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Utjecaj književne kritike na prevode djela H. P.
Lovecrafta na hrvatski i srpski jezik

Magistarski rad

The Notion of Equivalence in Translation:
The Influence of Literary Criticism on Translations
of Works by H.P. Lovecraft in Croatian and
Serbian

Master Thesis

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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the idea that literary criticism has an impact on translation and that specific strategies for the translation of horror fiction and Lovecraft in particular may be determined. Semantic and syntactic analysis is combined with references to literary criticism to establish the existence of such instances. The results disprove the idea, and the strategies used in translation are found to be uniform throughout, with no particular attention to critically relevant stylistic markers. The conclusion is that the examined translations employ generalized strategies which follow closely the source text, and produce acceptable translations. Therefore, the use of specific strategies in this case may not be necessarily required.

Keywords: H. P. Lovecraft, translation, literary criticism

Apstrakt

Cilj ovog rada je istraživanje ideje da književna kritika ima uticaj na prevod i pojedinačne strategije prevođenja u slučaju horor žanra, posebice Lovecraftovih djela, te da je te uticaje moguće utvrditi. Semantička i sintaktička analiza je povezana sa pozivanjem na književnu kritiku radi utvrđivanja postojanja takvih primjera. Rezultati opovrgavaju ideju, a strategije korištene u prevodu su jednake kroz sav tekst, i ne pridaju posebnu pažnju kritički relevantnim stilističkim obilježjima. Zaključak je da prevodi koji su uzeti u obzir koriste uopštene strategije koje blisko prate izvornika, te proizvode prihvatljive prevode. Stoga, korištenje specifičnih strategija u ovom slučaju nije nužno neophodno.

Ključne riječi: H. P. Lovecraft, prevod, književna kritika

Introduction

Critical analysis of Lovecraft in the Anglosphere has been practically non-existent during his life, and scarce in the decades after his death. It was only in the seventies, following a widespread interest by counter-culture movements in unconventional literature, that serious study of Lovecraft began in earnest. Some of the important pioneering names include Fritz Leiber, Dirk W. Mosig, Matthew H. Onderdonk, and George T. Wetzel.¹ Since then, their immense efforts have been employed to canonize Lovecraft's fiction in the context of American fiction. Undeniable proof of the merit of this endeavor is the inclusion of Lovecraft's work in the Library of America in 2005.

At the forefront of these efforts is certainly S.T. Joshi. In over 30 years he has contributed to the understanding of Lovecraft through his biographical research, collecting and organization of sources, publishing of letters, and literary criticism.

To supplement Joshi, oddly enough, the work of a philosopher otherwise not associated with either Lovecraft or 'weird fiction' is used. In his book *Weird Realism: Lovecraft and Philosophy*,² Graham Harman provides valuable insight into the stylistic devices Lovecraft uses, and the effect they are aimed to produce.

This small sample of criticism should provide enough justification to approach the topic of Lovecraft in translation from the angle proposed in this paper. Namely, to attempt to connect the literary criticism to the translation. Accordingly, the hypothesis is that the literary criticism will have a noticeable impact on the translation process and that translational strategies specific for 'weird fiction' and specifically Lovecraft can be distinguished.

¹ Schultz, D. E., & Joshi, S. T. (1991). *An Epicure in the terrible: A centennial anthology of essays in honor of H.P. Lovecraft*. Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

² Harman, G. (2012). *Weird Realism: Lovecraft and Philosophy*. Winchester, UK; Washington, USA: Zero Books.

Theoretical Framework

Translation theory provides the focal point of this paper, and is heavily rely on Mona Baker's *In Other Words*.³ Baker's book lays out pragmatically the approaches used in modern translation analysis without getting bogged down in the issues of differing philosophies within translation studies.

Jeremy Munday's book *Introducing Translation Studies* is used as a supplement to the information from Baker's book. In conjunction, these two provide a solid basis for analysis.

The aspects which are given the most attention in this translation analysis are those of Cruse's four types of lexical meaning, the Hallidayan model of thematic and informational structures, and cohesion and pragmatic equivalence as laid out in Baker's work.

Consequently, the textual level of analysis is in the focus of the analysis, with a particular interest in word-level-equivalence where appropriate, while the strictly grammatical structure takes second place. The reasoning behind this is that Lovecraft's style appears to be more unusual in lexical than in grammatical terms.

Munday's work is used primarily for its elaboration of translation shifts, translational strategies, functional theories of translation, and of discourse and register analysis approaches.

The Aim of this Paper

This paper aims to explore the features of Lovecraft's writing highlighted in literary criticism, analyze selected excerpts in terms of text type, register, lexis, thematic and informational structure, cohesion, and coherence, with said features in mind; and evaluate their translations. The goal is to investigate possible connections between literary criticism and translation practice.

The analysis should provide examples of the translation in portions of the source text where features highlighted as being pertinent in the literary criticism resources are present. Consequently, the evaluation of the translations proceeding from them should exhibit particular practices or translation techniques specific to the translation of said features, if any are present.

³ Baker, M., (2006.) *In Other Words*. New York: Routledge.

Methodology

First, the text type is determined through the consideration of the text's purpose, or ST writer's intention behind the syntactic and lexical choices in given text.⁴ In Baker's book, two classifications are given. The first one is described as more conventional and includes labels such as *journal article*, *newspaper editorial*, and *travel brochure*. The second classification is described as relatively loose and using labels such as *narration*, *exposition*, *argumentation*, and *instruction*.⁵

The reason to highlight this, even though in most instances Lovecraft writes text plainly recognizable as fiction according to the first classification or narration according to the second classification, is that his works are interspersed with sections intentionally written as journalistic or explanatory scientific texts that introduce additional narrators, as well as additional distance from the subject matter.

The register of the text is determined together with the dimensions of field, tenor, and mode. The field of discourse is the context in which an utterance is being spoken, e.g. performing a medical operation is a different field from discussing medicine. The tenor of discourse describes the relation between the speaker and hearer or reader, e.g. a conversation between a teacher and a student is different than between a mother and a child. The mode of discourse describes the purpose of the utterance (e.g. an essay), and its medium of transmission (e.g. written).⁶ If appropriate or necessary, register is re-established as shifts occur. The reasoning for including register in the analysis is the same as for text type. The significant distinction is that register details the manner in which the text type is presented, i.e. the degree of formality, familiarity, and subjectivity of the speaker.

From that text, lexical elements of particular interest or importance are singled out and analyzed according to Cruse's four types of meaning – propositional, expressive, presupposed, and evoked meaning.⁷ Various resources are consulted for the three languages.⁸ Because of the imaginative vocabulary and fantastic circumstances described with it this portion of analysis is given additional attention.

⁴ Armstrong, N., 2005. *Translation, linguistics, culture*. Clevedon [England]: Multilingual Matters. (p.27)

⁵ Baker, M., *op. cit.* (p. 113, 114)

⁶ *Ibid.* (p. 16, 17)

⁷ *Ibid.* (p.13-17)

⁸ *Cambridge Free English Dictionary and Thesaurus*. (2021). Retrieved 2021 from dictionary.cambridge.org; *Dictionary by Merriam-Webster* (2021). Retrieved 2021 from www.merriam-webster.com; *Hrvatski jezični portal* (2021). Retrieved 2021 from hjp.znanje.hr; Vujanić, M. et al., (2011). *Rečnik srpskog jezika*. Novi Sad: Matica srpska.

Sentences or clauses of particular interest or importance are singled out and their thematic structure is analyzed. That is, the theme and rheme is determined. The theme is the topic of the clause, and serves to provide an anchor point that connects both with previously mentioned information and new ideas to be introduced in the rheme. The rheme, then, is what the part of the clause conveying the information about the theme that the speaker wants to express.⁹

The same is done for their informational structure. That is, old (or given) and new information is determined. Again, the definitions come from Baker's book. Given information is information that the hearer or reader already knows, based either on preceding discourse or real-world knowledge. New information introduces new notions and relates to the given information in some way.¹⁰

The difference between thematic and informational structure is that the former is concerned with the speaker's perception, and the latter with the hearer's or reader's perception.¹¹

It may be deduced from the given distinction that in most cases theme and rheme will correspond to given and new information. Practically the same observation is given in Greenbaum and Quirk, the only difference being that they refer to theme and *focus* instead.¹² The two facets of structure may therefore be combined into one segment of analysis. The reasoning behind this segment of analysis is that the presentation of information is generally consistent in English and any deviation will be marked.

Either the targeted text as a whole or portions of particular interest or importance thereof are inspected for cohesive elements. Cohesive elements include reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. Cohesion may also be achieved through the continuity of tense, consistency of style, and punctuation devices such as colons and semi-colons.¹³

The same is done for elements of coherence. Elements of coherence are determined by the connections that a reader is able to make between them.¹⁴ Unlike the objective cohesive

⁹ Baker, M., *op. cit.* (p. 121-122)

¹⁰ *Ibid.* (p. 144, 145)

¹¹ *Ibid.* (p. 144, 145)

¹² Greenbaum, S., and Quirk, R., 2016. *A Student's Grammar of the English Language*. Harlow, England: Longman - Pearson Education Limited. (p. 397)

¹³ Baker, M., *op. cit.* (p. 211, 212)

¹⁴ *Ibid.* (p. 218)

elements, they are dependent on the reader. Because of this, it is likely impossible to give a list of items that may contribute to coherence.¹⁵ Consequently, elements of coherence are given with descriptions that attempt to categorize the perceived relationship between them in broad terms (e.g. *temporal*, p. 17, 18; *evaluative or affected language* p. 34, 35).

In conclusion, an evaluation of the translation is given in terms of overtness/covertness, degree of markedness, and overall acceptability.

Critical Theory

English-language Criticism

Much has been written on the works of Lovecraft in the English-speaking World. The eminent authority on Lovecraft is without doubt S.T. Joshi. He has produced essays, a biography, book-length analyses on the genre, annotations, and lexicons on Lovecraft and his work. His three-decades-long career has thus covered practically everything Lovecraft has written.

Joshi seems to be focused primarily on Lovecraft's worldview. This includes his literary philosophy or aesthetic conception, but also his personal beliefs. Joshi appears to give a lot of room in his writing to the exploration of Lovecraft's materialism, pessimism, and perhaps most notably atheism. This is not to say that no valuable information on the stylistic features of Lovecraft exists in Joshi's writing. The wealth of information available on Lovecraft in Joshi's writing far exceeds the scope of this paper.

However, a brief list of features that seem to be regularly highlighted as being characteristic of Lovecraft's work in English-language criticism is given here:

A Formal Narrative Style in the First Person

Lovecraft's stories are generally told in the 1st person.¹⁶ Most often, the narrator is some sort of intellectual – a professor, archeologist, scientist, etc., or at least uses erudite language.¹⁷ This choice has the benefit of tempering the uncertainty of narration without dispensing with it completely. With the 1st person narration, we are given a non-omniscient narrator, but

¹⁵ Ibid. (p. 253)

¹⁶ Harman, G. *op. cit.* (p. 44, 85, 102, 157, 213, 214); Joshi, S. T. (2016). *A Subtler Magick*. New York: Hippocampus Press. (p. 64, 78, 201, 225, 279, 301, 302); Schultz, D. E., & Joshi, S. T. *op. cit.* (p. 203).

¹⁷ Joshi, S. T. (2016) *op. cit.* (p. 116, 117, 142, 182, 183, 299,311); Schultz, D. E., & Joshi, S. T. *op. cit.* (p. 199); Joshi, S. T. (2007). *Icons of horror and the supernatural*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press. (p. 127).

through his representation of a coldly empirical, most often one-dimensional character,¹⁸ we are urged to lend him our trust that he is in fact speaking the truth.

In Lovecraft's writing, this appears to be of great importance. It may be deduced that in order to effectively convey his own ideas of humanity's precocious position in the universe and his own fear in the face of the limitless and unknowable, Lovecraft needs a very much human narrator. This would exclude omniscient narration. He also needs the fantastic creatures and plots he creates to be believable and appear as rational as possible. It may therefore be concluded that his typified narrator is the most reasonable choice for the things he wants to achieve.

For present purposes, this means that the formality, register, and text type will be, in most cases, clearly definable and conservative. The translation will consequently have to reproduce a largely impersonal tone in the narrative passages and attempt to successfully dampen the unbelievability through the narration.

A Realist Approach to Descriptive Passages, Especially of the Locale

Lovecraft's descriptions of New England are one of the integral parts of his works.¹⁹ They appear to function both as a realistic anchor point and a source of plausible historicity.

For American readers, these passages are probably immediately noticeable and evocative, even if they do not hail from that region. For foreign readers, this might have less of an effect, especially if they are not well aware of the history of the United States. In that sense, while Joshi places much value on these passages, critics and essayists in the B/C/S/M-speaking world seem to mention them only in passing. It could then be expected that these passages may receive less attention in translation than is given to them in the source text and English criticism.

An Affinity Towards Complex Sentences

One of the most common points of contention are Lovecraft's sentences. Especially at the time of his writing, they seem anachronistic in their length and complexity.²⁰ This relates

¹⁸ Harman, G. (2012). *op. cit.* (p. 47); Joshi, S. T. (2016). *op. cit.* (p. 32, 62-64, 141, 146, 173, 183, 193-195, 226, 231, 241, 306, 310-311); Joshi, S. T. (2001). *A Dreamer and a Visionary - H. P. Lovecraft in his Time*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. (p. 108, 287); Lovecraft, H. P., Joshi, S. T. (2000). *The Annotated Supernatural Horror in Literature, By H.P. Lovecraft, Edited, with Introduction and Commentary, by S.T. Joshi*. New York, NY: Hippocampus Press. (p. 62, 122).

¹⁹ Joshi, S. T. (2016). *op. cit.* (p. 18, 52, 118, 130, 131, 168, 171, 174); Schultz, D. E., & Joshi, S. T. (1991). *op. cit.* (p. 94, 96, 109-113, 204, 205, 213, 214, 270, 277); Joshi, S. T. (2007). *op. cit.* (p. 99-101, 104, 111, 277, 284); Joshi, S. T. (2001). *op. cit.* (p. 140, 171, 242, 245, 291).

primarily to his use of adjectives and coordinated sentences. The actions are usually presented briefly and succinctly, but the attitude of the narrator or the qualities of characters appear to be given much more room.

The target languages seem to be much more forgiving and even receptive to this kind of writing. The potential problem is therefore that the markedness of the text in English might be hard to reproduce in the translations using the same means.

At Times, the Overabundance of Adjectives

There is a number of fairly original adjectives in most of Lovecraft's stories, and they are at times used to the point of excess.²¹ Two kinds of adjectives, based on their usage, may be distinguished in Lovecraft's writing.

The first kind could be termed repetitive. It would contain a relatively limited set of adjectives that are repeated throughout the story, and oftentimes across stories. It appears that by modifying these reoccurring adjectives with a gradual increase in intensity, the effect of a layered or accumulated horror is produced.

For the target languages, this type of adjective should provide little to no problems. Their function in the text likely leaves a fair amount of leeway for the adjustment towards the standards of the target language. Their repetitiveness presumably turns them into valuable anchor points around which the rest of the passages may be built.

The second kind could be termed original adjectives. These appear to be used sporadically, without any overarching structure, and may be found chiefly in the lengthy climactic descriptions in Lovecraft's stories.

The problem that may arise from this is that the target languages seem to be less productive in this regard. Furthermore, even where innovation is possible it would likely be more highly marked than in the source text.

²⁰ Joshi, S. T. (2001). *op. cit.* (p. 89, 108, 242, 314, 317); Joshi, S. T. (2016). *op. cit.* (p.32, 90, 98, 298-301); Schultz, D. E., & Joshi, S. T. (1991). *op. cit.* (p. 29, 43, 44, 171, 172).

²¹Harman, G. (2012). *op. cit.* (p. 44, 45, 70, 80-83, 110, 111, 134, 135, 154); Joshi, S. T. (2001). *op. cit.* (p. 108); Joshi, S. T. (2016). *op. cit.* (p. 298-301).

Detailed Vagueness

Lovecraft's most memorable feature is that he manages, in his best works, to retain a vagueness and uncertainty to his descriptions, especially of the horrific entities that figure prominently in his work.²²

However, Lovecraft rarely, if ever, leaves anything without description. Most of the time, the description is simply either inferential or focused on only a handful of details. It may be deduced that this approach is meant to highlight the otherworldly nature of the whole by presenting even parts of it as barely describable.

This aspect should provide little to no problems to the translation, but should certainly be kept in mind.

Philosophical Elaborations and Implications

In his better works, the philosophy underlying them is largely implicit. It is the source of the horror in his best stories and remains underexposed throughout the text.²³

As with the previous point, it is not obvious that this could cause any problems in translation, but it might be valuable to keep in mind.

Plausible Pseudo-scientific Explanations

Especially in his later works, Lovecraft is deeply entrenched in science-fiction. Consequently, his horrors are being explained in plausible, for the time even believable pseudo-science.²⁴ That is to say, his grasp of scientific concepts is convincing.

This should be readily reproducible in almost any language, but does require a careful approach towards it.

Intentionally Alienating Inventions

There are many invented beings and locations in Lovecraft's writing. The reason they are used is discussed in detail in his own essays and private writing. For the sake of brevity, however,

²² Harman, G. (2012). *op. cit.* (p. 26-28, 33, 34, 52, 53, 62-68, 70-84, 135-137, 144, 189-192); Joshi, S. T. (2016). *op. cit.* (p. 106); Schultz, D. E., & Joshi, S. T. (1991). *op. cit.* (p. 231).

²³ Harman, G. (2012). *op. cit.* (p. 9-15, 33-36, 62-64, 186, 187); Joshi, S. T. (2016) *op. cit.* (p. 36, 55, 56, 75-78, 107, 138, 139, 150, 152-154, 275, 315); Schultz, D. E., & Joshi, S. T. *op. cit.* (97-112).

²⁴ Harman, G. (2012). *op. cit.* (p. 122, 131, 194, 195); Joshi, S. T. (2016). *op. cit.* (p. 56-58, 65, 79, 113, 116, 178, 179, 182, 183, 218, 259, 299, 313, 315); Joshi, S. T. (2001). *op. cit.* (p. 42, 43, 182, 220, 310); Joshi, S. T. (2007). *op. cit.* (p. 108, 109); Schultz, D. E., & Joshi, S. T. (1991). *op. cit.* (p. 28-32, 239, 301-305); Lovecraft, H. P., Joshi, S. T. (2000). *op. cit.* (p. 22, 23)

it may be said that they are primarily estranging or alienating devices.²⁵ They function to provide a sharp contrast to the world portrayed in the colors of realism.

It should be noted that another class of invented place-names may be found in Lovecraft's writing, namely those fashioned to resemble the naming conventions of early New England settler towns and cities (e.g. Innsmouth, Dunwich, Arkham) as well as at least one resembling the Algonquian language, the Miskatonic River and University.

This aspect of Lovecraft's writing is beyond the scope of this paper and is only noted as a distinguishing characteristic. It will not be examined further in the paper.

Serbian/Croatian Literary Criticism

Among the criticism in the target languages perhaps the most relevant for the purposes of this paper are those written by Dejan Ognjanović. The reason for that is that he translated many of Lovecraft's works into Serbian, and edited all of the cited. A secondary reason is that he seems to develop a strain of criticism not found in the English criticism resources cited.

In most aspects the criticism in the target languages agrees with English language resources. However, some important differences can be discerned. One of them was mentioned previously when discussing the realist depictions of New England locations.

The criticisms in the target languages usually reflect this point of the original critics only in passing. This is undoubtedly in part due to the shorter length of the critical texts but seems also to indicate a shift of focus away from this particular of Lovecraft's writing.

Another difference is the connection made with the concept of body horror, most easily recognized in film. Dejan Ognjanović especially draws parallels between the writing of Lovecraft and the evolution of body horror in films by Carpenter and Kronenberg.²⁶ This strain of thought is not developed in Joshi's criticism.

This is a certainly interesting point of difference in perspective and might exert influence over the translation.

On most other points, the two criticisms agree. This should provide a good argument for following the features outlined in the previous section as likely points of interest for the

²⁵ Harman, G. (2012). *op. cit.* (p. 159); Joshi, S. T. (2016). *op. cit.* (p. 84, 85); Schultz, D. E., & Joshi, S. T. (1991). *op. cit.* (p. 368, 369, 372-374); Lovecraft, H. P., Joshi, S. T. (2000). *op. cit.* (p. 90);

²⁶ Ognjanović, D. (2006). *Politika tela i estetika straha*. Novi Sad, Polja 439:35-47.

translator. Fortunately, several translations are done by Ognjanović himself, which should further provide justification for trying to trace the critical influences on the translation.

Analysis

Dagon

When *Dagon* was written, Lovecraft was in the process of experimenting with different styles and topics.²⁷ Joshi summarizes its plot as follows:

A supercargo on a vessel during the Great War, the unnamed narrator is captured by a German sea-raider but escapes in a boat. One night he falls asleep and awakes to find that an enormous subterranean land mass has been upheaved to the surface during the night. Walking along it after it dries, he comes upon “an immeasurable pit or canyon.” Climbing down the side of the canyon, he notices an enormous object in the distance: it is a gigantic monolith “whose massive bulk had known the workmanship and perhaps the worship of living and thinking creatures.” It bears a number of curious and repellent hieroglyphs and bas-reliefs, many of which depict bizarre aquatic creatures not known to science. But now a living creature emerges from the sea: “Vast, Polyphemus-like, and loathsome, it darted like a stupendous monster of nightmares to the monolith, about which it flung its gigantic scaly arms, the while it bowed its hideous head and gave vent to certain measured sounds.” The narrator, his sanity shattered, flees, eventually finding himself in a San Francisco hospital. He intends to commit suicide after finishing his account.²⁸

The story employs some of the strategies that will eventually become emblematic of Lovecraft's writing. The cosmicism tied to the monolith that emerges from the sea, the pseudo-scientific explanation of how the monolith and the island came to be, the flat, one-dimensional narrator, the loss or usurpation of human primacy, and the contemporary setting.²⁹ All of these would of course be altered and improved upon in later works.

The Setting

The setting of the story is outlined as being at the start of World War I. This is one of the first examples of Lovecraft situating his stories in contemporary times, and doing so realistically.³⁰ Especially crucial to that effect is that public perception at the time seems to have been strongly opposed to submarine warfare, which appears to have been thought of as ignoble.

It was in one of the most open and least frequented parts of the broad Pacific that the packet of which I was supercargo fell a victim to the German sea-raider. The great war was then at its very beginning, and the ocean forces of the Hun had not completely sunk to their later degradation; so that our vessel was made a legitimate prize, whilst we of her crew were treated with all the fairness and consideration due us as naval prisoners. So liberal, indeed, was the discipline of

²⁷ Joshi, S. T. (2016). *op. cit.* (p. 80, 81)

²⁸ *Ibid.* (p. 64, 65)

²⁹ *Ibid.* (p. 65, 80, 81, 313)

³⁰ *Ibid.* (p. 65)

our captors, that five days after we were taken I managed to escape alone in a small boat with water and provisions for a good length of time.³¹

Tamo gde se velelepnim Pacifikom, čini se, najmanje saobraća, na najotvorenijem moru, poštanski brodić za koji sam bio zadužen postao je žrtva nemačkog razarača. Veliki rat je tek počinjao da bukti, a kajzerovske pomorske snage još uvek nisu bile potpuno oslabile, pa je naš brodić neprijatelju došao kao prava nagrada, dok smo mi, njegova posada, bili tretirani sa najvećom učtivošću koja se može isposlovati za pomorske zarobljenike. Disciplina naših neprijatelja je bila takva da sam uspeo da pobegnem pet dana nakon zarobljavanja, čamčićem punim vode i zaliha koji su mogli da potraju duži vremenski period.³²

Bilo je to na jednom od najotvorenijih i najmanje prometnih dijelova širokoga Pacifika kada je teret čiji sam ja bio nadzornik pao u ruke njemačkoga razarača. Veliki je rat tada bio na samome svojem početku, a oceanske sile Huna ne bijahu se potpuno srozale na dno, tako da je naše plovilo postalo legitimni plijen, dok smo mi, njegova posada, kao ratni zatvorenici bili tretirani sa svim poštenjem i brigom. Tako je liberalna, zaista, bila disciplina naših tamničara da sam ja uspio pobjeći, sam u malom čamcu s vodom i zalihama za dosta vremena.³³

Text Type

The text is conventional fiction in type.

Register

The text is in a conventional fiction-writing register. It is relatively informal, with several idiomatic references and turns of phrases. The field could be described as general-purpose storytelling. The tenor is impersonal, the narrator is addressing a broad audience. The mode is written, as confirmed at the end of the story.

Lexical Analysis

Of interest are the adjective phrases *most open and least frequented*, the idiomatic racial slur *the Hun*, the noun phrase *their later degradation*, and *liberal ... discipline*

most open

most open has the propositional meaning of *large, uninterrupted*. It is neutral in expressive meaning: the speaker is ambivalent to it. The presupposed meaning arises from its collocation

³¹ Lovecraft, H. P. (1917) *Dagon*. Retrieved 20 September 2020, from <https://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/d.aspx>

³² Ognjanović, D., et al. (2012), *Nekromikon: najbolje horor priče Hauarda F. Lavkrafta*. Novi Sad, Everest Media

³³ Banović, D. (2006), *Dagon*. Zagreb, Plava Rijeka.

with the noun *ocean* and differentiates it from figurative openness (say, of the mind). And the evoked meaning is one of vastness.

In the Serbian translation, the word *najotvorenijem* is used. It agrees in all four meanings with the original.

The same is true for the Croatian translation.

least frequented

least frequented underscores similar things. Propositional meaning – denoting something rarely traveled to or through. Expressively it is neutral. Frequented almost exclusively occurs with locations its presupposed meaning is thus as relating to locations. Its evocative meaning is one of isolation.

The Serbian translation uses the words *najmanje saobraća* to convey virtually the same meaning. The difference is only in the word type.

The Croatian translation uses the words *najmanje prometnih*, which is a very close translation, and agrees with the original in all four meanings.

the Hun

the Hun has the propositional meaning of *the German*. It is strongly negative in expressive meaning. The presupposed meaning is dictated by its usage being almost exclusive to the WWI period and in relation to military affairs. It evokes WWI.

The Serbian translation transforms this into *kajzerovske*, i.e. *the Kaiser's*. The overall meaning is very similar in the target language, but it is certainly not nearly as negative in expressive meaning.

The Croatian translation retains the same word.

The issue here is whether the same word carries the same expressive and presupposed meaning in the target language. There is reason to doubt that it would be as readily understood as by an Anglophone audience.

degradation

[their later] degradation has the propositional meaning of *[their later] diminishing in some quality*. It is negative in expressive meaning. Through its co-occurrence with descriptions of maritime warfare at the start of WWI, the presupposed meaning is that *their degradation pertains* to their use of submarines at later stages of the war, then deemed dishonorable. The evocative meaning is thus of dishonorable maritime warfare.

The Serbian translation uses *oslabile*. The issue here is that even the propositional meaning is not the same – the Serbian word *oslabile* denotes a loss of power or intensity, not of an ambiguous quality. The evoked meaning here would be that they were to become less capable in warfare, not less honorable in their conduct.

The Croatian translation uses *srozale*. *Srozale* is dual in meaning, but one of those meanings is exactly that of a moral degradation implicit in the original.

due us

due us has the propositional meaning of *what we are owed*. It has a neutral or mildly positive expressive meaning. Its presupposed meaning is that international humanitarian law applies. The evoked meaning is one of honorable maritime warfare.

koja se može isposlovati would be back-translated as something like *which could be negotiated*. This is clearly a problematic translation because it implies that the prisoners of war had to negotiate to be treated fairly.

The Croatian translation omits this phrase completely.

liberal discipline

liberal discipline reiterates much of the same things and is used to underscore the temporal placement of the story.

In Serbian, the qualification *liberal* is replaced with what could be back-translated as *such was [our captors' discipline]*.

In Croatian, the phrase is translated with the same lexemes.

Thematic and Informational analysis

The Serbian translation employs a structure-shift. Structure-shifts are among the most common in translation, and denote changes in the word order.³⁴ Therefore, the sentences with changes in the target languages are particularly interesting for thematic and informational analysis.

English

It was in one of the most open and least frequented parts of the broad Pacific that the packet of which I was supercargo fell a victim to the German sea-raider.

This is clearly a marked sentence. This would be its unmarked arrangement:

The packet of which I was supercargo fell a victim to the German sea-raider in one of the most open and least frequented parts of the broad Pacific.

The introduction of a dummy *it* and movement of the prepositional phrase *of which*. towards the middle allows the relatively light rheme and new information block - *fell a victim to the German sea-raider* to fall into the sentence-end or focus position.

Serbian

Tamo gde se velelepnim Pacifikom, čini se, najmanje saobraća, na najotvorenijem moru, poštanski brodić za koji sam bio zadužen postao je žrtva nemačkog razarača.

The Serbian translation achieves much the same thing. The difference is the introduction of *čini se*, i.e. *it seems*, and replacement of the dummy *it* with a *wh*-clause. The back-translation would be:

Where the broad Pacific, it seems, is least frequented, on the most open sea, the package ship for which I was responsible fell prey to a German destroyer.

Although the introduction of *čini se* seems unwarranted, the overall effect is the same. The thematic and informational structure reflects the original well and does not violate the principles of the target language.

Croatian

Bilo je to na jednom od najotvorenijih i najmanje prometnih dijelova širokoga Pacifika kada je teret čiji sam ja bio nadzornik pao u ruke njemačkoga razarača.

³⁴ Catford, J.C., (1965) *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. Oxford, Oxford University Press. (p. 77, 78)

The Croatian translation changes practically nothing in the sentence structure or order. The back-translation would be:

It was in one of the most open and least frequented parts of the broad Pacific when the cargo of which I was the supervisor fell into the hands of a German destroyer.

Again, the thematic and informational structure does not change and it is clear that the end-focus applies.

Cohesion

The elements of cohesion vary between the three languages only in terms of lexical choices and sometimes semantics. In number, positioning, and relationship to each other, they are virtually identical.

English

For the imperial Germans - *German, the Hun, our captors.*

For the narrator's ship - *Packet, a victim, our vessel, a legitimate prize, her.*

For the war - *Sea-raider, Great War, ocean forces, naval prisoners, discipline, captors.*

In Serbian

For the imperial Germans - *Nemačkog, kajzerovske, neprijatelju, neprijatelja.*

For the narrator's ship - *Poštanski brodić, žrtva, naš brodić, prava nagrada, njegova.*

For WWI - *Razarača, Veliki rat, pomorske snage, pomorske zarobljenike, disciplina, neprijatelja, zarobljavanja.*

In Croatian

For the imperial Germans - *Njemačkoga, Huna, tamničara.*

For the narrator's ship - *Naše plovilo, legitimni plijen, njegova.*

For WWI - *Razarača, Veliki rat, oceanske sile, ratni zatvorenici, disciplina, tamničara.*

Coherence

The elements indicating coherence are almost exclusively temporal and are virtually identical across the three languages.

English:

Of which I was supercargo, then, their later degradation, whilst we of her crew, that five days after,

Serbian:

Za koji sam bio zadužen, tek, još uvek nisu bile, dok smo mi, takva da sam uspeo,

Croatian:

Čiji sam ja bio nadzornik, tada, ne bijahu, dok smo mi, da sam ja uspio pobjeći

Conclusion

Both the Serbian and Croatian translations are acceptable. Points of divergence and possible mistranslation pertain exclusively to contextual and implied meaning of individual words or phrases and are therefore unlikely to present a problem in understanding or coherence for the reader. It may, however, take away from the historical vibrancy of the text.

The Croatian translation sticks more closely to the source language syntax and word order, while the Serbian translation employs some transformations. Neither causes significant changes in the meaning of the text nor do they impede the reading of the translation.

Pseudo-Scientific Explanations

Lovecraft always had an interest in natural science and strove to incorporate plausible explanations for his fantastic elements in his stories. This idea would be further developed and refined in later writing, but here the first inkling of that concept may be observed.³⁵

As I crawled into the stranded boat I realised that only one theory could explain my position. Through some unprecedented volcanic upheaval, a portion of the ocean floor must have been thrown to the surface, exposing regions which for innumerable millions of years had lain hidden under unfathomable watery depths.³⁶

Dok sam upuzavao u nasukan čamac, pretpostavlja sam da samo jedna teorija može da objasni moje okruženje: putem nekakvog naglog vulkanskog potresa, ogroman komad okeanskog dna se iznedrio na pučinu, otkrivajući površine koje su mnogo miliona godina ležale skrivene u nemerljivim vodenim dubinama.³⁷

³⁵ Joshi, S. T. (2001). *op. cit.* (p. 28, 30, 31, 174 – 176)

³⁶ Lovecraft, H. P. (1917), *op. cit.*

³⁷ Ognjanović, D., et al. (2012), *op. cit.*

Kada sam se uspuzao u nasukani čamac, shvatio sam da samo jedna teorija može objasniti moj položaj. Nekakvim nezapamćenim vulkanskim izljevom, dio oceanskoga dna zacijelo je bio izbačen na površinu, otkrivajući predjele koji su nebrojene milijune godina ležali skriveni pod neizmjernim vodenim dubinamama.³⁸

Text Type

The text type remains the same – fiction.

Register

The register is mostly the same, it is a fairly informal report to a broad audience, with the theory being given in laymen's terms.

Lexical Analysis

There are a few words of interest in this excerpt: *upheaval*, *innumerable*, and *unfathomable*.

upheaval

English

upheaval has the propositional meaning of drastic change. It is expressively neutral. Its presupposed meaning is governed by its co-occurrence with *volcanic*, which distinguishes it from its metaphorical (often sociopolitical) meaning. Its evoked meaning is one of catastrophic natural forces.

Serbian

In Serbian, it is translated as *potres(a)*, the propositional meaning of which is quaking or earthquake. Its expressive meaning is neutral. Since it is modified by *vulkanskog*, its presupposed meaning is related to nature, and therefore not emotional or medicinal. Its evoked meaning is that of a catastrophic natural force.

Croatian

In Croatian, it is translated as *izljev(om)*, which has the propositional meaning of eruption or spill. Its expressive meaning is neutral. Since it is modified by *vulkanskim*, its presupposed meaning excludes it from meaning *spill*, since it collocates with *volcanic* only as *eruption*. Its evoked meaning is that of a catastrophic natural force.

The interesting thing here is that both the Serbian and the Croatian translations are acceptable despite describing semantically different phenomena. The reason could be that the concept of

³⁸ Banović, D. (2006), *op. cit.*

a *volcanic upheaval* is perhaps intentionally vague – it is unclear whether the eruption of a volcano underneath the sea has caused the formation of the island, or if the eruption has caused a movement of the earth (i.e., an earthquake) which created the island, or if some upheaval underneath the sea has caused an eruption of a volcano, which created the island.

From the perspective of the 21st century, a volcanic eruption causing a movement of tectonic plates which causes the emergence of an island is the least unlikely option. However, it should also be kept in mind that plate tectonics was controversial and not widely accepted at the time of writing of the original.

innumerable

English

innumerable has the propositional meaning of too numerous to count. It is expressively neutral. It has the presupposed meaning of *a very large number of* (i.e., not truly uncountable, but too large of a number to conceptualize) because of its co-occurrence with years. It has the evoked meaning of age beyond conceptualization.

Serbian

In Serbian it is translated as *mnogo*, the propositional meaning is *many*. It is expressively neutral. Its presupposed meaning is governed by its co-occurrence with *milion godina*, i.e. *millions of years*, which defines it as describing a temporal dimension. It has the evoked meaning of age beyond our conceptualization.

Croatian

In Croatian it is translated as *nebrojene*, the propositional meaning is *uncounted*. It is expressively neutral. Its presupposed meaning is defined by its co-occurrence with years, defining it as a temporal dimension. Its evoked meaning is *age beyond conceptualization*.

In this instance, it is interesting that while neither the Serbian nor the Croatian translator used a literal translation, they have both centered on the practical meaning of the expression and adapted it in some way. The Serbian translation uses *many millions* in its most usually understood meaning – simply too old to be specified. The Croatian uses the expression *nebrojene*, i.e., *uncounted*, this is interesting because the expression *nebrojive* (which exists in both languages) is the literal translation of innumerable and very close to the Croatian

translation. It is only through the presupposed meaning that uncounted becomes practically equal to uncountable.

unfathomable

English

unfathomable has the propositional meaning of impossible to comprehend or measure. Its expressive meaning is neutral. Its presupposed meaning is defined through its co-occurrence with *watery depths*, which defines it as *impossible to measure*. Its evoked meaning is that of a dark, deep, isolated point beneath the ocean.

Serbian

The Serbian translation uses the word *nemerljivim*, the propositional meaning of which is *immeasurable*. Its expressive meaning is neutral. Its presupposed meaning is governed by its co-occurrence with *vodenim dubinama*, which designates it as a measure of depth. Its evoked meaning is that of a dark, deep, isolated point beneath the ocean.

Croatian

The Croatian translation uses the word *neizmjernim*, which is a synonym of *nemjerljivim*. Therefore, it is absolutely identical in all four meanings to the Serbian translation.

In this instance, it is interesting that the translation must sacrifice some interesting points of the original lexeme. *Unfathomable* can mean both beyond comprehension and beyond measure. There is no readily available equivalent for such a word in either Serbian or Croatian. It also has the benefit of consisting of the root morpheme *fathom*. *Fathom* on its own is an imperial measurement of length, used most often in nautical matters, and specifically for depth (e.g., in submarine navigation); and in the bare infinitive form *to fathom*, means to understand.

It could be argued that *nemerljiv* means that one cannot even attempt to measure something, while *neizmjeran* means that one cannot measure something in its totality. But this distinction is most likely lost in regular usage.

Thematic and Informational Analysis

Once again, the Serbian translation stands out because it performs a slight transformation of the sentence structure. Namely, what is realized as two sentences in the original and the Croatian translation is transformed into a single complex sentence in the Serbian translation.

The resulting sentence is by no means out of place in the target language, as the ‘second sentence’ turned clause is introduced through a colon as a kind of elaboration. The thematic structure is therefore maintained since the colon provides a discursive break only slightly shorter than a full stop.

The theme of the first sentence/clause ends with the full stop and the colon, respectively. Another theme follows, which ends with *surface*, and *pučinu*, *površinu*, respectively.

The informational structure can be mapped as follows:

Old information: [As I crawled into the stranded boat]

New information: [I realised that only one theory could explain my position.]

New information: [Through some unprecedented volcanic upheaval, a portion of the ocean floor must have been thrown to the surface,]

Old information: [exposing regions which for innumerable millions of years had lain hidden under unfathomable watery depths.]

Where O is Old Information and N is New Information. Theme and rheme can be mapped in the same respective positions, and throughout the three languages.

Cohesion

Even in this minuscule portion of the text, cohesive devices may be found. They are reproduced in the target languages, although the cohesive elements pertaining to the 1st person narrator are realized as inflections of the auxiliary verb rather than through the use of personal pronouns. The only exception is the semantic ambiguity of *unfathomable* that is inevitably lost.

English

For the narrator: *I, I, my*

For the deep ocean: *Ocean floor, unfathomable, watery depths*

Serbian

For the narrator: *sam, sam, moje*

For the deep ocean: *okeanskog dna, vodenim dubinama*

Croatian

For the narrator: *sam, sam, moj*

For the deep ocean: *oceanskog dna, vodenim dubinama*

Coherence

The original text has two obvious elements of coherence. *Through*, indicating a causal relationship; and *must have been*, denoting an evaluation of the likelihood of the occurrence. The Serbian translation reproduces the former, leaving out the latter; while the Croatian translation does the inverse.

English: *through, must have been*,

Serbian: *putem*,

Croatian: *zacijelo*

In both cases, the text remains coherent, but it is interesting to observe the shift. In the Serbian translation, the subjectivity or uncertainty of the assertion is dispensed with. It could be argued that the word *nekakvim* in the Croatian translation is the equivalent of *through* as an element of coherence since it does contain that meaning. However, it is certainly less explicit than the English or Serbian ones.

Conclusion

Both translations are acceptable. There are slight losses at the lexical level, but the overall message and implications of the text are faithfully reproduced in the translations. The transformation of sentence structure used in Serbian does seem to be a little more natural for the target language but is of little importance on the whole.

Cosmicism

Cosmicism, in short, appears to be the most recognizable Lovecraftian feature in writing. It describes the diminishing of human achievement by placement of it on a cosmic scale.

All at once my attention was captured by a vast and singular object on the opposite slope, which rose steeply about an hundred yards ahead of me; an object that gleamed whitely in the newly bestowed rays of the ascending moon. That it

was merely a gigantic piece of stone, I soon assured myself; but I was conscious of a distinct impression that its contour and position were not altogether the work of Nature. A closer scrutiny filled me with sensations I cannot express; for despite its enormous magnitude, and its position in an abyss which had yawned at the bottom of the sea since the world was young, I perceived beyond a doubt that the strange object was a well-shaped monolith whose massive bulk had known the workmanship and perhaps the worship of living and thinking creatures.³⁹

Odjednom je sva moja pažnja bila usredsređena na ogroman objekat na suprotnoj strani jame, koji se strmo uzdizao na nekih stotinjak metara ispred mene, i koji se belio, odašiljući pridošle zrake naviruće mesečine. Radilo se o džinovskom komadu kamena, uskoro sam počeo ubeđivati sebe, iako sam svesno razaznavao da njegove konture i pozicija nisu baš odgovarali odlikama uobičajenih delova Prirode. Nešto pomnije ispitivanje pogledom ispunilo me je utiscima koji se ne mogu pretvoriti u reči. Uprkos pozamašnoj veličini i napomenutom položaju, unutar ambisa koji je zjapio na dnu okeana, čini se, od kad je sveta i veka, bez sumnje sam mogao naslutiti da je strani objekat predstavljao dobro oblikovani monolit, čija je neizmerna masa, u stvari, plod građevinske veštine, kao i predmet obožavanja nekih, inteligentnih bića.⁴⁰

Najednom sva moja pažnja bude zaokupljena golemim osebnim objektom na suprotnoj uzvisini, koji se strmo uzdizao tridesetak metara ispred mene. Objekt se bjelasao, pomilovan novim zrakama mjeseca koji se dizao. Da je to bio samo divovski komad stijene, uskoro sam se uvjerio, ali bio sam svjestan narocita dojma da njegove konture i smještaj nisu u potpunosti djelo Prirode. Poblize ispitivanje ispunilo me senzacijama koje ne mogu izraziti jer unatoc njegovoj enormnoj velicini i položaju u ponoru koji je zjapio na dnu mora još otkako je svijet bio mlad, ja sam opazio izvan svake sumnje da je cudnovati objekt bio dobro oblikovan monolit ciji je masivni volumen upoznao obrtništvo, a možda i kult živih i razumnih stvorenja.⁴¹

Text Type

The text type remains the same.

Register

The register remains the same.

Lexical Analysis

Perhaps the only lexeme interesting for present purposes in this paragraph is *workmanship*.

workmanship

English

workmanship has the propositional meaning of *work done by a skilled crafter*. It has a neutral expressive meaning. Its presupposed meaning is governed by the context of a monolith that

³⁹ Lovecraft, H. P. (1917), *op. cit.*

⁴⁰ Ognjanović, D., et al. (2012), *op. cit.*

⁴¹ Banović, D. (2006), *op. cit.*

rose from the sea. The evoked meaning is one of an intelligent race that lives beneath the ocean for a considerable amount of time.

Serbian

In Serbian, it is translated as *građevinske veštine*, which has the propositional meaning of *crafting skill*. The expressive meaning is neutral. The presupposed meaning is defined by the same means. The evoked meaning is the same.

Croatian

In Croatian, it is translated as *obrtništvo*, which has the propositional meaning of trade. The expressive meaning is neutral. The presupposed meaning is defined by the same means. The evoked meaning is the same.

Although the Croatian translation seemingly fulfills all the listed criteria, the translation in context is stilted. This is in part due to the word itself being a metonym of workmanship – since workmanship is a kind of trade. It is in a larger part due to the retention of the original sentence structure. That something *has known the workmanship of* is slightly unusual and marked in English. In Croatian, this effect is amplified.

Thematic and Informational analysis

The perhaps most interesting sentence is the final one in the original text. Its thematic/informational structure may be mapped as follows:

Old information: [A closer scrutiny]

New information: [filled me with sensations I cannot express;]

Old information: [for despite its enormous magnitude, and its position in an abyss which had yawned at the bottom of the sea since the world was young,]

New information: [I perceived beyond a doubt that the strange object was a well-shaped monolith whose massive bulk had known the workmanship and perhaps the worship of living and thinking creatures.]

The sentence is very long and complicated. The Serbian translation, in this case, splits it into two at the point of the semicolon in the original. The Croatian translation retains the original structure. In either case, the thematic/informational structure follows the same pattern, since the theme being spoken about is the old information, and what is being expressed about it, i.e. the rheme is the new information.

Cohesion

The cohesion is maintained mainly through the constant reference to the monolith.

English

For the monolith: *(vast and singular) object, (an) object (that gleamed whitely), it, (a gigantic) piece of stone, its, its, its, (strange) object, (well-shaped) monolith, whose (massive bulk)*

Serbian

For the monolith: *(ogroman) objekat, koji (se strmo uzdizao), koji (se belio), (džinovskom) komadu kamena, njegove, (strani) objekat, (dobro oblikovani) monolit, čija (je neizmerna masa)*

Croatian

For the monolith: *(golemim osebujnim) objektom, koji (se strmo uzdizao), objekt (se bjelasao), (divovski) komad stijene, njegove (konture), njegovoj (enormnoj velicini), cudnovati (objekt), (dobro oblikovan) monolit, čiji (je masivni volumen)*

What is perhaps interesting to note is that this is an example of Lovecraft's use of original adjectives, as well as his 'detailed vagueness'. The object is described through a variety of adjectives, and different points of it are highlighted, but they always stay in the sphere of details. It is never said how tall, wide, and long the monolith is, what its shape exactly is, what exactly is carved where on its surface, etc. The translations seem to realize the stylistic value of this series of references and retain them almost in full.

Coherence

Coherence is critical in sections like this one. Consequently, many spatial and several temporal elements of cohesion are to be found.

English: *At once, on the opposite slope, rose, about a hundred yards ahead, ascending (moon), soon, position, position, at the bottom of (the sea), since.*

Serbian: *Odjednom, na suprotnoj strani, uzdizao, nekih stotinjak metara ispred, naviruće, uskoro, pozicija, položaju, na dnu (okeana), od kad,*

Croatian: *Najednom, suprotnoj uzvisini, uzdizao, tridesetak metara ispred, dizao, uskoro, smještaj, položaju, na dnu (mora), otkako,*

Conclusion

Although overall the translations are adequate, there are some incongruencies in both. For example, the Serbian translation has *bez sumnje sam mogao naslutiti* which could be translated as *without a doubt, I could have suspected* which makes no semantic sense. The Croatian translation has the already mentioned *čiji je masivni volumen upoznao obrtništvo, a možda i kult živih i razumnih stvorenja*, which, even if it may be acceptable is highly unusual or marked. The implication as well is ambiguous. It is clear that in both the original and the Serbian translation the monolith is meant to have been a product of said workmanship. In the Croatian translation the interpretation of *witnessed the workmanship* is possible, if not more likely.

Aside from that, the translations are successful. The translation is closer to the original in crucial points, as in the descriptive buildup mentioned before. It also reproduces roughly the same tone of the passage.

Usurped Primacy

The idea that the human race is superseded by another intelligent lifeform on Earth appears to figure prominently in Lovecraft's later works. Although only vaguely implied in this excerpt, it is the first sign of a concept that would become prominent in Lovecraft's later writing.

Of their faces and forms I dare not speak in detail; for the mere remembrance makes me grow faint. Grotesque beyond the imagination of a Poe or a Bulwer, they were damnably human in general outline despite webbed hands and feet, shockingly wide and flabby lips, glassy, bulging eyes, and other features less pleasant to recall. [...]

Then suddenly I saw it. With only a slight churning to mark its rise to the surface, the thing slid into view above the dark waters. Vast, Polyphemus-like, and loathsome, it darted like a stupendous monster of nightmares to the monolith,

about which it flung its gigantic scaly arms, the while it bowed its hideous head and gave vent to certain measured sounds. I think I went mad then.⁴²

O licima i samim oblicima tih stvorenja, ne usuđujem se ni da pišem u detaljima, zbog toga što me samo prisećanje na njih dovodi na rub nesvestice. Nakazni, van svih pojmovna Poove i Balverove mašte, oni su imali, prokletu, ljudsku fizionomiju

⁴² Lovecraft, H. P. (1917), *op. cit.*

u opštem smislu, uprkos spojenim prstima na rukama i nogama, uprkos zaprepašujuće širokim i otromboljenim usnama i staklastim iskolačenim očima, neprijatnim za prizivanje u misli. [...]

Potom sam sasvim neočekivano, ugledao nešto. Skoro praćakajući se, ne bi li doplutalo do površine, to, stvorenje, je ušlo u moj vidokrug, iznad mračnih voda. Ogromno i odvratno, imalo je izgled zastrašujućeg čudovišta iz košmara. Približivši se monolitu, oko koga je obavilo svoje džinovske krljušaste udove, stvorenje je počelo da se klanja gornjim delom tela, i da pri tom, ispušta izvesne odmerene zvuke. Mislim da sam upravo tada i izgubio razum. ⁴³

O njihovim licima i oblicima ne usuđujem se detaljno govoriti, jer me na samo sjecanje hvata nesvjestica. Groteskni, s onu stranu mašte Poa ili Bulwera², bili su vraški ljudski u općim crtama unatoc mrežastim dlanovima i stopalima, sablažnjivo širokim i labavim usnama, staklastim buljavim očima i drugim odlikama koje su manje simpatične da ih se prisjećam. [...]

Tada sam je iznenada vidio. Uz tek slabo buckanje koje je označilo njezino uzdizanje na površinu, stvar se pojavila nad vodom. Golema, nalik na Polifema¹ i odurna. Jurnula je na monolit poput čudesnih čudovišta iz noćnih mora i oko njega ovila svoje divovske ljuskave udove, pa pognula svoju odvratnu glavu i pustila određene pravilne zvuke. Mislim da sam tada pomahnitao. ⁴⁴

Text Type

The text type remains the same.

Register

The register is largely the same, but the tenor is slightly more personal, i.e. the narrator conveys more of his attitudes and emotions.

Lexical Analysis

Some interesting word choices have been made in the description of the carvings: *webbed*, *flabby*, *bulging*; as well as in the description of the living being: *Stupendous*, *scaly*, *measured*. They figure prominently in the descriptions, partially also because they are alliterative, repeating a series of plosives and fricatives respectively.

webbed

English

webbed has the propositional meaning of *connected or formed like a web*. It is expressively neutral. Its presupposed meaning is governed by its collocation with *hands and feet*. This

⁴³ Ognjanović, D., et. al. (2012), *op. cit.*

⁴⁴ Banović, D. (2006), *op. cit.*

modifies the meaning to *connected by a membrane*. The evoked meaning is that of a human-like entity with amphibian-like hands and feet.

Serbian

The Serbian translation uses the word *spojenim*. It has the propositional meaning of *connected*. It has a neutral expressive meaning. Due to its collocation with *prstima na rukama i nogama* its presupposed meaning is *connected with skin*. It is evocative of a humanoid being with connected fingers.

The problem here is that the wording is in a sense a hyponym. It is true that the notion of *webbed hands and feet* is contained in the meaning of *connected hands and feet*, but it might be interpreted otherwise as well. For example, as *fingers which have grown together*.

Croatian

The Croatian translation uses the word *mrežastim*. It has the propositional meaning of *web-like*. It has a neutral expressive meaning. Determining if any presupposed meaning exists is difficult. Since the collocation with *dlanovima i stopalima* is definitely unusual. Its evoked meaning, therefore, depends on whether the intended connection to amphibian-like hands and feet is made.

The problem here is that the collocation is transferred directly from English although such a collocation does not exist in the target language. Consequently, the meaning is dubious if not lost to a considerable number of readers.

flabby

English

flabby has the propositional meaning of *soft, loose, and fleshy*. It has a negative expressive meaning. Through its collocation with *lips*, it has the meaning of *disproportionately large and drooping*. Its evoked meaning is that of a large mouth, non-human in appearance.

Serbian

The Serbian translation uses the word *otromboljenim*. The propositional meaning of the word is *soft, loose and fat*. The expressive meaning is slightly less negative. The presupposed meaning arising from its collocation with *usnama* is *disproportionally large and drooping*. The evoked meaning is that of a large mouth with a non-human appearance.

The meaning here lines up very well. The only potential problem is that the expression is rather informal in the target language, and perhaps even part of a dialect/sociolect.

Croatian

The Croatian translation uses the word *labavim*. The propositional meaning of the word is *loose*. It is neutral in expressive meaning. Since it collocates with *usnama*, it has the presupposed meaning of *fleshy, loose or droopy*. Its evoked meaning is that of a large mouth with a non-human appearance.

This translation loses the strongly negative connotations, and the additional meaning of fleshiness, at least in the propositional sense. However, it is in part regained by inference and contextual clues.

bulging

English

bulging has the propositional meaning of *protruding or swelling outwards*. The expressive meaning is slightly negative. The presupposed meaning arises from its collocation with *eyes*, and is *exceedingly large, glossy, protruding out of their sockets*. The evoked meaning is of large, watery eyes, protruding out of their sockets.

Serbian

The Serbian translation uses the word *iskolačenim*.

iskolačenim has the propositional meaning of *wide open*. It has a somewhat negative expressive meaning. Its propositional meaning is indistinguishable from its propositional meaning since it rarely if ever occurs outside of this collocation. The evoked meaning is *wide-open eyes*.

The problem here is that it contains a meaning not present in the original. The usual assumption that *wide-open eyes* are voluntarily such – i.e., the owner intentionally opens them up.

Croatian

The Croatian translation uses the word *buljavim*. The propositional meaning is *staring*, the expressive meaning is negative. The presupposed meaning is *exceedingly large, glossy,*

protruding out of their sockets. The evoked meaning is that of large, watery eyes, protruding out of their sockets.

This seems to be a better fit for the translation, not in the least because it helps retain the plosive alliteration.

The reluctance of the Serbian translator to use the same or similar word (e.g., combining *bulging eyes* into the adjective *buljooko*) could perhaps be explained as a difference in the perceived formality of the expression in the two languages.

stupendous

English

stupendous has the propositional meaning of *extremely impressive*. The expressive meaning is positive. The presupposed meaning is *unbelievable, awesome* and arises from the collocation with *monster of nightmares*. The evoked meaning is of an unbelievable, imaginary being.

This expression is significant as a point of contrast. It follows Lovecraft's philosophical view that even though humanity's glimpses into the universe are terrifying they also invoke awe.

Serbian

The Serbian translation uses the word *zastrašujućeg*. The propositional meaning is *terrifying*. The expressive meaning is negative. The presupposed meaning is *inducing terror on sight*. The evoked meaning is that of a terrifying imaginary creature.

Clearly, this translation changes the original considerably. This is further corroborated by the omitting of *Polyphemous-like* and the movement of *darted* into the next sentence. The original describes the movement of the beast by comparing it to the awe-inspiring movement of a nightmarish creature – its appearance is only implicit in this clause. The Serbian translation does away with the movement and explicitly describes its appearance.

Croatian

The Croatian translation uses the word *čudesnih*. The propositional meaning is *fantastical*. The expressive meaning is neutral or slightly positive. The presupposed meaning is *fictional, unbelievable*. The evoked meaning is that of a fantastical imaginary creature.

This translation captures the contrast slightly better. It puts somewhat more focus on the wondrous nature of the thing than the awe-inspiring dimension that the original highlights, but the notions are really very close.

scaly

English

Scaly has the propositional meaning of *covered in scales*. The expressive meaning is neutral. The presupposed meaning is the same. The evoked meaning is of a creature with scaly skin.

Serbian

Krljušaste has the propositional meaning of *covered in fish-scales*. The expressive meaning is neutral. The presupposed meaning is the same. The evoked meaning is of a creature with fish-like skin.

Croatian

Ljuskave has the propositional meaning of *covered in scales*. The expressive meaning is neutral. The presupposed meaning is the same. The evoked meaning is of a creature with scaly skin.

The main difference between the Serbian and Croatian translations is in the degree of specificity.

While *ljuska* is the formal expression for scales either on fish or on reptiles, *ljuskava koža* would usually be interpreted as *flaky skin*. The meaning of *covered in scales* arises from its context.

Krljušt, is more informal and is used almost exclusively to refer to specifically fish-scales.

In that sense, while both translations are acceptable, the Serbian translation sacrifices some tonal formality for the sake of clarity, while the Croatian retains the tone but introduces a possible ambiguity.

measured

English

measured has the propositional meaning of *regular, carefully considered, rhythmic*. Its expressive meaning is positive. Its propositional meaning is *systematic, purposeful*. The evoked meaning is of speech produced by a non-human entity.

Serbian

odmerene has the propositional meaning of *regular, carefully considered*. Its expressive meaning is positive. Its propositional meaning is *systematically, purposefully*. The evoked meaning is of speech produced by a non-human entity.

Croatian

pravilne has the propositional meaning of *according to rule, following a pattern, regular*. The expressive meaning is positive. The propositional meaning is *systematically, in a pattern*. The evoked meaning is of speech produced by a non-human entity.

The only possible problem is that *pravilno* is more often used as meaning *correctly*. Although the meaning of something rhythmical, patterned, is there, it could be considered secondary, and therefore marked in this situation.

Thematic and Informational Analysis

This portion of the text is the climactic finale of Lovecraft's story. Accordingly, two large, complex sentences describing the creatures are given.

Grotesque beyond the imagination of a Poe or a Bulwer, they were damnably human in general outline despite webbed hands and feet, shockingly wide and flabby lips, glassy, bulging eyes, and other features less pleasant to recall.

Here the informational and thematic structure does not line up. The theme is roughly speaking *grotesqueness of the creatures*, it is introduced by the first clause before the comma. The rheme is their actual description following *they were*.

However, in informational terms, the only old information (on the sentence level) is the clause *they were*. Everything else is new information.

Both translations follow the exact same structure.

Old information: [Vast, Polyphemus-like, and loathsome,]

New information: [it darted like a stupendous monster of nightmares to the monolith, about which it flung its gigantic scaly arms, the while it bowed its hideous head and gave vent to certain measured sounds.]

The informational/thematic structure of this sentence is purposefully adjusted. The initial description is introduced without a subject to avoid a conjunct. The reference is made clear through anaphoric ellipsis.

The theme, therefore, is the creature, and the rheme is its movement.

The old information is the creature, and the new information is its movement.

Both translations introduce a full stop and split this sentence into two without any apparent reason since the rest of the structure is followed rather closely.

Cohesion

Cohesion in the original is realized mostly through the use of pronouns.

English

Pronouns: *Their, they, it, its, it, it, its*

Nouns: *The thing, monster*

The two translations use inflections much more.

Serbian

Pronouns: *Njih, oni, svoje, to*

Nouns: *Tih stvorenja, nešto, stvorenje*

Inflection: *Doplutalo, imalo, obavilo, ispušta, nakazni, je ušlo, ogromno, odvratno*

Croatian

Pronouns: *njihovim, je, njezino, svoje, svoju,*

Nouns: *stvar*

Inflection: *pojavila, jurnula, ovila, pognula, pustila, golema, odurna, groteskni, bili su*

It is interesting perhaps that even so not all the pronouns used are strictly necessary. The abundance of inflectional cues is often enough to retain effortless cohesion.

Coherence

Coherence is realized perhaps most notably through constant use of evaluative or affected language. The use is also fairly consistent throughout the translations.

English

Dare not, makes me grow faint, grotesque, damnably human, shockingly, less pleasant, loathsome, stupendous, hideous

Serbian

Ne usuđujem se, dovodi na rub nesvestice, nakazni, prokletu, zaprepašćujuće, neprijatnim, odvratno, zastrašujućeg,

Croatian

Ne usuđujem se, hvata nesvjestica, groteskni, vraški ljudski, sablažnjivo, manje simpaticne, odurna, čudesnih, odvratnu

Conclusion

Being the crucial, climactic finale of the story, this portion of the text is unsurprisingly problematic for translation. The translations are consequently not without faults.

There are issues on the lexical level – omitting of descriptions (*Polyphemous-like* in Serbian), non-equivalence (*bulging eyes* – *iskolačene oči*; *flabby lips* – *labave usne*), and possible ambiguities (*scaly arms* – *ljuskave ruke*). There are some apparently unnecessary transformations done in the sentence structure (separating one sentence into two), adding of information not present in the original (*bowing its head* becomes, roughly, *bowing its torso*), and other, less noticeable things.

Overall, both translations are acceptable in that they convey the core message of the excerpt. Stylistic intricacies are perhaps, however, mismanaged.

The Colour out of Space

The Colour out of Space is one of Lovecraft's best stories. He himself cherished it as his favorite for the rest of his life.⁴⁵ It refines the ideas found in *Dagon* and does so in a more mature style. The cosmicism or otherworldliness in particular is here brought to its absolute peak in Lovecraft's writing.⁴⁶ The inland Massachusetts location is realistically constructed as well.⁴⁷ The scientific jargon is used precisely and completely in several passages, without the vagueness found in *Dagon*.⁴⁸

One thing that appears to be specifically tied to this story is Lovecraft's exploration of the idea of color. It seems that Lovecraft uses it as a guiding principle throughout the story. Beyond providing narrative cohesion, it seems also to function as an element of estrangement. Since color is easy to understand but hard to describe, it lends itself well to the idea of phenomena beyond human comprehension.⁴⁹

Color as an Alienating Tool

In this excerpt, the familiar concept of color in artistic terms is extended to the real world. The effect appears to be alienating in two ways: first, it describes the real world in terms of a painting; following that, even that outlandish description is further complicated by the painting itself being distorted.

Upon everything was a haze of restlessness and oppression; a touch of the unreal and the grotesque, as if some vital element of perspective or chiaroscuro were awry.⁵⁰

Nad sve se nadnosila izmaglica nemira i potištenosti, dodir nestvarnog i grotesknog, kao da je neki bitan element perspektive bio poremećen.⁵¹

Nad sve se nadnosila izmaglica nemira i prigušenosti; natruha nestvarnog i grotesknog, kao da je neki bitan element perspektive ili chiaroscuro bio poremećen.⁵²

This sentence is part of the description of the village that is the chief location of the story.

⁴⁵ Joshi, S. T. (2016) *op. cit.* (p. 158)

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* (p. 161, 162, 313)

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* (p. 160)

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* (p. 162)

⁴⁹ Harman, G., (2012) *op. cit.* (p. 72, 76, 77)

⁵⁰ Lovecraft, H. P. (1927), *The Colour out of Space*. Retrieved 20 September 2020, from <https://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/cs.aspx>

⁵¹ Ognjanović, D., et al. (2012), *op. cit.*

⁵² Fančović, M. (2003), *Howard Phillips Lovecraft Reanimator i druge priče*. Zagreb, Zagrebačka naklada.

Text Type

Its text type is fiction.

Register

Its register is almost poetic, in the field of fiction, with a subjective tenor and in the written mode.

Lexical Analysis

The crux of this sentence is in its closing clause (*as if*) *some vital element of perspective or chiaroscuro were awry*. The interesting lexemes are therefore *perspective*, *chiaroscuro*, and *awry*.

perspective

perspective has the propositional meaning of *point of view*. It has no expressive value. Its presupposed meaning is *apparent proportions*, governed by the artistic context. The evoked meaning is of the proportions of real-life objects being akin to those in paintings.

Since both translations use the direct equivalent *perspektive*, there is no need to discuss them separately.

chiaroscuro

chiaroscuro has the propositional meaning of *light-dark*. It has a neutral expressive meaning. Its presupposed meaning is *the contrastive interplay of light and shadow* and is governed by the fact that the expression is used only in the artistic context. Its evoked meaning is that of artistic lighting in the real world.

The Serbian translation dispenses of this expression completely.

The Croatian translation retains it without explanation.

The translational problem here should be merely whether to adapt the spelling or not. Even in the original, it is a loanword with a very specific field of usage, and would likely not be recognized by people not knowledgeable about it. Therefore, relative obscurity is intended.

awry

Awry has the propositional meaning of *away from the expected course, wrong*. The expressive meaning is slightly negative. The presupposed meaning in this context is *violating the artistic principles*. The evoked meaning is of a place that looks like a distorted painting.

Both languages use the word *poremećen*. The propositional meaning of which is *disorderly, in disarray*. The expressive meaning is negative. The presupposed meaning is *violating the artistic principles*. The evoked meaning is of a place that looks like a distorted painting.

By removing the reference to *chiaroscuro*, the artistic streak that runs through the original is somewhat damaged in Serbian. The connection there is dependent on the evocative force of the *elements of perspective* as clear references to art.

Informational and Thematic Analysis

The informational and thematic structure of the sentence is standard, with the rheme following the theme, and the new information following the old information.

Old information: [Upon everything]

New information: [was a haze of restlessness and oppression; a touch of the unreal and the grotesque, as if some vital element of perspective or chiaroscuro were awry.]

The translations retain the same structure.

Cohesion

The descriptive portion of the sentence consists of co-referential noun phrases and maintains the cohesion of the sentence.

a haze of restlessness and oppression, a touch of the unreal and the grotesque, some vital element of perspective or chiaroscuro

The same is true for the translations, with the exception of *or chiaroscuro* in Serbian.

Coherence

Coherence is maintained through artistic references, as mentioned previously. The translations retain these elements, with the exception of *chiaroscuro* in Serbian.

Conclusion

The translations are acceptable. The decision to omit *chiaroscuro* in Serbian is unwarranted. Both translations replicate the overall impression of the original and successfully convey the artistic connotations.

Contrastive Horror

The animals mentioned in this excerpt are usually signs of pastoral bliss; here, however, they are strung together into a single entity. The effect of degradation and decay thus appears to be exacerbated by their commonplace nature.

He was never specific, but appeared to think that they were not as characteristic of the anatomy and habits of squirrels and rabbits and foxes as they ought to be.

Nije nikada bio sasvim precizan, ali činilo se da misli da nisu toliko karakteristični za građu i navike veverica i zečeva i lisica koliko bi trebalo da budu.

Nije nikad bio sasvim određen, ali činilo se da misli da oni nisu onoliko karakteristični za građu i navike vjeverica i zečeva i lisica koliko bi trebali biti.

Text Type

The text type is fiction.

Register

The text is in a conventional fiction-writing register. The field is generalized reporting. The tenor is personal, but fairly formal. The mode is written.

Lexical Analysis

Instead of focusing on individual lexemes, it might be beneficial to consider some of the collocations found in this sentence. Graham Harman gives an interesting stylistic analysis of this passage.⁵³ He differentiates three distinct stylistic techniques employed in this sentence. The first is the stringing together of *squirrels and rabbits and foxes* as typically harmless animals into a unified whole that carries a quality of corruption or degradation. The second is the stringing together of *anatomy and habits*, which shows the breakdown of the usually inextricable relationship between a creature and its footprints. The third is the vagueness of *ought*, which seems to concede that the relationship between the anatomy and habits and footprints may not be definite.

The translations use the words *v(j)everica i zečeva i lisica, građu i navike* and *trebalo da budu/trebali biti*. The meanings are directly equivalent in all words except one: anatomy is translated as *građa*, i.e., *build*.

⁵³ Harman, G. (2012). *op. cit.* (p. 74, 75)

First of all, the usual collocation is in relation to the human body, as it would be in English. Beyond that, the word is more informal – anatomy is purposefully scientific, as is corroborated by Harman's analysis of the implication in the second and third stylistic markers in this sentence. Finally, there is no reason to introduce that change, *anatomija* exists in both languages, is used to refer to animals, and is a direct equivalent.

Informational and Thematic Analysis

Old information: [He]

New information: [was never specific,]

Old information: [but appeared to think]

New information: [that they were not as characteristic of the anatomy and habits of squirrels and rabbits and foxes as they ought to be.]

The theme are the opinions of Nahum. On the sentence level, we already know about Nahum, but we get to know in the rheme that he was never specific and that he appeared to think that their characteristics were strange. On the clausal level, we know that he appeared to think, but we get to know what he appeared to think.

Cohesion

There are a few cohesive elements. There are two references to Nahum, once overt as *he*, and once as an ellipsis in *but appeared to think*. There are two references to the footprints, both times as *they*.

Serbian and Croatian achieve more or less the same with inflection. The references to Nahum are found in *bio*, and *misli*. References to the footprints may be found in *nisu*, *karakteristični*, *da budu* in Serbian; and *oni*, *nisu*, *karakteristični*, *trebali*, *bi biti* in Croatian.

Coherence

Coherence is maintained through references to animals, their physiology, habits, and footprints.

Conclusion

Overall, the translation is successful, although the translation of *anatomy* as *građa*, i.e., *build*, is dubious.

Disparate Alternatives

Harman suggests that the device of providing two disparate alternatives linked by a disjunct *or* is one of Lovecraft's most useful literary devices⁵⁴. The reader is forced to interpret the two items as a single whole, which presents an impossibility.

Thaddeus went mad in September after a visit to the well. He had gone with a pail and had come back empty-handed, shrieking and waving his arms, and sometimes lapsing into an inane titter or whisper about 'the moving colours down there'.⁵⁵

Tadeus je poludeo u septembru nakon što je otišao na bunar. Otišao je s vedrom, a vratio se praznih ruku, vrišteći i mašući rukama i povremeno pretvarajući svoje krike u šuplji kikut ili šapat o "bojama koje se tamo dole pomeraju".⁵⁶

Thaddeus je poludio u rujnu nakon odlaska do bunara. Otišao je s vjedrom, a vratio se praznih ruku, vrišteći i mašući rukama, i povremeno se hihoćući bezumno i šapćući o "bojama koje se kreću tamo dolje".⁵⁷

Text Type

The text type is fiction.

Register

The register is general-purpose storytelling. The field is fiction. The tenor is informal, fairly personal, slightly subjective. The mode is written.

Lexical Analysis

Once again, Harman's analysis might be of interest. He highlights the disjunction *titter or whisper* as being representative of an important stylistic device in Lovecraft's writing.⁵⁸ More precisely, the use of two completely disparate concepts as two alternatives. In this case, it is inane, shrill laughter and whispering. The reader may interpret this either as someone's voice changing haphazardly between shrillness and whispering or as laying in between the two. Both are difficult to conceptualize and thus produce horror at the degree of human degradation.

⁵⁴ Harman, G. (2012). (p. 79, 80)

⁵⁵ Lovecraft, H. P. (1927), *op. cit.*

⁵⁶ Ognjanović, D., et al. (2012), *op. cit.*

⁵⁷ Fančović, M. (2003), *op. cit.*

⁵⁸ Harman, G. (2012), *op. cit.* (p. 79, 80)

In the translations *šuplji kikot ili šapat* and *hihoćući bezumno i šapćući* are used in Serbian and Croatian, respectively. There are two significant differences.

In the Serbian translation *titter* and *whisper* are retained as nouns, while in Croatian they are transformed into verbs; accordingly, in Serbian *inane* is translated as an adjective, and in Croatian as an adverb.

The Serbian translation translates *inane* as *šuplji*, and the Croatian translation as „bezumno“.

Šupljo is the equivalent of *hollow*. The translation could be acceptable since native speakers would likely identify the meaning to be metaphorical – i.e., hollow as lacking significance or sincerity; however, the collocation with laughter appears to be very rare, and at times used to describe dry laughter as well.

Bezumno translates directly as *mindlessly*. The translation could be acceptable since it denotes senselessness. However, when collocating with laughter it usually denotes pathological laughter in the medical sense. Hence, this translation might be unnecessarily specific to some readers, but since the pathologic quality is implied by the context it might be acceptable.

Informational and Thematic Analysis

Old information: [He had gone with a pail]

New information: [and had come back empty-handed, shrieking and waving his arms, and sometimes lapsing into an inane titter or whisper about ‘the moving colours down there’]

The informational structure is conventional. The reader already knows that Thaddeus has gone mad last September, and is now given the new information on his madness.

We are introduced to the theme in the previous sentence, that being *how Thaddeus went mad last September*, when he had gone to fetch water is a reference to that information. The rheme then follows, elaborating how it manifested itself.

The translations largely follow the same structure.

Cohesion

Elements of cohesion may be found in the references to Thaddeus, mostly in elided form through the use of coordinated verb phrases.

Thus, in English there is: *Thaddeus, He, [he] had come back, [he was] shrieking and waving, his, [he was] sometimes lapsing into an inane titter or whisper.*

The translations once again achieve much of this through inflection:

In Serbian: *Tadeus, je poludeo, je otišao, otišao je, vratio se, svoje.*

In Croatian: *Thaddeus, je poludio, otišao je, vratio se.*

Coherence

Internally, coherence is achieved through the use of words evocative of madness:

Mad, shrieking, waving his arms, lapsing, inane titter

On the level of the whole story, the reference to *moving colors* establishes coherence.

The same is true for the translations.

In Serbian: *poludeo, vrišteći, mašuci rukama, krike, šuplji kikot*

In Croatian: *poludio, vrišteći, mašuci rukama, hihoćući bezumno*

Conclusion

It is noticeable that the difference between the two translations is in most places superficial. Both adhere to the original closely in form. The uncanny coordination of two disparate alternatives is maintained. Overall, the translation is successful, despite minor doubts on the lexical level.

The Call of Cthulhu

The Call of Cthulhu is Lovecraft's most well-known story. In some regards, it is of lesser quality than *The Colour out of Space*, but it is more ambitious and thus contains many more easily recognizable Lovecraftian motifs. For the present purposes, a few stylistic characteristics are important.

The first is the narrative structure. Building upon the embeddedness of narratives in his previous works, Lovecraft ably introduces several narrators with distinct registers in this story. The story also contains some examples of Lovecraft intentionally constructing a narrator that is overly dismissive of the fantastic things that occur. This has the effect of coaxing the reader into more readily suspending their disbelief and lends credence to the tale.

Following that, he lays out his core idea of the cosmic insignificance of humanity in more detailed, if not too overt terms. Again, the revelation of it comes from the viewpoints of science, art, and spirituality – all of them presented as essentially useless in the face of these phenomena outside of human cognitive capability.

Finally, he uses his characteristic style of description in an even more elaborate manner. In this story instances can be found where a vague danger or horror is defined through comparison with conventionally dangerous or horrific things.

Cosmicism

The notion first mentioned in *Dagon* is here brought to a high point. In explicit terms, the narrator muses not only about the damage some knowledge may cause to humanity, but the inevitability of total destruction following all knowledge, once it is logically correlated.

The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far. The sciences, each straining in its own direction, have hitherto harmed us little; but some day the piecing together of dissociated knowledge will open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful position therein, that we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the deadly light into the peace and safety of a new dark age.⁵⁹

Najmilosrdnija stvar na svetu, rekao bih, nesposobnost je ljudskog uma da uzajamno poveže sav svoj sadržaj . Mi živimo na blaženom ostrvu neznanja, usred

⁵⁹ Lovecraft, H. P. (1926), *The Call of Cthulhu*. Retrieved 20 September 2020, from <https://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/cc.aspx>

mračnih mora beskonačnosti i nije nam namenjeno da putujemo predaleko. Nauke, svaka stremeći na svoju stranu, do sada nam nisu mnogo naudile, ali jednoga dana spajanje tog razuđenog znanja razotkriće nam tako užasavajuće horizonte stvarnosti, i strahotnost našeg položaja unutar nje, da ćemo ili poludeti od otkrovenja, ili od te svetlosti pobeći u mir i sigurnost novog mračnog doba.⁶⁰

Najmilosrdnija stvar na svijetu, rekao bih, nesposobnost je ljudskog uma da međusobno poveže sve svoje sastojke. Mi živimo na mirnom otoku neznanja usred crnih mora beskonačnosti, i nije za nas da putujemo predaleko. Znanosti, od kojih svaka vuče na svoju stranu, dosad nam nisu mnogo naškodile; ali jednoga dana sastavljanje razdvojenoga znanja otvorit će takve užasavajuće prizore stvarnosti, i našega pogibeljnog položaja u istoj, da ćemo ili poludjeti od tog otkrivenja ili pobjeći od smrtonosne svjetlosti u mir i sigurnost novoga mračnog doba.⁶¹

Text Type

The text type is fiction.

Register

The register is conventional fiction. The field is fiction. The tenor is impersonal and pontificating without a clear audience, the mode is written.

Lexical Analysis

Two words or strings of words are important in this passage. First, *placid* in *placid sea of ignorance*, and second, *deadly* in *deadly light*.

They are opposed to each other and are constructed as pessimistic refusals of common approaches to knowledge. They build on the idiomatic phrase that says that ‘ignorance is bliss’, and they infer from this notion its ultimate conclusion.

placid

placid has the propositional meaning of *calm, peaceful*. Its expressive meaning is positive. The presupposed meaning of it comes from its association with *ignorance*. The evoked meaning is of virtuously peaceful ignorance.

The Serbian translation uses the word *blaženom*. The propositional meaning of which is *blessed, blissful*. The expressive meaning is positive. The presupposed meaning comes from its association with *ostrvu neznanja*, and further defines it as metaphorical *peace of mind*. The evoked meaning is of virtuously peaceful ignorance.

⁶⁰ Ognjanović, D., et al. (2012), *op. cit.*

⁶¹ Fančović, M. (2003), *op. cit.*

The Croatian translation uses the word *mirnom*. The propositional meaning is *peaceful or calm*. The expressive meaning is positive. The presupposed meaning is defined by its collocation with *otoku neznanja*, and denotes a metaphorical peace and calmness. The evoked meaning is of virtuously peaceful ignorance.

The problem with the translations is not in their choice of words. Both alternatives work in this context. The problem is that the idiom ‘ignorance is bliss’ is either non-existent or exceedingly rare in the target languages (outside of translation). The Serbian translation uses the more explicit reference to blissfulness or blessedness, while the Croatian translation retains more of the original's covertness. In this particular case, the Serbian translation might be more accessible to a larger readership.

deadly

deadly has the propositional meaning of *causing death*. The expressive meaning is negative. The presupposed meaning comes from the collocation with *light* and defines it as *shattering, destructive (knowledge)*. The evoked meaning is of knowledge able to destroy civilization.

The Serbian translation disposes of the word completely, instead referring to it as *te svetlosti*, i.e., *that light*. This takes away the inversion found in the original, but it does tie the concept with the preceding ideas expressed in the sentence. Thus, *that* stands as a reference to *sastavljanje razdvojenoga znanja otvorit će takve užasavajuće prizore stvarnosti, i našega pogibeljnog položaja u istoj*. This might function better as a cohesive device.

The Croatian translation uses the word *smrtonosne*. The word is a direct equivalent to *deadly* and need not be analyzed further.

Informational and Thematic Analysis

The bulky final sentence of the paragraph is of interest.

Old information: [The sciences, each straining in its own direction, have hitherto harmed us little; but some day the piecing together of dissociated knowledge]

New information: [will open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful position therein, that we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the deadly light into the peace and safety of a new dark age.]

The reader already knows from the context that the narrator thinks a complete knowledge of things is detrimental to a single human, now that notion is extended to humanity. That notion

becomes the theme of the sentence and is followed by a description of the consequences once such a thing occurs, functioning as the rheme.

The translations once again mirror the original structure very closely.

Cohesion

Cohesion is maintained through the reference to humanity once the representativeness of the narrator is established. In the latter part of the final sentence, ellipsis is employed.

English: *I, we, our, we, [we shall] flee*

The translations naturally use inflection in a few places instead of the pronouns, but retain the full number of cohesive elements found in the original, including the ellipsis at the end, as well as introducing two elements not present in the original.

Serbian: *rekao bih, mi, nam, nam, našeg, da ćemo, [da ćemo] pobeći*

Croatian: *Rekao bih, mi, nas, nam, našega, da ćemo, [da ćemo] pobjeći*

Coherence

Coherence is maintained through references to the mind, knowledge, and mental processes. The number of elements is the same in all three languages.

English: *mind, correlate, ignorance, sciences, knowledge, reality, frightful position therein, mad, revelation, dark age*

Serbian: *Uma, neznanja, nauke, znanja, stvarnosti, strahotnost našeg položaja, poludeti, otkrovenja, mračnog doba*

Croatian: *Uma, neznanja, znanosti, znanja, stvarnosti, našeg pogibeljnog položaja, poludjeti, otkrivenja, mračnog doba*

Conclusion

A minor flaw in the translations is that some expressions have been translated into more generalized language. An example would be *correlate*, which has a strong intellectual or scientific connotation in English, becomes something akin to *combining, piecing together* in the translations. Whether or not the avoidance of this and similar instances would have produced a better translation is questionable.

The core of the message is successfully retained, the bulkiness of the final sentence is also kept in the translations and its coherence does not suffer. The more explicitly phrased *bliss* of ignorance in Serbian might be beneficial, but that does not imply unacceptability in the Croatian version.

Overall, the translations are successful.

Detailed Vagueness

The following description is perhaps the best-known stretch of text in all of Lovecraft's opus. The description is fairly detailed, many characteristics are touched upon, but the vagueness is still maintained. This is achieved through the insistence on the entity being more than the sum of its characteristics, as well as by it being a description of a depiction carved by another man.

If I say that my somewhat extravagant imagination yielded simultaneous pictures of an octopus, a dragon, and a human caricature, I shall not be unfaithful to the spirit of the thing. A pulpy, tentacled head surmounted a grotesque and scaly body with rudimentary wings; but it was the general outline of the whole which made it most shockingly frightful. Behind the figure was a vague suggestion of a Cyclopean architectural background.⁶²

Ako kažem da se mojoj pomalo ekstravagantnoj mašti istovremeno ukazivala slika hobotnice, zmaja, i karikature ljudskog bića, neću mnogo pogrešiti u iskazivanju duha te stvari. Mekano-sluzava glava s pipcima nadvisivala je groteskno, krljuštasto telo sa zakržljanim krilima, ali opšti obris celine bio je ono što ga je činilo šokantno zastrašujućim. Iza figure nalazio se nejasan nagoveštaj neke kiklopske arhitektonske pozadine.⁶³

Ukoliko kažem da se mojoj pomalo ekstravagantnoj mašti ukazivala istodobno slika hobotnice, zmaja, i karikature ljudskog bića, neću iskazati odstupanje od duha te stvari. Gvaljava glava s pipcima dizala se iznad grotesknoga, ljuskama osutog tijela s rudimentarnim krilima, ali opći obris toga bio je ono što ga je činilo najšokantnije zastrašujućim. Iza lika nalazio se nejasan nagovještaj nekakve kiklopske arhitektonske pozadine.⁶⁴

Text Type

The text type is fiction.

Register

The register is general discourse. The field is sculpting, the tenor is personal or expressive, fairly formal. The mode is written.

⁶² Lovecraft, H. P. (1926), *op. cit.*

⁶³ Ognjanović, D., et al. (2012), *op. cit.*

⁶⁴ Fančović, M. (2003), *op. cit.*

Lexical Analysis

A few word choices are interesting because of the differences in translation. Namely: *pulpy*, *scaly*, and *rudimentary*.

scaly

An analysis of the word *scaly* in another context may be found above on pages 32 and 33. It is of note that the translations are consistent in using the same expressions (*krljušt* in Serbian, *ljuska* in Croatian).

rudimentary

The translations of *rudimentary* are of notice for similar reasons as *anatomy* discussed on pages 40 and 41. Namely, the Serbian translation uses the word *zakržljelim*, while the Croatian translation uses the word *rudimentarnim*.

zakržljelim does indeed capture part of the meaning, as it denotes something that is atrophied or something that is vestigial. The problem is twofold. First, *rudimentary* in this context is much more likely to refer to the primitive or basic nature of the wings, rather than any sort of regression, devolution, or vestigial quality. Even if accepted as such, the translation loses the vaguely erudite sound of *rudimentary*, which appears to be much less colloquial or commonplace than *zakržljalo* is in Serbian.

rudimentarno in Croatian appears to be a direct equivalent, and although a loan word, it captures the whole breadth of the meaning present in English, and likely has even less frequency in the target language.

pulpy

English

pulpy has the propositional meaning of *resembling pulp* or *poorly written*. The expressive meaning is neutral or slightly negative. The presupposed meaning comes from the collocation with *tentacled head* and refines the meaning into *soft and wet, resembling pulp*. The evoked meaning is of an unpleasant head that resembles an octopus.

Serbian

The Serbian translation uses the words *Mekano-sluzava*. They are directly translated as *soft-slimy*. Taken as a whole, the two words thus cover the specific meaning realized by *pulpy* in English.

Croatian

The Croatian translation uses the word *gvaljava*. The propositional meaning of the word is *crowded, tangled, lumpy*. The expressed meaning is negative. The presupposed meaning is *tangled, lumpy and soft* because of the collocation with *tentacled*. The evoked meaning is of an unpleasant head that resembles an octopus.

It should be mentioned that two hyphenated descriptors as found in the Serbian translation are usually very limited in usage (one might find them most often with colors, as in, say *reddish-brown – crvenkasto-smeđa*). As well as that *gvalja*, the root of the adjective *gvaljava* is most often used in the expression *to have a lump in one's throat*. It is also sometimes used to refer to regurgitated undigested food by predators, e.g. owls. That is to say that this option might be marked as well.

Informational and Thematic Analysis

The informational structure may be presented as follows:

Old information: [A pulpy, tentacled head surmounted a grotesque and scaly body with rudimentary wings;]

New information: [but it was the general outline of the whole which made it most shockingly frightful.]

The reader already knows that the depiction is resembling an octopus, a dragon, and a human. The theme is therefore a detailing of these previously mentioned features, and the rheme is the new information that not its individual parts but its totality made it frightful.

The translations follow the same pattern.

Cohesion

Cohesion is maintained through reference to the creature.

English: *the thing, the whole, it, the figure*

Serbian: *te stvari, celine, ga, zastrašujućim, figure*

Croatian: *te stvari, toga, ga, zastrašujućim, lika*

Coherence

The elements of coherence are the descriptions of the bas-relief.

English: *simultaneous pictures of an octopus, a dragon, and a human caricature, a pulpy tentacled head, a grotesque and scaly body, rudimentary wings, general outline, cyclopean architectural background*

Serbian: *slika hobotnice, zmaja, i karikature ljudskog bića, mekano-služava glava s pipcima, groteskno, krljuštasto telo, zakržljanim krilima, opšti obris, kiklopske arhitektonske pozadine*

Croatian: *slika hobotnice, zmaja i karikature ljudskog bića, te stvari, gvaljava glava s pipcima, grotesknoga, ljuskama osutog tijela, rudimentarnim krilima, opći obris, kiklopske arhitektonske pozadine*

Conclusion

The translation is successful. Some noticeable problems do exist. For example: *I shall not be unfaithful to the spirit of the thing* is modified in both translations.

The Serbian translation expresses it as follows: *neću mnogo pogrešiti u iskazivanju duha te stvari*. Directly translated it would be *I will not be too wrong in expressing the spirit of the thing*.

The Croatian translation expresses it as follows: *neću iskazati odstupanje od duha te stvari*. The direct translation would be: *I will not express deviation from the spirit of the matter*.

In Serbian the notion of being *too wrong* about the description is introduced. Both translations introduce the verb *iskazati*, that is *to express*. This might be a result of the need of the two languages to reiterate the verb from the first part of the sentence *If I say* as an element of coherence.

Horrific by Comparison

By introducing an indirect comparison in this excerpt, Lovecraft achieves effective horror without writing it out directly. Johansen talks freely about the gruesome death of his shipmates but seems *queerly reticent* about going into details. The reader thus infers that whatever actually happened is worse than falling into a chasm and dying from the impact. The second paragraph describes the often-used notion of *wrong* or *non-Euclidean* geometry in definite terms. The idea of an acute angle behaving like an obtuse one separates the

appearance of matter completely from its essence. This is a reiteration of the *spirit of the thing* being different from the sum of its characteristics.⁶⁵

The next day, it appears, they raised and landed on a small island, although none is known to exist in that part of the ocean; and six of the men somehow died ashore, though Johansen is queerly reticent about this part of his story, and speaks only of their falling into a rock chasm. [...]

Parker slipped as the other three were plunging frenziedly over endless vistas of green-crustad rock to the boat, and Johansen swears he was swallowed up by an angle of masonry which shouldn't have been there; an angle which was acute, but behaved as if it were obtuse.⁶⁶

Sledećeg dana, kako se čini, došli su do malog ostrva na koje su se iskricali, iako se ne zna ni za jedno poznato ostrvo u tom delu okeana. Šestoro ljudi je nekako poginulo na obali, mada je Johansen neobično ćutljiv što se tog dela priče tiče i govori samo o njihovom padu u neki procep u stenama. [...]

Parker se okliznuo dok su preostala trojica panično jurila preko beskrajnih prostranstava zeleno obraslog kamena prema brodu, i Johansen se kune da ga je progutao jedan ugao zidina koji nije trebalo da bude tamo; ugao koji je bio oštar, ali se ponašao kao da je tup.⁶⁷

Sljedećeg dana, kako se čini, došli su do jednog malog otoka na koji su se iskricali, premda se ne zna ni za jedan otok u tom dijelu oceana; a šestorica ljudi su nekako poginula na njemu, premda je Johansen neobično povučen što se tog dijela priče tiče i govori samo o njihovu padu u neki procjep u stijenama. [...]

Parker se poskliznuo dok su preostala trojica panično jurila preko beskrajnih prostranstava zeleno obraslog kamena prema brodu, i Johansen se kune da ga je progutao jedan kut zidina koji nije trebao biti tamo; kut koji je bio oštar, ali se ponašao kao da je tup.⁶⁸

Text Type

The first paragraph is a newspaper article in type.

The second paragraph is fiction – reported speech.

Register

The register of the first paragraph is journalistic. The field is an accident report, the tenor is impersonal, objective, formal, it is in the written mode.

The register of the second paragraph is general discourse. The field is a personal account, the tenor is personal, subjective, still formal, and in the written mode.

⁶⁵ Harman, G. (2012). *op. cit.* (p. 65 - 68)

⁶⁶ Lovecraft, H. P. (1926), *op. cit.*

⁶⁷ Ognjanović, D., et al. (2012), *op. cit.*

⁶⁸ Fančović, M. (2003), *op. cit.*

Lexical Analysis

One interesting example might be the expression *reticent*.

reticent

English

reticent has the propositional meaning of *not revealing one's thoughts or feelings readily*. The expressive meaning is neutral. The presupposed meaning is *unwilling to talk about*. The evoked meaning is of someone unwilling to talk about an experience.

Serbian

The Serbian translation uses the word *ćutljiv*, directly translated as *quiet*. The expressive meaning is neutral. The presupposed meaning is not modified by the context. The evoked meaning is of someone unwilling to talk about an experience.

Croatian

The Croatian translation uses the word *povučen*, directly translated as *introverted, shy*. The presupposed meaning modifies the meaning to denote *shy about talking of this accident*. The evoked meaning is of someone unwilling to talk about an experience.

The interesting thing is that the Serbian translation uses a more explicit word, usually collocated specifically with speech, while the Croatian one uses a more generalized, metaphoric word. In the end, the evocative meaning is the same, but the Serbian translation makes it clear that what is being described is speech and not the overall character of Johansen.

Informational and Thematic Analysis

The informational and thematic structure is conventional.

Old information: [Parker slipped as the other three were plunging frenziedly over endless vistas of green-cruste rock to the boat, and]

New information: [Johansen swears he was swallowed up by an angle of masonry which shouldn't have been there; an angle which was acute, but behaved as if it were obtuse.]

From the immediately preceding text, the reader knows that three sailors died. Here the fourth's death is described by Johansen and reported by the narrator. Thus, the theme is laid out in the first part of the sentence – explaining the circumstances and timeframe of the death,

and then the report of Johanson's allegation functions as the rheme, or what is said about the topic of the sailor's death.

The narrator purposefully distances himself from the claim by highlighting that *Johansen swears*.

The translations follow an identical pattern.

Cohesion

Cohesion is achieved through reference to the sailors:

English: *they, six of the men, Johansen, their, Parker, other three, Johansen, he,*

Naturally, the translations use more inflection and some reflexive pronouns.

Serbian: *došli su, su se iskricali, šestoro ljudi, je poginulo, Johansen, njihovom, Parker, se okliznuo, preostala trojica, jurila, Johansen, ga,*

Croatian: *došli su, su se iskricali, šestorica ljudi, su nekako poginula, Johansen, njihovu, Parker, se poskliznuo, preostala trojica, jurila, Johansen, se kune, ga*

Coherence

Coherence is maintained through the references to nautical terms and the imagined architecture of the place.

English

Nautical: *landed, small island, ocean, six of the men, ashore, plunging, the boat, swallowed up*

Architecture: *endless vistas, green-cruled rock, angle of masonry, an angle, acute, obtuse*

Serbian

Nautical: *malog ostrva, iskricali, ostrvo, okeana, šestoro ljudi, obali, preostala trojica, brodu, proguta*

Architecture: *beskrajnih prostranstava, zeleno obraslog kamena, ugao zidina, ugao, oštar, tup*

Croatian

Nautical: *Malog otoka, iskricali, otok, oceana, šestorica ljudi, preostala trojica, brodu, progutao*

Architecture: *beskrajnih prostranstava, zeleno obraslog kamena, kut zidina, kut, oštar, tup*

Conclusion

The translations in general are successful, however, some significant losses can be found. For example, in both translations *masonry* becomes *kamena*, i.e. *stone*. This does not include the principal meaning of *masonry* – it is made out of some sort of stone, but the emphasized meaning is that it is artificial. In the translations, the meaning can be (and likely will be) understood as a natural occurrence or even reference to a greenish sea.

The distinction between the two registers is much less noticeable in the translations. The Serbian translation must have recognized this and in the book, this portion is printed in a newspaper-article frame.

Conclusion

The initial idea that motivated this study seems to have been disproven. Even if the translators had the literary criticism in mind, which seems to be the case, it has been presented in addendums to the translations. The translations themselves appear to follow fairly strict rules of adherence to the original sentence structure and word order in almost all places. The lexical choices are thus in part determined by the position they occur in. Because of this inflexibility many of the narrative and stylistic features of the original text are reproduced in the target text, but likely not because of any special attention given to them. The likelihood of that may be found in examples where stylistically pertinent qualities were not reproduced faithfully (e.g. inversion, p. 47 above; added meaning, p. 36, 51, 52 above; omission of meaning p. 55 above; complete omission p. 38, 39 above; mismatch in register p. 40, 41, 48, 49 above; etc.)

In addition to that, the literary criticism in English appears to strongly favor discussion about the thematic or ideological meaning, or significance of Lovecraft's writing, and stylistic analysis seems to be consequently sparse. It comes with little surprise, then, that the translation adopts a conservative approach.

Variations, however, do exist. Some references to historical or fictional figures are omitted (e.g. *Polyphemous-like*, p. 26, 27 above). Some concepts are translated through elaboration, or with more generalized language (e.g. *liberal discipline*, p. 16 above; *innumerable*, p. 21 above; *reticent* p. 53 above; etc.) , which seems to be unfortunately unavoidable in translation. Mismatches in register or formality are fairly rare, but appear more striking because of said rarity (e.g. journalistic register p. 56 above; scientific register p. 40, 41, 48, 49 above).

What is commendable is the accompanying literature in the form of translator's notes, biographical information, primary and secondary resources, a short overview of Lovecraftian literary theory, and illustrations in the Serbian translation. The Croatian translations contain less additional material but do also comment on the work of Lovecraft, and point to footnotes for less-known terminology.

What is perhaps most noticeable is that there is little crucial difference in the two translations. In *The Colour Out of Space*, there is a great opportunity for comparative analysis of the same text (presumably) written in Croatian first and later adapted to Serbian language norms. The reason is that for this particular story Marko Fančović is credited as the translator in the book edited by Dejan Ognjanović.

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