect (Leech and Short 157). This way the experience may become more immediate for the reader. Reworking the syntactic structure in the translation bears on the impression of immediacy.

In the translation of *Elric of Melniboné*, archaicity, formal style, and syntactic complexity are the elements that make the setting, the characters, and the story believable. Their reworking in the translation changes the basic functioning of the novel, as its key elements no longer carry out the same function. The most common deformations employed in the translation are rationalization, ennoblement, destruction of expression, and destruction of underlying networks of signification. While rationalization and ennoblement are not always dictated by the language system itself, the other two are unavoidable. What is more, even if the former sometimes were not necessary, what their usage did to the meaning of the text may suggest that changing the form does indeed change the content, and consequently that the form in which the novel is written is not merely surface decoration.

Another proof for the importance of form in high fantasy may be found outside of its immediately obvious stylistic peculiarities, in the seemingly ordinary sentence elements. *Elric of Melniboné* is a quest fantasy, in which the setting and atmosphere are gradually established with the help of the narrator and other authoritative figures, who the protagonist encounters on his journey. The world is erected, and characters introduced, with heavily modified noun phrases: "From the tapering, beautiful head stare two slanting eyes, crimson and moody, and from the loose sleeves of his yellow gown emerge two slender hands, also the colour of bone, resting on each arm of a seat which has been carved from a single, massive ruby" (Moorcock 4). The numerous adjectives and relative clauses are intended to help the reader orient themselves in the world they are invited to enter. The indefinite article *a* introduces explanations needed for the story to progress, for the reader to get a feeling of gradually comprehending more and more of the world. Elric's throne is *a seat*; when she first enters the scene, his beloved, Cymoril, is *a young woman*; his armor, which has served many an emperor before him and is thus well known in the empire, is for the reader still *an armour which was forged by sorcery*. In translation, the abundant modification is retained. In the first chapter, the description of Elric's pale flesh and white hair is as detailed as in the source text: "Njegovo je meso boje izbljijedjele lubanje; a duga kosa koja mu leprša iza leđa mliječno je

bijela” (Benini 15). What cannot be transferred, however, is the effect of the indefinite article, which invites elaboration, as compared to the definite, which presents the phenomena as already known. The indefinite article signals the quest narrative, in which the workings of the world unfold gradually, while the definite article at the outset signals the immersive type, the world of which is taken as a given. The importance of the contrast will be elaborated further in the following section.

2. *Polarno svjetlo/Polarna svjetlost*

The most prominent aspects of style of *The Golden Compass* are neologisms, wordplay, differentiated sociolects, and degrees of formality. Not all neologisms have proven to be problematic in terms of translation. The compound functions in a similar way in the translations. It is the same in both: *aletiometar*. It has remained a compound. The spelling is adjusted to fit the Croatian alphabet, but both the first and the second component of the compound retained its connotations (aletio- as in *aletheia*, truth in Greek; -metar as a device for measuring (Hrvatski jezični portal, HJP)). Others are a bit more complex.

The signifier *dæmon* appears in the first sentence of the novel. It introduces the setting and the genre of the text. While at first glance it may seem as graphological deviation, the spelling with an *a* in English indicates a different signified: as opposed to an evil spirit, the signifier refers to a godlike creature from the Greek mythology (OALD). Thus, it is a case of semantic neology. In both Croatian translations, the spelling is retained. However, with different connotations. Since in Croatian the same spelling is used to denote both an evil spirit and a creature from Greek mythology (HJP), one is now talking of both semantic neologism and graphological deviation. The strangeness of the word is more pronounced in translation; it is doubled. In English, the strangeness resides only on one plane. In Croatian, there is also the grammatical problem of gendered nouns. Thus, another signifier must be used for the female *dæmons* (*dæmona* in Husić, *dæmonica* in Ott¹³). The degree of deviation may carry more weight in this novel than in some others, as it is essential for establishing the setting. The strangely familiar aspect of it is one of the strategies with which a quest fantasy can ensure identification of the reader with the protagonist. As previously argued, the reason why subtle neology is employed in the source text is for the familiar-yet-unfamiliar setting to appear genuine. In this particular case, taking into account the structure of the novel, adding to the strangeness subtracts from the overall plausibility of the story. Neither of Berman’s

¹³ Referring to the translations in terms of the translators’ surnames is not to suggest that this is the translators’ fault (it is a result of different language systems), but merely for their easy location in the *References* section.

deformations includes this type of addition, which is not strictly speaking semantic, but it does bring another layer to the sense the word has in the story.

The signifier *gyptians* is another one which may ring familiar to the reader of the source text. It is a play on the words *Gypsies* and *Egyptians*, an alternative name for the Romani people which is considered pejorative by some, and a reference to their presumed origin. A number of parallels may be drawn between the concepts the three signifiers denote. Both the *gyptians* and the *Gypsies* are known as nomadic peoples living in close proximity, yet in tightly knit communities separate from the major population. Many of their members speak the common language of the land they live in, but they also practice their own dialects. They have been known to be the subjects of prejudice, misconception, and mistreatment from other inhabitants of the lands they settled in. Naming the boat-people *gyptians* pulls the reader into the story, without making it overly strange. In the Husić translation, some of the parallels are lost. The people are called “Gipćani,” which has only one underlying meaning for the Croatian reader: *Egipćani*, the people of Egypt. This is a case of destruction of expression, insofar as the original term is reworked into Croatian, as well as of destruction of the underlying signification, as there is no connection to the Romani people. A significant number of neologisms are deliberately structured around certain elements from the reader’s world, which this particular translation tampers with. The double familiarity is reduced to a single connotation. The Ott translation has a different problem. In it, the people are named *Jeđupi*, which is a term actually used for the Romani in the Dalmatian region of Croatia and in Montenegro (Zagrebačka slavistička škola). The term *Jeđupi* cannot function as an equivalent of *gyptians* neither in formal nor dynamic sense because it is a name specific for a region, and only the familiar aspect of the source term is kept. There is no strangeness, only familiarity. Again, the network of signification is cut short. The formal Croatian equivalent of the word *Gypsies* is *Cigani*. As such, in order for the same degrees of strangeness and familiarity to be retained, a deviant spelling of *Cigani* could have been used in translation. However, the names *Gypsies* and *Cigani* have different social and political connotations. While some do consider *Gypsies* to be derogative, the same term is often used in English in the context of bohemianism, freedom, and unpredictability. The Croatian term, however, is used almost solely in the derogative sense, which may be why it is shunned in both translations. Therefore, whichever term one uses, something will be missing, or added, in the translation.

Dust, the central concept in the series, is in both translations rendered as *Prah*. The term generally functions for the story, with minor issues in some parts of the narrative. Depending on the context, *dust* can have two equivalents: *prah* and *prašina*. *Prah* denotes the

tiniest particles of something solid that was ground or, allegorically, the remains of a deceased person (HJP). *Prašina* is also used for tiny particles left behind, but usually in a different context, which is mostly with regards to untidy places (HJP). The narrative dictates the first equivalent. In the story, the term *Dust* comes from the Bible, in which it is connected to the soil and ground, which in turn brings about questions of righteousness and sin (Pullman 274). For many characters, *Dust* as a concept denotes the sinful nature of adults, as opposed to the innocence of children. For this reason, and taking into account the fact that in all Croatian versions of the Bible the word appearing in the same context is *prah* (Biblija govori), that solution seems adequate. It does, however, prove somewhat problematic when it is used in the context of being dirty, such as when Lyra pretends to be ignorant in front of adults. She says another girl told her that children had *Dust* covering them, but that she could not be dusty because she had taken a shower the day before (Pullman 189). The formal equivalent of *dusty* is *prašnjava*, which is an adjective derived from the noun *prašina*, generally used with the meaning of being dirty. *Prah* is here not a dynamic equivalent because in this context, the speaker of Croatian would typically use the term *prašina*. The issue is in the polysemy of the English word *dust*, and in the fact that Lyra is pretending to know nothing about its philosophical meaning. What is destroyed in this case is the polysemic nature of the signifier *dust*, which may be classified as destruction of expression.

The Gobblers is a name the children and other affected communities have given to a group of individuals luring children from their families and snatching them away, seemingly unaware of where it in fact stems from. Lyra later learns that the name comes from the General Oblation Board, an independent organization related to the Church whose purpose is to maintain its power (Pullman 32, 67). *The Gobblers* came out of the Board's initials, GOB. This would not be such an issue in the translations were it not for the description of the origin of the Board. The name comes from a custom from the Middle Ages. The children who were given to the church to become monks and nuns were known as oblates (Pullman 67, Herbermann 555). While that is no longer the case, the term used to be reserved solely for children entering the monastic life by virtue of being offered up by their parents (Herbermann 555). In Latin, *oblatus* means *given* or *brought* (Hrvatska enciklopedija). The character explaining the name of the Board mentions this meaning of *offering* (Pullman 67). It is also important in the context of the activities of the Oblation Board, whose members perform experiments on children previously snatched from the streets in order to get an insight into the matter of *Dust*. Thus, the two important connotations of the words *oblatus* and *oblation* are offering, or a sort of sacrifice, and children. In the Husić translation, the Board is named

Pričesni odbor. This name is chosen so that *proždrljivci*, the first three letters being p, r, and o, can be used for *the Gobblers*. The children fear they eat them or, as they say, “gobble them up” (Pullman 42). A gyptian child mistakenly calls them “cannaboles,” explaining that that is the reason why they are called the Gobblers (Pullman 41). Thus, the Croatian equivalent of *the Gobblers* has to refer to eating, has to be connectible to cannibals, and has to contain the initials of the name of the board. For all this to make sense, the entire section in which the board is explained is rewritten in order for the information to add up. The concept of *pričest*, meaning communion, does somehow contain the meaning of *oblation* as the offering, and it can be connected to children. However, it is said to be understood as involving a kind of sacrifice (Husić 80). This is a peculiar case of semantic addition. Such changes, apart from being questionable from a religious perspective, cannot be justified in the section which is supposed to adhere to the state of things in the outside world. Once again, the relationship of familiarity and strangeness is disturbed. In the Ott translation, the board is named *Žrtveno vijeće*, while *the Gobblers* are *žderavci*. In this case, the concept of sacrifice (*žrtva*) is maintained. The term *oblation*, meaning “religious offering” (Merriam-Webster), is retained in the adjective *žrtveno*. Furthermore, the verb *žderati*, meaning “to eat greedily” (HJP), from which the noun *žderavci* is coined, is fitting for the conversation about the Gobblers eating children, and is also colloquial and therefore in accordance with the children’s way of speech. The name for the group does contain the initials of the board (ž and v). However, the information in the explanation is once again altered to graphologically fit into the network of signification. The word *žrtvenici*, which is chosen for *oblates*, is a case of semantic neology, since the term was not used for the children offered, and today it has the meaning of places for offering, altars (HJP). While in another novel this might be suitable for *oblates*, the reason why this is not so in *The Golden Compass* is because the information about the term is taken from the outside world, and the entire structure of the novel depends on subtle changes in spelling and/or meaning of concepts already existing in the world of the readers. The network of signification is disturbed because the information which comes from historical sources is no longer presumed to be true. Croatian does have the term *oblati*, but establishing a connection with the name of the board, the noun denoting the group, and verbs of eating would hardly be possible. The best equivalent is in this case not suitable.

The following is an excerpt from a conversation between Lyra and Tony Costa, a young gyptian, before the gathering of gyptian families. Elements of colloquial style are italicized:

That's how we know a little about what *they're* doing. *Them* two last night *weren't* Gobblers; they were too clumsy. If *they'd* been Gobblers *we'd've* took 'em alive. *See*, the gyptian people, we *been* hit worse than most by these Gobblers, and *we're a coming* together to decide what to do about it. *That's* what we *was* doing in the basin last night, taking on stores, 'cause *we're* going to a big muster up in the fens, what we call a roping. And *what I reckon is we're a going* to send out a rescue party, when we *heard* what all the other gyptians know, when we *put* our knowledge together. (Pullman 82)

This is an example of a written rendition of unpremeditated speech. It is written as free direct speech, with minimal narratorial interventions. It features elements commonly present in informal speech. Leech and Svartvik list the following elements of spoken (informal) language: tag questions, ellipsis, coordination on clause-level, finite clauses, lack of linking adverbs, contracted forms (Leech and Svartvik 26-9). In the quoted passage, all but the first are used. Ellipsis occurs in verb phrases in the present perfect tense (*been hit* instead of *having been hit*, *heard* instead of *have heard*, *put* instead of *have put*); coordinators are preferred over subordinators (frequency of the coordinator *and*); all of the verb phrases in the speech fragment are finite; there are no linking adverbs – instead, inferred connections are used; there is frequent usage of contractions (*that's*, *they're*, *weren't*, *they'd*, *we'd've*, 'em, 'cause, *we're*, *I'd*). Other elements characteristic of English speech patterns, according to Leech and Svartvik, implemented in the passage are fixed phrases indicating involvement in the discourse (*see*, *what I reckon is*). Another marker of informal style is lack of agreement in person and number of subject and verb (*we was* instead of *we were*) and personal pronoun in objective case in place of a demonstrative pronoun acting as determiner in a noun phrase (*them two* instead of *those two*). The last interesting element featured in the quotation is the a-prefix, inherited from Old English (Middle English Compendium). It is separated from the verb which it belongs to (*a coming*, *a going*). The occurrence of the a- prefix in gyptian speech may be seen as unusual, given its archaic quality. However, it may also be regarded as indicative of an older speech community, one with a long tradition, and thus adding to the characterization of a tight-knit ethnic group with deeply ingrained common values. The linguistic features delineated above have the purpose of imitating informal everyday speech. They are tied to a culture distinct from the predominant one, to people with a lower social status. Some of the features, such as the use of contractions, are not reserved solely for this particular group; they do also appear in the speech of characters with a higher status, but in much fewer instances. It is the frequency of their usage that separates the two groups.

In the Husić translation, the linguistic patternings of the gyptian speech are effaced. There are no contractions, there is no ellipsis, the *a-* prefix is entirely abandoned. What is kept is the coordinator *and* (*i*), and the fixed phrase *see* (*vidiš*). Throughout the novel, gyptian speech is given in standard Croatian, which is a case of destruction of vernacular networks. Most of the informal and all of the non-standard features of the source text are effaced, which strips the gyptians of much of their significance as characters. Their social status is no longer reflected in their speech, as they do not differ in speech from other inhabitants; they do not appear as a tightly knit community connected via common language; with the effacement of contractions and ellipsis, they are uprooted from the English soil (or water) which they are supposed to inhabit. In the Husić translation, they do not appear as a distinct social group.

The Ott translation appears more eager to reflect the foreignness of the source text, with regards to the gyptian speech pattern. In the translation of the above-cited passage, there is one feature not considered standard in Croatian: infinitive used in the first future tense without the ending *-i* when the auxiliary verb *htjeti* is positioned before the main verb (Hrvatska školska gramatika) (*ćemo se sastat', odlučit', ćemo radit'*). There is also the fixed expression *znaš*, used as equivalent for *see*. In the entire passage, there are no other non-standard features, because Croatian does not offer opportunities for contractions and ellipsis in the same places. Although, contractions are used in this translation in other places, such as in questions (*jesi l' čula* for *you heard of them*) and in words which are in standard Croatian spelled with the phonetic set *-ije* (*c'jelu noć* for *all night*). Ellipsis is the main strategy with which non-standard features are represented. Despite the attempt to make gyptian speech more colloquial, it still does not present the people in identical light. The foreign vernacular is rendered with a domestic vernacular. Berman calls this phenomenon popularization, and claims such practice ridicules the source language (Berman 250) by rendering it in a language more familiar to the reader. The two vernaculars do not enjoy the same status. Furthermore, the gyptians from the text, despite being drifters, are connected to the English land and people, a version of whose language they speak. Jeđupi, on the other hand, live in England, deal with the English, are named with a region-specific Croatian term, and speak an informal regional version of Croatian. The cultural significance of their name and speech is reworked in translation.

The children are another distinct social group. Their speech is similar to that of the gyptians, with a difference in the frequency of ellipsis, fixed expressions, and fillers. Furthermore, the *a-* prefix is not present in children's speech. The vocabulary is also more informal than that of the gyptians. The following is an excerpt from a conversation between

Lyra and a few other girls in the Bolvangar dormitory. For the sake of brevity, the narratorial comments have been taken out, leaving only direct speech of the children:

“*She’s* awake.”

“They gave her sleeping pills. *Must’ve*...”

“*What’s* your name?”

“Lizzie,” [...]

“Is there *a load* more new *kids* coming?” [...]

“*Dunno*. Just me.”

“*Where’d* they get you *then*?” [...]

“Where is this place?”

“*Middle* of nowhere. They *don’t* tell us.”

“They usually bring *more’n* one *kid* at a time...”

“What do they do?” [...]

“We *dunno*,” [...] “They *sort of* measure us and do *these* tests and *that-*“

(Pullman 181)

Beside contractions (*she’s*, *must’ve*, *what’s*, *where’d*, *don’t*, *more’n*), in children’s speech there occur other features of informal style. *Dunno* is a contracted form of *I do not know*, with the personal pronoun *I* left out, phonetically reduced, and written as pronounced in order to imitate actual speech. Ellipsis also occurs in the phrases *they must have* (*must’ve*) and *in the middle of nowhere* (*middle of nowhere*); in both phrases a pronoun has been left out. Fixed phrases are used as discourse markers indicating involvement (Leech and Svartvik 24) (*sort of*, *then*), along with demonstrative pronouns used as fillers (*these*, *that*). Vocabulary-wise, the excerpt is simple: *kid* is used for *child*, *a load* instead of *many*. The result is an impression of immediacy of spoken language, with little to no premeditation. It is the manner of speech of a group who is affected by forces incomprehensible to them, who yet have to grasp the overwhelming consequences of the events around them.

In the Husić translation, the only informal elements are two discourse markers (*ili tako nešto* for *sort of*, *i tako* for *that*) and a fixed phrase (*nemam[o] pojma* for *dunno*). There is no other informal or non-standard language feature in the passage. The vocabulary they use is average, neither overly simple nor highly specific (*pošiljka* for *load*, *djeca* for *kid*). The children speak standard, neutral English, which does not differentiate them from other social classes in the novel. In the Ott translation, there are two informal features: one case of ellipsis (*je l’* for *is*) and a discourse marker (*neka* for *sort of*). Again, the degree of informality and the markedly simple vocabulary are effaced. There is no overt distinction between the speech

styles of children and adults. In the source text, despite not being particularly formal, the style of speech of grown-up characters tied to the education system seems more formal in comparison. Oftentimes the illusion of natural speech is maintained, but with marked difference: contractions are used sparingly, the vocabulary is more formal, fillers are less common, linking adverbials are more common, coordination is varied with subordination. There is nothing overtly formal in their speech, and yet it is significantly different from the other groups. This impression is achieved by restraint in using contracted forms, variation between coordinated and subordinated sentences, certain linguistic choices, such as *to bid one welcome* instead of *to welcome one*, *brief* instead of *short*, and phrases indicating politeness, such as *please* and *would you like*. These features are not immediately perceived as formal, but they do appear so in comparison. They contribute to differentiating the social classes in the novel. The social strata are thus kept distinct. It is partly because of distinct speech patterns of social groups that the setting and the story as a whole make sense. In a pseudo-Victorian society, the more powerful figures have better access to knowledge. They can use it to instruct or manipulate and deceive those that are below them on the social ladder. On her quest, Lyra experiences both. In the Husić translation, the social stratification is lost, while in the Ott translation it is discernible in places. However, due to vernaculars being closely connected to their original land and people, translating one with another has consequences.

As mentioned, the definite and indefinite articles, as well as the presence or lack of pre- and postmodifying elements in noun phrases, are two examples of how what is generally thought of as plain and unremarkable style may be used for various literary effects. Such common features of English language guide the reader subtly but effectively and make the text as a whole believable. In the very first sentence of the novel, the reader encounters the noun *daemon*, which is marked only by the possessive determiner *her*, referring to Lyra (Pullman 3). The noun phrases in the first paragraph are mostly definite and relatively bare of modification (*the darkening hall, the kitchen, the long benches...*). The same is the case for the first two chapters, which establish the setting and pull the reader into the story. It is in the third chapter, "Lyra's Jordan," that the elaboration characteristic of quest fantasies begins. This has a significantly different effect from the first chapters of *Elric of Melniboné*. After the explanatory introduction, the first chapter abounds in heavily modified, indefinite noun phrases, which are meant to gradually erect a living world in the mind of the reader, with the help of the omniscient narrator and characters of higher authority. In *The Golden Compass*, the beginning is structured as immersive fantasy, in which the setting is nothing out of the ordinary for the protagonist. The definite article establishes the setting as familiar and known

to Lyra: she moves through *the hall*, passes *the kitchen*, *the tables*, *the benches* as places she has been growing up with. The quest narrative gradually takes center stage. Later, Mrs. Coulter would take her to *a meeting of geographers*, she would wake up in *a bed* on a boat. The distinction between the familiar and the unfamiliar, between the first, immersive part, and the second, quest-type part of the story, is lost in both translations, because Croatian does not have a system of contrasting elements which would similarly denote degrees of familiarity. Both the familiar and unfamiliar phenomena are simply *blagovaonica*, *kuhinja*, *stol*, *klupa*, *sastanak*, *krevet*. The lack of modification is retained, but the contrast between the familiar and unfamiliar is, once again, missing.

3. *Igra prijestolja*

One of the translation problems arising in *A Game of Thrones* is similar to the other two novels, and that is the problem of degrees of formality. The plot and the setting of the story are believable in part due to the characters' way of speech, which is largely formal. However, there are instances in which characters who are not nobility exhibit their own sociolect. Here are two examples of character discourse:

1. "This sudden trip of yours *bespeaks* a certain urgency. I *beg of you*, let me help. Old sweet friends should never hesitate to rely *upon* each other" (Martin 173).

1.a) "Ovaj *vaš* iznenadni dolazak nagovještava stanovitu hitnost. Molim *vas*, dopustite mi da *vam* pomognem. Stari, dragi prijatelji nikad ne bi smjeli oklijevati da se oslone jedan na drugoga" (Pavičević 181).

Whereas the sentence from the source text contains an archaic word now specific for literary context (*bespeak*) (OALD) and two different formal expressions (*beg of you*, *upon*) (OALD), the only element indicating higher formality in the target text is the usage of the second person plural pronoun "vi" when talking to a single person. Using the plural version for singular indicates respect (Barić et al. 204) and heightens the formality of discourse. By itself, however, it is too weak in comparison to the formality of the English sentences. Croatian did not have the same course of historical development, which is why if a somewhat archaic counterpart of *bespeak* could be found, it would not be suitable. While in the English tradition archaicity generally evokes images of aristocracy, due to history, in Croatian it is tied to the common people (Katičić 140). The sentences are uttered by Petyr Baelish, Littlefinger, a court official addressing a female member of a noble family, who he fancies. The formality is thus doubly important. In Croatian, it is inevitably of a lesser degree.

2. “Two rooms at the top of the stair, *that’s* all there is” [...] *They’re* under the bell tower, you *won’t* be missing meals, though *there’s* some *thinks* it too noisy. *Can’t* be helped. *We’re* full up, or near *as makes* no matter” (Martin 285).

2.a) “Dvije sobe na vrhu stuba, to je jedino slobodno” [...] “Pod zvonikom su, pa nećete propustiti objed, iako neki misle da stvara odviše buke. Nema tu pomoći. Puni smo, ili uistinu vrlo blizu toga” (Pavičević 297).

The heavy usage of contractions, incongruency of pronoun in plural and verb in singular, and other idiomatic expressions indicate colloquiality, which is taken to distinguish the lower social class from the aristocracy. Croatian has no tradition of verb contractions indicating informality, and incongruency is considered ungrammatical rather than idiomatic. The passage does not differ in style from the one analyzed above, and as such does not contribute to a believable portrayal of a socially stratified world. Berman’s deformations in question are the effacement of the superimposition of languages, and the destruction of the vernacular. Replacing the “orality of the vernacular” (Berman 250) with standard Croatian makes characterization shallower and fails to conjure an image of a socially stratified world.

Another potential problem are neologisms, but of a different kind than those in Pullman’s work. In *A Game of Thrones*, neologisms can be detected in, among other areas, the names of localities, people, other species, social roles, and relations. Among the most common strategies of neology are noun-noun and adjective-noun compound words, which appear both as neologisms and expressions in common usage. Their occurrence ranges throughout several semantic domains. Some refer to the flora and fauna (*godswood*, *redwood*, *ironwood*, *direwolf*), others are toponyms and proper names (*Riverrun*, *Highgarden*, *Littlefinger*, *Greyjoy*, *Shaggydog*), some denote elements of social and military life (*Kingsguard*, *Dragonlords*, *longsword*). The function of compounds is to relay relatively complex concepts with short expressions (Plag 193). They carry the semantic layers of both of its constituents and make up a significant aspect of the writing style. They add color and variety to the setting and contribute to its believability. Within the compound structure, the left-hand member modifies the right-hand member of the compound (Plag 173). The left-hand member may be a root (*astrophysics*), a word (*blackboard*), or a phrase (*off-the-rack* item), and the second either a root or a word. This is referred to as the modifier-head structure. The head is the main part – the compound gets most of its semantic and syntactic characteristics from the head, be it noun, verb, or adjective. In some instances, the meaning of the compound cannot be reduced to combined meanings of its constituent parts (Plag 194). Ingo Plag gives

the example of *blackbird*, in which case one cannot predict the meaning of the compound based solely on the joint meaning of the lexemes *black* and *bird*. Similarly, *direwolf* is a kind of wolf, but it is not merely a dire, or terrifying, wolf. It is a species with its own native land, physical and behavioral properties, and place in the overall ecosystem of the fictional world. The same is true for other compounds in the novel, such as *Kingsguard* and *Riverrun*, neither of which means only what the two lexemes would suggest.

Direwolf is one of the compounds not problematic in the Croatian translation. Both of its components have their counterparts in Croatian, and *strahovuk* as a compound of the noun *strah*, connector *-o-*, and noun *vuk* is not unnatural. However, in many other cases compounds are rendered with another kind of word formation. *Godswood* is named *božanska šuma* (adjectival attribute+noun), *Kingsguard* is *kraljevska straža* (adjectival attribute+noun), *redwood* is *mamutovac* (suffixation), *moonlight* is *mjesečina* (suffixation), *longsword* is simply *mač*. Compound proper names and toponyms are translated inconsistently, i.e. while some are translated as compounds (*Littlefinger* as *Maloprsti*, *Riverrun* as *Rijekotok*), others are changed (*Starfall* as *Zvezdani Slap*), and still others are left in the source language (*Greyjoy*, *Blackwood*). This is a consequence of different systems of word formation between the two languages. In English, compounding is the most productive type of word formation (Plag 169), while in Croatian suffixation is the most productive process of forming up new words (Barić et al. 294). This means that in English compounds occur more often, and they appear more natural. It is not possible to render every English compound with a Croatian one. In this particular case, however, this proves an issue, for compounds play a major part in the style of the novel. They bring a certain coloration to the narrated world, and changing their frequency changes the color. The sonorous quality of words and the rhythm of discourse are disturbed, which changes the experience of reading. In addition, as it has been noted, in some compounds the meaning is not predictable, i.e. it is not a sum of the separate meanings of its components. Rendering *Kingsguard* as *kraljevska straža* fails to communicate the fact that this is a noble title, that one is dealing with a group of specifically selected individuals forming a unit. Berman claims that making the translation more homogeneous than the original (which is what happens when compound noun names are given as a simple noun or adjective) makes the text of the translation more inconsistent, since it becomes a kind of randomized patchwork of different ways of writing (Berman 294). When linguistic patternings change, the translation becomes asystematic, insofar as the system on which the source text relies for telling the story is ruined.

A number of compounds are in fact proper names and toponyms. In *A Game of Thrones*, names appear to be chosen strategically. More often than not, they reflect, resemble, or anticipate a character's individual traits, and/or key features of their native land. In the case of toponyms, they may serve as a description of the geographical entity they denote, as well as offer hints about the ways of their inhabitants. This is the case for both compound and non-compound names. *Stark* and *Riverrun* may be observed as cases in point. *Riverrun* is the seat of House Tully, located in the riverlands. It is situated on the place of convergence of two rivers, which gives the family its sigil: the leaping trout. The family customs are tied to the life on the riverbanks. *Rijekotok* works as an equivalent, since it brings about similar images of rivers in flow. The form anticipates the meaning. The family of Stark is everything its name suggests. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary offers the following entries for *stark*: 1. unpleasant, real, and impossible to avoid/bleak; 2. very different from something in a way that is easy to see/clear; 3. looking severe and without any color or decoration; 4. complete and total. In addition to the already mentioned, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary lists some other meanings: 1. a) rigid in or as if in death; b) rigidly conforming, absolute; 2. archaic: strong, robust; 3. utter, sheer; 4. a) barren, desolate. Every single one of the enumerated semantic layers pertains to the Stark family, as portrayed in the novel. They become apparent in their speech, their relations, their way of conduct, as well as their surroundings. Winterfell, their dwelling in the far north, is a desolate place. The scenery is one of barren earth, ancient, lonely trees, unadorned castles, and utter emptiness. The sheer desolation of the landscapes is something King Robert also bemoans on his visit to the Starks, exclaiming he has "never seen such vast emptiness" (Martin 41). He goes on to complain about the snows that plague the North, thinking them harsh and unforgiving (Martin 41). Eddard, or Ned Stark, the head of the house, admits to winters in the North being hard, but he has strong faith in his family's endurance (Martin 41). What is more, the Starks are people of strong moral codes and rigid beliefs, which become apparent in their actions, such as Eddard taking the post of the Hand of the King despite his reservations, and eventually losing his life in hope of saving his family. The name of Stark rings of the family's presence in the novel. All of this semantic richness is lost in the translation. The names of illegitimate children of the houses are likewise tied to their place of origin. In the North, where harsh winters are commonplace, *Snow* is the last name given to an illegitimate child of a member of a noble house. In Highgarden and the region of the Reach, with their roses and green fields, the last name is *Flowers*. In the mountainous Vale region, such children are given the name *Stone*. Thus, their ancestry is always easily traced, and one's attitude towards them adjusted

accordingly. The landscape and the characters are complexly intertwined, enhancing the impression of the protagonists being completely *of* their world, which in turn negates the need for complex elaborations of otherwise unusual concepts throughout the novel. It helps make successful immersion possible. Keeping the names *Stark*, *Snow*, *Flowers*, and *Stone* without translating them erases the emphasis put on the connection between the characters and the land they inhabit. In *A Game of Thrones*, their closeness is one of the strategies of immersion. Changing the relationship of the two elements of narrative affects the structure of the novel, thus weakening the immersion effect. If, on the other hand, the names were translated, it would similarly hinder immersion. This is visible in those cases in which names were indeed translated into Croatian, such as *Maloprsti*. The Croatian name stands out, surrounded as it is by other names that are either existing in the English tradition (*Catelyn*, *Alyssa*, *Arthur*, *Jon*, *Samwell*), or reminiscent of it (*Erryk*, *Joffrey*, *Brynden*, *Walder*). Most of these names are not translated because they do not have an immediately recognizable meaning. However, there are also those which do exhibit such meaning, but are nevertheless left in the source form (*Blackwood*, *Bracken*, *Frey*, *Greyjoy*). The inconsistency only underlies the discord between the two languages. The case of the last name *Greyjoy* is similar to that of *Stark*, insofar as it anticipates certain character traits. The compound may be taken to mean “wry amusement,” which is a syntagm explicitly used for the behavior of Theon Greyjoy early in the novel (Martin 25). The irony of him bearing the last name *Greyjoy*, and being amused by such things as death and suffering, is lost in the translation. In order for the connection to become apparent, the name should have been translated, as some others have (*Shaggydog* as *Kudrov*, *Ghost* as *Duh*, *Littlefinger* as *Maloprsti*). With that, however, one risks exacerbating the problem of Croatian names and expressions put in the context reminiscent of English linguistic tradition. If one takes as true the postulate that the names should fit the text in the same way the names in the source text fit it, which is the case if one does not wish to change the overall effect of the text, Croatian versions, especially applied inconsistently, as such stand out. Instead of promoting immersion, they hinder it.

According to Mandala, fantastic texts may use definite noun phrases deictically in order to present imaginary elements of the story as already accepted (Mandala 100). Both the characters and the readers are expected to believe the unbelievable. This is especially noticeable in immersive fantasy. In *A Game of Thrones*, in the first two chapters the reader is introduced to some of the elements of the narrated world which mark its difference from the “real” world, but these elements are presented as already known and nothing out of the ordinary. Right from the beginning, the reader is presumed to know who “the wildlings” who

are dead are (Martin 1), what is “the Night’s Watch” in which Gared has spent forty years (Martin 2), and what is “the Wall” whose safety the men miss (Martin 2). The fact that it is currently “the ninth year of summer” is put in coordination with the information that it is Bran’s seventh year of life (Martin 13), making it appear no more extraordinary. In translation into Croatian, the definitiveness of nouns and noun phrases can be expressed with such deictic expressions as demonstrative pronouns *taj/ta/to*, *onaj/ona/ono*, and others. They are, however, not always suitable replacements of the definite article. In *Igra prijestolja*, *the Wall* is *Zid*, *the Night’s Watch* is *Noćna straža*, *the ninth year of summer* is *deveta godina ljeta*. Capitalization indicates strangeness, but there is no sense of familiarity as present in the source text. In the case of *the Wildlings*, who are the very first entity not existent in the outside world, the effect of their first mentioning is lessened; capitalization is not a signal for strangeness because *Divljaci*, their name in Croatian, is the first word in the sentence. The fact that in the source text *the* appears instead of *a* carries semantic weight. It signals the institutional aspect, the fact that those are all firmly established and well-known cultural elements of the fictional world. One of the key elements which make a story immersive is thus absent in translation.

4. *Gardens of the Moon*

Gardens of the Moon does not currently have a Croatian translation. Therefore, no translation analysis can be made. It might, however, be useful to briefly examine some of its salient formal features and compare them to those from the other three texts, in order to get a better grasp of how form affects meaning. As it has been mentioned, some of the most prominent stylistic features of the novel are names and titles, and variations in degrees of formality. With regards to descriptive names, they function more or less the same as toponyms and proper names in *A Game of Thrones*, which is understandable insofar as they are both immersive fantasies. Therefore, they may bring similar challenges in the process of translation. Nicknames referring to various physical and personality traits of the characters help in establishing a sense of history, a history made up of numerous individual stories intertwined into one. They add depth to the narrative. Not translating them would significantly affect its basic structure, weakening its very foundations. The depth is what makes the story immersive, which is why it is crucial for the narrative as such to work. Some of them may be susceptible to transposition into Croatian. With the names such as *Fiddler*, *Picker*, or *Mallet*, due to their relatively simple structure (common noun-turned-proper), and the existence of signifiers for the same signifieds in Croatian, unproblematic equivalents may be possible to find. However, some others may be challenging. Hood is a male character. In Croatian the

word for *hood* is *kapuljača*, which is a feminine noun. The name should not be changed because it refers to the character's looks and aids in visualization of his stature, appearance, and overall impression, but the character's gender should not be changed, either, since with such a change the dynamic between the characters changes as well. The issue of gender is likewise prominent in approaching the name *Oppon*. While the name itself may be left as is, the problem lies in how to use it in Croatian sentences, which have different case and verb endings for different genders. *Oppon* is a name used to refer to two entities, the twins of luck, of which the Lady is female, and the Lord is male. Treating *Oppon* as one or the other would erase the duality. This is only one of the potential setbacks. There is also the problem of compound names and nicknames, such as *Tattersail*, *Whiskeyjack*, *Shadowthrone*, and *Circle Breaker*, whose rendition in the same form and with the same phonetic structure may prove an issue, due to the inevitable destruction of linguistic patterns and asystematization of the text.

Spoken human interaction has certain ungrammatical features which project the speaker's emotional investment in the discourse. According to Biber et al., inserts are standalone elements that are not part of a larger syntactic unit, but which nevertheless perform various discourse functions (Biber et al. 454). Those are interjections, greetings/farewells, discourse markers, attention getters, response getters, response forms, hesitators, polite formulae, and expletives (Biber et al. 450-2). They can often be heard in spontaneous speech and are an integral part of everyday communication. In writing, they are usually separated from the rest of the sentence/clause by punctuation marks (Biber et al. 16). While all occur in characters' speech in *Gardens of the Moon*, arguably the most linguistically interesting are interjections and expletives, which often reference specific deities from the intratextual world. Interjections are exclamatory responses to a situation, while expletives are an often-offensive way of expressing usually strongly negative emotions (Biber et al. 450, 452). Some expressions in *Gardens of the Moon* are reminiscent of common expletives in English (*for Hood's sake*, as in *for God's sake*), while others are more particular (*kiss of Gedderone*, may be similar to *heavens above*). Depending on the nationality, place of origin, and religious convictions of the characters, the deities referenced in the inserts and other formulaic utterances change. The Malazans tend to reference Hood (*Hood take it*, *Hood's breath*), there is also the mention of Fener, Oppon, and Queen of Dreams (*Fener's tail*, *with Oppon's luck*, *Queen of Dreams*), as well as Shedenul (*Shedenul bless his hide*, *Shedenul's mercy*). In Darujistan, on the other hand, Dessembræ and Gedderone are the most often invoked deities (*Dessembræ be praised*, *Dessembræ fend*, *kiss of Gedderone*). As is the case in extratextual

reality, these expressions tend to be formulaic and fairly consistent within a speech community. Precisely due to their consistent implementation, as well as structure familiar to common expressions from the “real” world, inserts and other emotive utterances used in the text enhance the impression of an ordered, consistent, and thus sensible fictional world. Their occurrence helps build up a world of fleshed-out, believable characters, and their consistent usage and formulaic quality contribute to the narrative permitting successful immersion.

In his study, Berman asserts that prose works contain multitudes of expressions, proverbs, and similar discourse elements which are tied to the vernacular, i.e. the common people of a certain country or region (Berman 250, OALD). Some such expressions have their parallel in other languages. However, he maintains that those equivalents are ethnocentrism, meaning they put the domestic culture over the foreign one, and as such do not translate the source expressions (Berman 251), since they give the idiom of one country and people to another. Even if in a secondary world the characters may not necessarily be presumed to be residents of an existing country and speakers of its language, they still do follow lexical and grammatical patterns of the language of the source text in their speech, and therefore bring about images tied to its culture. In translating vernacular formulaic expressions from *Gardens of the Moon*, there are a few potential problems. First, the already mentioned issue of gender when it comes to Hood and Oppon; second, the rhythm and structure of the sentence containing them would have to change in order for the sentences to be grammatical and recognizable in Croatian. For example, *kiss of Gedderone* is used in a sense of unpleasant surprise. In English, this type of noun phrase is a familiar structure of an interjection, with such constructions as *God’s mercy*, *heavens above*, and others. This is where expressions such as *Shedenul’s mercy* stem from. Following the English structure would make the expressions in Croatian unrecognizable as expletives and interjections, while transforming them into sensible expressions in Croatian would affect their structure and overall length. The first person singular pronoun “mi” or the second person singular pronoun “ti” in the locative case may have to be added, and the noun may have to be in the possessive form for the expression to reminisce a Croatian interjection. Rendering it simply as *Gedderonin poljubac*, or even closer, *poljubac Gedderone*, since it does not resemble any existing expression in Croatian, may not be recognized as an expletive and may therefore seem out of place in the context. In order for expletives and interjections to be recognized as such, the characters would have to express themselves in different images.

Two characters of particular interest with regards to the implementation of style in characterization are Onos T’oolan, or Tool, and Kruppe. Tool is the only surviving member of

his clan of the Logros T'lan Imass (Erikson 299), a once mortal race turned undead. He is more than three hundred thousand years old, existing for millennia and unable to die. His is a tragic story of war and futility. For the analysis of his speech pattern, it might serve the following excerpt from his conversation with Adjunct Lorn:

“I accept that name. All of my history is dead. Existence begins *anew*, and with it *shall* be a new name. It is suitable. [...] “Our Bonecasters sensed an enclave of surviving Jaghut,” Tool said. “Our commander Logros T'lan determined that we exterminate them. *Thus* we did.” (Erikson 299)

In Tool's speech, there is an absence of slang expressions, expletives, and interjections. In all of Tool's lines in the novel, there is a relative shortage of contracted forms. Certain lexical choices indicate a higher degree of formality (*anew* instead of *again*, *shall* instead of *will*, *thus* instead of *so*). Vocabulary is more philosophical in nature (*history*, *existence*, *death*). His way of speech is markedly different from the normal idiomatic style of everyday conversation; the absence of such features as interjections, expletives, and contractions, as well as an increased usage of sentence adverbs, makes it more formal in style (Mandala 91), and thus more distant. This distance is meaningful. It helps to evoke in the reader a sense of past, of a prolonged and weary existence. It suggests the character belongs to an older time and is not completely at ease with the norms of the present. His speech reflects his ancientness. It aids in keeping the modern world at bay (Mandala 93), as well as in imagining a world with history which cannot but repeat itself. An ancient character whose way of speech resembled the common speech patterns of the reader's everyday would hinder immersion; Tool's speech strengthens it.

Here, again, the problem lies in the lack of formal expressions in Croatian suitable to replace the auxiliary verb *shall* with the meaning of *will*, with added sense of determination (OALD), adverb *anew* with the meaning of *again, from the beginning* (OALD), and *thus* as a sentence adverb. The lack of contractions is not transposable into Croatian, since there is no practice of contracted auxiliary verbs in Croatian. Tool's speech is crucial for his characterization, and as such it is important to portray all of its nuances in translation. In Croatian, the formality of it would be difficult to attain, at least in the same degree as it is in the source text.

Another linguistically and narratologically interesting aspect of the story is the character of Kruppe. He is a “small round man” wearing a faded red waistcoat and a threadbare coat (Erikson 162). He is described as “an obese mage with dubious abilities,”

with “a mask of blissful idiocy” (Erikson 204) perpetually on his face. His idiolect is peculiar in multiple aspects, which can be observed on the following example:

...and then did Kruppe sweep with motion so swift as to be unseen by any the king’s crown and scepter from the sarcophagus lid. Too many priests in this tomb, thinks Kruppe then, one less ‘twould be a relief to all lest the dead king’s musty breath shorten and so awaken his wraith. Many times afore this had Kruppe faced a wraith’s wrath in some deep pit of D’rek, droning its list of life-crimes and bemoaning its need to devour my soul – harrah! Kruppe was ever too elusive for such sundry spirits and their knock-kneed chatter –.” (Erikson 223)

Kruppe’s speech is an amalgam of linguistic phenomena. For instance, it is riddled with assonance (the repeating of the vowel *e* throughout the quoted passage) and alliteration (the repetition of the consonant *s* throughout the passage, *t* in the second sentence, *d* in in the third, *s* in the fourth sentence). It is rhythmical and highly descriptive. His speech is overly cumbered with modifiers (adjectives and adverbs) and determiners (possessives, quantifiers), which makes it artificial and affected. He is often too formal than the situation itself calls for. In addition, he is in the habit of referring to himself in third person. His threadbare looks and flowery speech paint a picture of an unkempt, puffed-up, self-aggrandizing individual, one in whose words there should not be put much stock. However, on his example the reader is to learn that appearances may be deceiving. Kruppe is a literary device, a cipher for how the novel, and the series as a whole, should be read. He is the narrator of his own character. Because of how he chooses to express himself, he appears unreliable and is easy to overlook in the grand scheme of things. But behind the affectations, underneath the pudgy façade, there hides one of the most powerful figures in play. His storyline is a reminder that in this novel, in this series, everything is disguised. Words and appearances mislead, confuse, and often mean precisely the opposite of what they claim to be. Nothing is as it seems. Kruppe’s way of speech is ironic. It is a means of proving a point and underlying certain key issues of the text. The character of Kruppe is a way for the extradiegetic narrator to communicate with the reader without having to address them directly. He is a way for the narrator to control the readers’ response and to guide them through the experience of reading, without compromising the much-needed immersion. The readers are not given solutions on a silver platter, but rather they are expected to come to conclusions on their own, with covert nudges by the narrator.

Kruppe’s peculiar idiolect poses many potential challenges for translation. One is the rhythm of his utterances, with its plentitude of sound repetitions. The repetitions are important for their ornamental rather than informative function. Berman’s qualitative impoverishment is

what would happen with the loss of “sonorous richness” of the source text (Berman 247). Kruppe’s speech is flowery and over-the-top, in places even difficult to make sense of. Croatian lexemes have a different phonological pattern; keeping both the sound and what they signify, which is, of course, important for the progression of the plot, may be an issue. Another potential problem are formal expressions, such as the adjective *sundry* and the conjunction *lest*. The formality of his speeches is of a different quality than that of Tool. It stands out because he uses such expressions in taverns, on the street, and when talking to friends and acquaintances, which are all situations one would normally consider neutral or even markedly informal. Finding a way to make his speech formal when it is formal in the source text, without lessening or enhancing the specificity of his expression, is a task similar to that of translating speech styles in Pullman. Using certain lexical, grammatical, and syntactic structures instead of others plays a part in characterization, and as such changing it takes a toll on the character as a whole, as well as its function in the overall structure of the novel.

The seemingly “plain” style has its function in *Gardens of the Moon* as well. At the beginning two characters are discussing warfare, mentioning *sorcerers*, *wax-witches*, and *a cadre of mages* (Erikson 5). Two of the noun phrases are completely bare, with no pre- or postmodification. In the third, the fantastic element is relegated to the prepositional phrase acting as postmodifier to the more “ordinary” noun (*cadre*). Such positioning enforces the normality of the fantastic. Lack of modification is transferable into Croatian. The absence of an element in the source text is rendered with an absence in the translation. To one extent, the familiarity of the unfamiliar may be retained in translation. A potential problem may be, once again, the definite article, the occurrence of which with previously unexplained and/or fantastic phenomena (*the Warrens*) is significant for the narrated world, and for the reading experience.

Summing up, translating *Gardens of the Moon* poses similar challenges as translating the other high fantasy fictions analyzed above. Translating idiolects may bring about the destruction of linguistic patternings, which would in turn bring about the effacement of the superimposition of languages, and finally the destruction of the underlying networks of signification. Translating expletives and interjections may influence their structure, which is why one may deal with the destruction of linguistic patternings and the destruction of expressions. As with the names of characters, the issues may be grammatical gender and compound structure, which may pose problems for the retention of linguistic patternings and underlying networks of signification in the text.

Conclusion

The style of (high) fantasy has been called plain, frivolous, uninspiring, and weak. Its themes have gone from being considered escapist and childish to challenging and important. The style has been derided by some and remained in the shadows for others. Stylistic features of the four novels analyzed above suggest that no such generalization should be made for the entire genre. The narrative structure can go in multiple directions, two of which are the immersive and quest type. A single text may be constructed with several prominent stylistic features, all intertwined and mutually dependent, which is visible in, for example, archaisms, formal speech, colloquial speech, compound nouns and names in general, employed in *A Game of Thrones*. The archaisms and formal expressions are not frivolous; they are used strategically to help construct a world of court intrigue, in which old-fashioned mannerisms and values make sense. The same is the case in *Elric of Melniboné*. In *Gardens of the Moon*, the same feature is used to establish characters who do not belong to the time and place of others, who have a past behind them, which gives depth and a sense of lived history to the narrated world. The usage of colloquialisms and informal stylistic elements does not make the style weak; it builds a sense of a socially stratified world, it distinguishes between social groups and aids in their characterization, as evident in *The Golden Compass*. Even the seemingly “plain” style plays a role in establishing the relationship between the characters and their surroundings, which in turn guides the readers into forming their own stance towards what they are reading. In *Elric of Melniboné*, the abundant adjectives and other modifiers help build a world which the reader is not presumed to know, and with which they become more familiar as the protagonist’s quest progresses. In *The Golden Compass*, for the setting to appear familiar yet unfamiliar, Lyra’s immediate surroundings is first presented as known to her and the reader, and later, as her quest unfolds, she gains new insights into the elements about which she was previously ignorant, which is evident in the shift from the definite to the indefinite article. In *A Game of Thrones*, as well as in *Gardens of the Moon*, the definite article at the outset of the narrative is one of the key elements marking it as immersive. As such, though the style of high fantasy may be plain, it is by no means simple or insignificant. It is layered and, most importantly, meaningful.

Stylistic features of the language of a given text build the narrated world. The content of the text depends on the form in which it is given, which becomes apparent in translation. Certain literary elements can be, and are, translated, and they function in the translation in the same way as they do in the source text. Such is the case of absence of modification, or certain

common-nouns-turned-proper. However, the fabric of the narrative changes. The form makes the story what it is. Any change in form brings a change in meaning. This is what makes the text literary. As Tolkien has noted, no translation can ever cover all the possibilities of meaning and signification of the source text (Tolkien, "On Translating Beowulf" 50). Whether a reader picks up on it or not, the source text always offers something else, not present or changed in translation. What is literary is perceivable, it can be noted and felt, but it cannot be transferred to other modes of existence than the one in which it originally appears. A novel is that particular novel only the way it was originally written. In translation it becomes something else. As Davis points out, "the object of translation theory [...] is the untranslatable – the singularity of a text – signaled by the elements most inextricable from context, syntax, or lexicon" (Davis 22). This is what concerns theoreticians of the concept of translation. Perhaps it is what should be in the focus of literary scholars and critics as well, as this is precisely what the term *literariness* denotes. It is manifested differently in every epoch, every genre, every single work of literature. It remains for one to hope that the status of high fantasy will thus be reconsidered.

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