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Review of Momo Kapor's *The Magic of Belgrade* (translated by Ljiljana Bajić)

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One of the symbols of Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, are the writers who devoted their works to depicting its life, culture and citizens, and among the most notable of them was Momo Kapor (1937-2010). He was not only a writer, but also a renowned painter, and he illustrated his books himself – which rendered them irresistible for all readers, especially Belgraders. My review will focus on the translation of Kapor's book *Magija Beograda* into English, as *The Magic of Belgrade* (both published in 2008). Kapor was famous for his works on Serbian culture and mentality, so it is obvious that this book abounds in culture-specific items which are always a challenge to translators. Due to the limited length of the review, the analysis will be reduced to commenting on strategies used for translating selected examples of words and phrases denoting food in the short chapter Pastries (Kolači), which range all the way from omission or reduction to amplification or explicitation, as well as from domestication to foreignization.

The fact that is of utmost importance in this regard, as will be demonstrated below, is that Belgrade is situated on the Balkan Peninsula, between the East and the West, and has thus been under both Oriental and Occidental cultural influences. In the chapter selected for analysis, Kapor himself emphasizes the significance of cultural differences reflected on the food canvas: "I see the pastry shops' windows as battlefields of historical struggles lost and won. *Baklava* next to a Parisian tartlet – you can see that only in Belgrade! What a clash between the East and the West, what a Waterloo!" (319). This duality is quite evident in the translated text. Namely, the translator, who by and large did a very good job, intentionally used mapping or transference for most of the Oriental pastries, which are all – regardless of the translation procedure – marked by italic, and cultural equivalence or even explicitation for those coming from the West, thus deftly balancing between foreignization and domestication, respectively.

The best example for foreignization – the procedure used for the translation of Oriental pastries – is the following sentence: "When we finally threw the Turks out, we kept their *baklava, tulumbe, kadaif, tufahije* and *ćeten-alva*" (319-320), whereas instances of domestication – used in the case of Western pastries – are easily found soon after: "After having expelled them, we turned to Europe, naturally. [...] Belgrade housewives used to make quince 'cheese', almond puffs, ladies' fingers, walnut rolls, vanilla cookies, 'princess-doughnuts'" (320). For the latter, the translator found cultural equivalence, so these terms have become amalgamated in the text and do not catch the eye of the reader. On the other hand, the former is not only transferred, but also denoted by italic letters, which makes them all the more noticeable and foreign-looking – maybe even exotic. Thus, pastries turn into genuine cultural references: names of the Western ones are symbolic of something refined and sophisticated, whereas the Oriental ones signify the centuries of Ottoman Empire's colonial rule in Serbia and their own 'otherness' within both the source and the target texts (TT).

Unlike Newmark, who defines transference as 'transcription' and reckons that it "includes transliteration, which relates to the conversion of different alphabets" (81), some other authors make a distinction between transcription and transliteration, on the one hand, and

transference proper, on the other. Namely, whereas the former includes certain modifications of the translated word, in the latter case the word is copied as is. Therefore, Hlebec has a separate chapter on "Integral loans" – which is how he names transferred words, and explains that such a word is "shifted from the source text completely unchanged, just the same as it is written or pronounced in the original, hence, with zero adaptation" (15); while Prćić calls this kind of neologisms 'raw' and purports that they are not only taken over from the source language (SL) "directly, without any modification of their written form" (122), but also "entirely unadjusted on the level of orthography (since they retain the source orthographic identification)" (123).

Furthermore, "Some authorities deny that this is a translation procedure, but no other term is appropriate if a translator decides to use an SL word for his text" (81), emphasizes Newmark, but he also adds that this item "in principle should be a SL cultural word whose referent is peculiar to the SL culture" (81). Similarly, Baker simply assorts transferred words and expressions within the chapter "Translation using a loan word", and stresses that "This strategy is particularly common in dealing with culture-specific items" (31).

Of course, there are certain exceptions in the selected chapter that prove the rule, but they are mostly found in the case of food items that have become an inseparable part of the Serbian daily menu, although they originated in the Orient. The best example for this is certainly the famous 'burek' (288), "without which no beginning of a new day can be imagined in Yugoslavia [i.e., Serbia]", specifies Novačić and states that: "Just as there is English, so there is Yugoslav breakfast. It is a burek" (82). In this instance, the translator opted for cultural equivalence and translated the word as 'cheese pies' (320), followed by literal translation in the case of 'pogačice sa čvarcima' (288) – which have become 'pastries with cracklings' (320) in the target text. In one sentence, although the Oriental gastronomic delight 'sutlijaš' could have been translated by its cultural equivalence 'rice pudding', it was simply omitted, and the phrase: "prete da podave ono malo slatke Evrope u centru, da je udave u užeglom sutlijašu" (290) was translated as: "threaten to drown what little has remained of the sweet Europe in downtown Belgrade" (322). On the contrary, for the cake that is unavoidable at the most important feast in Serbian culture – the so-called 'slava' or a family's patron saint day – the translator even used amplification and translated 'slavski kolači' (291) as 'big round cakes for patron saints' days' (323), thus underlying the importance of this culture-specific word.

Nevertheless, most of the Oriental food items are both transferred, together with the Serbian diacritic signs (e.g., *š, ć, ž*), and italicized – besides those already mentioned above (*baklava, tulumbe, kadaif, tufahije, ćeten-alva*), the examples for this procedure are also: *sudžuk* (320), *urmašice* (322), *salep* (322), *boza* (322), and some of those are seen several times. All of this proves that the translator made an effort to abide by the principle set by the writer himself towards the end of the chapter: "I am all for a peaceful coexistence between *Turkish delight* and Sachertorte, and I would like to make it public by beating on a *drum layer cake* with forks, as I have always had certain misgivings about all reforms, including the *reform layer cake*!" (322-323) In this chapter, at least, the translator successfully managed to implement 'a peaceful coexistence' between the East and the West, translating for the foreign reader not only the names of food items, but also their cultural references and the wealth of historic influences Serbia has been exposed to – both from the Orient and the Occident.

Moreover, the translator deftly applied a foreignizing strategy, as Hatim and Munday put it, "through lexical borrowings that preserve SL items in the TT" (230), by using foreign – in this case Serbian – terms "in order to introduce the flavour of the SL culture into [the] translation" (149), and borrowing Serbian cultural items "to give a foreign character to the TT" (335). In such a way, the translated text remained "tied in a specific manner to the source

linguaculture" (House 89), as proof that – in order to produce a successful translation, contrary to Venuti's opinion – at times the translator cannot and should not remain invisible.

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