

Contradictions and Alternatives to Global Capitalism. A Polemic

SOLÍK, M. (ed.): Rozpory a alternativy globálního kapitalismu. Polemika. Praha: Filosofia, Bratislava: Veda, 2015. 304 p. ISBN 978-80-7007-431-2 (FILOSOFIA), ISBN 978-80-224-1407-4 (VEDA).

Slavomír Gálik

It is not common in Czech or Slovak intellectual circles that a book examining a monograph, in particular from a domestic author, is published. It must be said openly that in our academic environment we still have to learn how to deliver proper, fair and argument-based criticism of controversial topics that refrain from denigrating our discussion partners. If such a discussion does occur, it almost always produces a higher level of understanding in the form of clarified arguments and broadened and deepened knowledge. Creative works, as noted by J. F. Lyotard, are not rooted in consensus; rather, they are more likely to arise from dissent, or discussion. One such creative work based on critical discussion is the collective monograph *Rozpory a alternativy globálního kapitalismu. Polemika* (Contradictions and Alternatives to Global Capitalism. A Polemic), edited by Martin Solík. The book's driving themes are built upon critical reflection and discussion on Marek Hrubec's book *Od zneuznání ke spravedlnosti. Kritická teorie globální společnosti a politiky* (From Misrecognition to Justice. A Critical Theory of Global Society and Politics) (Prague: Filosofia 2011). Martin Solík (p. 9) says that Hrubec's book is an opus magnum of a critical theory of a global society based on philosophy of mutual recognition. Hrubec's criticism primarily focuses on the liberal concept elaborated by J. Rawls, which is asserted worldwide, but cannot in principle solve the problem of social issues, in particular, the recognition of the poor, specifically the global poor. In his opinion, Rawls has basically created a concept for the ruling class and the wealthy. Hrubec, as noted by Solík (p. 13), focuses most of his attention on the questions of social and economic justice as social rights to be applied in an extraterritorial manner. Hrubec claims that a specific kind of the stronger global arrangement is required for the extraterritorial implementation of rights as it is impractical to do so from a national position.

Solík (p. 15) continues that Hrubec's primary contribution is a new methodology-based critical theory of society that is trichotomic in nature: criticism, explanation and normativity. The book is also divided along the lines of Hrubec's trichotomic methodology. The first chapter deals with criticism of (neo)liberalism with contributions from authors Luboš Blaha, Ondřej Lánský, Miloslav Bednář, and Ladislav Hohoš. The second chapter develops Hrubec's methodology with contributions by Karolína Černá, Fabricio Pontin, Michael Hauser and Martin Solík. The third chapter of the book is focused on normativity and presents the opinions of Oleg Suša, Mikuláš Havran and František Škvrnda. An extended chapter is provided at the end of the book in which Hrubec responds to objections and comments proposed by the discussing authors.

The first part of the book is primarily focused on a critical discussion on (neo)liberalism. Luboš Blaha is the first contributor and he attempts to defend some aspects of liberal methodology. Blaha (p. 37) claims that Rawls searches for a minimalistic version of justice below which it is impossible to fall under any circumstances, using an abstract and neutral approach. Hrubec (p. 214) rejects this version, seeing liberalism and neoliberalism as, in his opinion, the ideology of capitalism and liberal methodology established as a way of protecting the interests of wealthy men, those who are not really interested in exposing and eliminating sources of social inequalities. Ondřej Lánský (p. 56) is another contributor to the first part of the book and he, agreeing with Marek Hrubec, believes that liberalism supports a number of key manifestations of injustice in capitalism-based societies as they interpret inequality as legitimate and necessary. Justice, according

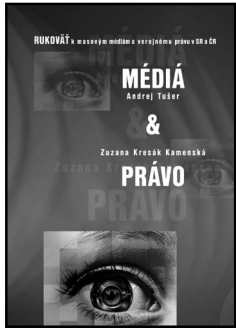
to Lánský (p. 82), demands unconditional equality. Another very critical study by Miloslav Bednář (p. 93) labels Hrubec's work as a contribution to Czech (and even global) neo-Marxism and its problems. Hrubec responds to Bednář (p. 224) by stating that his argument created a non-existent opponent that has been profiled in an absolutist manner. In this case Bednář's criticism misses the essence of the problem formulated by Hrubec. A contribution from Ladislav Hohoš concludes the first section of the book – the author argues with Bednář and defends Hrubec's opinion. Hohoš (p. 104) says that neoliberalism is simply a vulgar form of economism and argues that the "invisible hand" of the market dictating the market mechanism is basically a secular form of "divine providence".

The second part of the work focused on methodology and development of the concept of recognition. Karolína Černá, as the first author contributing to the second thematic unit, considers Hrubec's methodology (criticism – explanation – normativity) as very beneficial, and interprets it by using a simple hexagonal table (p. 111). The second contributor, Fabricio Pontin, examines Hrubec's theory from the perspective of Husserl's phenomenology. Hrubec responds (p. 240) to these approaches by stating that Pontin's type phenomenology involves a passive relation to reality that fixes the unjust status quo in society. Husserl's conceptions, according to Hrubec (p. 241), must be applied to a critical theory in a new way, which itself refers back to phenomenology. Another author, Michal Hauser, argues with Hrubec's assumptions and the foundation of critical theory. Hrubec tries to clarify the theory here and also points out multiple misinterpretations in the case of analysis of Axel Honneth in relation to critical theory and orthodox Marxism (p. 243). The final contribution in this section is the study by Martin Solík (p. 159) emphasising the establishment of global justice in social relations and intersubjectivity rather than individualism and subjectivity in line with Hrubec's approach. In his opinion and opposed to neoliberalist approaches, such relations may serve as the basis for the just resolution of economic, social and cultural inequalities.

The third part of the book is focused on a normative theory of the arrangement of global society, including a vision for a global state. The first author, Oleg Suša, continually refers back to Hrubec's critical theory of global justice as he, just like Hrubec, does not see the potential for the resolution of global inequalities using neoliberal concepts (p. 182). Oleg Suša also notes the problem of ecological crisis, which is mentioned by Hrubec as well (p. 263), since this is also a global – in this case, however, environmental – injustice. Mikuláš Havran is another contributor who ponders over the idea of a global state. Just like Hrubec, he states (p. 192) that a global state will likely be required in the future but, at present, it could only exist in a negative form associated with an authoritative or even military regime. František Škvrnda's contribution closes the second section and contemplates security in the context of the critical theory of global society. The author states (p. 196) that economic globalisation has produced more inequalities, losses and threats than benefits, profits and guarantees. The issue of security in global society is highly topical as a result. Hrubec appreciates Škvrnda's analyses (p. 276), stating that global security will take on ever increasing importance and its implementation will likewise support the creation of a global state.

I would like to emphasise that the monograph *Rozpory a alternativy globálního kapitalismu. Polemika* has assumed even greater pertinence in the context of the recent massive migration wave to the European Union. These migrants represent an acute global problem that appears to be impossible to resolve using old national approaches and methods. Hrubec's critical theory of global society based on philosophy of mutual recognition and justice is among the illuminating approaches and methods. This fact, in addition to the other reasons mentioned previously, demonstrates that the submitted monograph represents a very useful scholarly work, which provides an important theoretical basis towards a better understanding of current global changes and, in particular, the much needed establishment of global justice.

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Media & Law

TUŠER, A. – KRESÁK KAMENSKÁ, Z.: *Média & právo. Rukoväť k masovým médiám a verejnému právu v SR a v ČR. Žilina: Eurokódex, 2014. 268 p. ISBN 978-80-8155-046-1.*

Marek Švec

Writing a review is sometimes even more difficult than actually authoring a publication, in particular due to the fact that the reviewer is not familiar with the individual and unique thought processes of the author(s). The reviewer has no idea why the author(s) chose one approach or another when grappling the issue at hand. Preparing a review of a handbook or a lexicon of terms covering a specific scholarly area of interest or scientific field is as demanding for the reviewer as was the authors' work itself – it is necessary to try and understand the selection of the individual terms and their subsequent interpretation. Evaluating this new publication by Tušer and Kresák Kamenská is even more complex. Not only does the work inherently systematise the theoretical foundations of two separate specialisations, general legal science and media theory, by respecting the premise of the existence of an indivisible connection between media and law, but it also compares two different bodies of law. In an attempt to adhere to the formal aspects expected of any review, it must be said that the reviewed scientific publication has the essence, traits and contents of an original monothematic academic work within a particular scientific field thanks to its clearly monothematic nature, transparent structure and overall treatment of the issues in question. The authors adequately apply, analyse and synthesize knowledge on the addressed topic, which they enhance with new perspectives, notions and approaches that are the results of their own scientific and research activities.

The authors' decision to publish their work as a handbook or a lexicon, which is not always typical for the present processing of new knowledge and research findings related to scientific disciplines, is noteworthy positive and respects the selected approach, i.e. proceeding from the more general to the more specific. The preparation of any work that involves clarifying the basic terminology in a particular area of interest often results in the misunderstanding of the professional community, which is influenced by negative and deformed practical experience juxtaposed against the original (and intended) content of a specific term or institute. In this regard, the authors' attempt to provide an objective interpretation of the examined institutes – regardless of their social or non-legal impacts – is remarkable. This allows the reader to create an individual subjective opinion on the basis of individual empirical experience in confrontation with the provided content of the definition, e.g. in particular with respect to the terms state power or public power, legal precedent and its place in the law system of the Slovak Republic, or in case of the issue of protecting personal rights at the boundaries between constitutional and media law.

A deeper inquiry into the content of the publication and its actual language leads to the conclusion that the authors did not intend to create a superficial summary of specific terms; rather, their selection and systematic incorporation of progressive elements into the work are logically connected to the key objective – explaining the essence of both investigated scientific fields to the reader. Exaggerating slightly, the scope of the book's content may be outlined by a simple paraphrase, "everything important lawyers should know about media and media professionals should know about law." Included terms are used to explain and clarify the area of mass media production to the reader – with emphasis placed on mass media within corresponding interdisciplinary links to related legal aspects while also providing the opportunity to follow the historical development of a specific social and legal institute and its current practical applications within other social science disciplines. Likely the most significant evidence of this statement is the specialised interpretation

of a term central to both disciplines, "censorship", where the authors help the reader observe the forms and limits of restricting the freedom of expression, beginning with Euripides, going on through totalitarian ideology to the European Court of Human Rights.

Despite the vast breadth of focus on the given issue at the boundary between two scientific disciplines, the authors do not rely on their own self-presentation and boundless theorising; they rather deliberately provide the intended informational value of the statements within the individual terms in a reader-friendly manner. The actual language used in the publication corresponds with the ambitions of the collective of authors as expressed in the preface: to increase media literacy among a wide diapason of users, in particular among the general public, but also to facilitate the use of the work for educational purposes by university students. In this respect it can be said that the reviewed publication does not suffer from the same contemporary illness that afflicts most academic writings intended for educational purposes; namely it lacks an infantile and repetitive nature and attempts to find the proper compromise between providing information to students in the simplest form possible while also enriching their current level of knowledge which is necessary in order to apply the information in practice. The resulting effect is then manifested in the form of providing relevant information without using unnecessary or embellished language.

The relatively extensive list of relevant bibliographic sources used by the authors in processing the content of the work, including both domestic and foreign authors, is another added value offered by this publication. A quick glance at the authors' overview once again confirms their interest in confronting the professional opinions of the authors on the issue at hand, comparing the existing opinions on the given topic not only with their own work but also with other authors' notions and conceptions – all in order to find a sustainable and defensible interpretation of each term.

Given these positives, the publication titled *Media & Law* authored by Tušer and Kresák Kamenská is a welcome addition to the existing range of knowledge on relationships between media and law. It is even desirable to expect its future expansion that would include coverage of private law issues in connection with mass media, which is likely to be an even greater challenge for the authors. After all, the process of locating and examining the interrelations and legal interactions between media and physical and juridical persons in terms of the contractual system of civil or business law deserves the same attention as is afforded to public law.

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On the History of Czechoslovak Advertising 1918 – 1989

HLOUČOVÁ, K.: *Proměny československé reklamy. Brno : Klemm, 2015. 181 p. ISBN 978-80-87713-12-9.*

Dušan Pavlů

Every professional publication that helps perceptive readers expand their horizons in a given field is a welcome addition to the Czech book market. In fact, the current number of books that appear with a broad, compendious, and contextual profile is pleasing. Czech literature, in particular thanks to the Nakladatelství Academia publishing house, continues to deliver new books that map the fundamental aspects of the material and spiritual world of Czech society in the 19th and 20th centuries, including political analyses, economic

studies and perspectives on changing lifestyles and publications that consider other fringe aspects and fragments of this time period. Every scholarly text of this kind that delivers new information or information in a new context is a welcome contribution towards understanding the lives of our ancestors.

As such, my expectations were relatively high when I opened *Proměny československé reklamy 1918 – 1989* (Transformations of Czechoslovak Advertising 1918 – 1989) by Kateřina Hloučová. As the quotation on the cover says: “Transformations of Czechoslovak Advertising makes the first attempt to map the history of this field from 1918 to 1989 using the key years in our history during the 20th century and delivering answers to all of the pertinent issues of the advertising history of Czechoslovakia.”

The author analyses the time period in question over 9 chapters, detailing the etymology of the concept of advertising, interpreting broader social context in the individual stages of development, including the inter-war period, the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, developments up to February 1948, the period from 1948 to 1968, and the period to 1989 in brief. Advertising tools, including advertisements, posters and mass media as the most significant carrier of advertising messages (the press, film, radio, television), as well as promotional activities of some prominent pre-war business units, such as Baťa, Neher, Rolný, are examined over these historical periods. The existence and operation of the Advertising Club of Czechoslovakia is also covered briefly. Besides the admittedly laborious process of collecting factual materials, the publication comes in for criticism due to the highly disproportionate range of themes, which neglects important events in the development of advertising, and to a lack of criticism with respect to other related events.

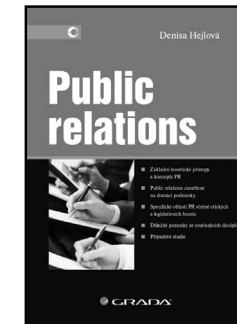
For the uninitiated readers, the reviewed publication may appear to be a revelation as it is dealing with the topic of the development of commercial communication, but de facto the text delivers nothing new that would portray the analysed events in new contexts or that would lend credence to the claim of “the first mapping of the history of this field”. A great deal of information was previously published in partial studies and chapters in various book publications and in dictionaries or glossary entries.

It is clear that the approach taken by the author – interpretation of events based on the specific historical, economic, and ideological contexts of development at the given time period – is correct as opposed to interpreting them on their own merits. This is clearly a very rewarding perspective; however, it does anticipate working with a sufficient and in-depth level of knowledge on the actual advertising industry and its historical transformations, on the primary directions of its development, peripeteia and the complexities of life in the advertising community, discussions related to the rise of new media, transformation of law, etc. The publication is marked by various deficiencies and errors in this area that somewhat obscure the compelling view of the development of the advertising profession over the course of the given historical periods. For instance, the terminological discussion in the 1920s and 1930s that concerned the synonymous use of the terms propaganda and recruitment become more frequent in the 1930s and in particular in the post-war period as the result of a pre-war competition of sorts to find the best translation of the German term *die Werbung*. In the former East Germany, the term *Werbung* was used synonymously as an equivalent for the broader meaning of the word promotion throughout the entire post-war period.

The information about the first Czech advertisement on page 23 is debatable, much the same as the information that Reklub was the publisher of TYP magazine. This statement can only be made from 1946 onward as the Reklub 1947 Yearbook provided a statement from Mr J. Solar claiming that “Reklub has become an important part of our economic lives and the publisher of the TYP monthly led by Dr. Jan Brabec.” Information on the significant and pioneering role of A. Kachlík is also inaccurate; the term marketing and PR was used by this author in his publication *Public Relations*, which was published in 1965 by the Czechoslovak Chamber of Commerce. The author’s interpretation of the “clumsiness” of the term advertising (p. 17) is not entirely accurate. The terminological discussion in the 1960s and 1970s precipitates from a situation where classical advertising tools, strategies and tactics had begun to see extensive use in other, non-commercial fields and areas. Advertising was understood as a specific component of promotion, focused exclusively on the commercial communication of products and business.

In summary, the publication delivers some new information and contexts to the topic of the development of advertising but also suffers from specific imbalances, excessive emphasis on some of the most general economic and political events and, conversely, there is a lack of sufficient detail concerning other matters and issues of greater importance for the development of the advertising industry.

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Public Relations

HEJLOVÁ, D.: Public Relations. Praha: Grada Publishing, 2015. 256 p. ISBN 978-80-247-5022-4.

Ľubica Hulajová

Public Relations by Denisa Hejlová (born Kasl Kollmannová) was published by Grada Publishing House in 2015 as a scientific monograph aimed at reaching a wide range of readers from university students in media studies, journalism and marketing communication to PR managers, spokespeople and other professionals dealing with these issues in commercial as well as in public sectors. The author works as a senior lecturer and chairs the Department of Marketing Communications and Public Relations at the Faculty of Social Sciences, at Charles University in Prague. She specialises in strategic communication, public relations and public affairs and has gained work/professional experience as a PR Vice-Dean, PR manager and communication consultant for both commercial and non-commercial organisations, including the Czech Academy of Sciences, Veolia, the Institute of Clinical Medicine or Aoyama Automotive Fasteners. Hejlová applied the knowledge and experience received through study, participation in international research projects in the sphere of public relations (2011 in Japan and 2014 in the USA) and her own PR praxis in writing the above-mentioned scientific work.

The main purpose of the book (as stated by the author) is “to bring a holistic approach to public relations, describing main theoretical approaches and fields, such as corporate and crisis communication, community relations, public affairs and government relations, political PR, corporate social responsibility, advocacy, etc.” (p. 233). The book is divided into five parts: history of PR – main milestones and representatives, theory of PR – main approaches and models, strategies: planning and managing communication, fields of PR and their examples, PR and their role in the democratic society.

As the author suggests, the work is based “on the author’s own research and on the study of (in the Czech Republic) mostly non-accessible foreign literature. She has used standard research methods associated with social sciences, mainly quantitative and qualitative research, interviews with experts in the field and case studies.” (p. 12).

The main contribution of the book lies in providing a complex overview of PR history, theories, strategies, tools and ethics. The first part dealing with the history of PR is concentrated mainly on PR history in the USA. A very positive aspect of the monograph is that the author worked out a separate chapter on the history of PR in the Czech Republic, not avoiding the so called ‘normalisation era’ in the former Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. Naturally, the issues of socialist propaganda represent a controversial part in the history of both Czechs and Slovaks and, from our point of view, it should be dealt with sensitively, in a broader

context and by applying various perspectives to provide an objective overview. Evidently, this is not the aim of the above-mentioned publication but it is acceptable that the author has the right to set the criteria according to which she selects and organises the given topic.

The second part on theories of PR, gives an insight into issues of defining PR as a field of study. Hejlová presents her own overview of possible categorisation within PR according to the target groups, sectors they operate in and tools mostly used by PR staffs. In the last chapter of the second part, she defines three theoretical approaches: executive approach represented by Grunig's theory of excellence, critical approach supported mainly by previous journalists Miller and Dinan, Stuart Ewen and others, and lastly, balanced approach typical for most European theorists, such as Jacquie L'Etang, Dejan Verčič or Betteke van Ruler, but in the following subchapters she focuses only on Grunig and Hunt's excellence theory, and Freeman's stakeholder theory; although, the writer herself states that culture and cultural values play an important part in PR work.

We consider the third part of the book as the one which represents a real contribution as it provides readers with a well-structured and logical overview of evaluation methods in PR and their drawbacks, as well as with the author's own categorisation of PR tools. The fourth part maps the fields in which PR operates and the author applies outcomes of her own research and experience in these issues.

The last part is aimed at PR and its role in a democratic society, explains the role of credibility and ethics in PR, introduces legal framework for PR activities in the Czech Republic and gives an insight into main unethical or manipulative practices applied within PR.

To sum up, when reviewing the book as a source of study material, it is a logically organised and well-structured publication utilising case studies and making recommendations for additional sources, print as well as online ones. Evidently, it fills up the market niche with the PR literature of this character. However, when considering it as a scientific monograph we are missing the information on research carried out by the author at least in the Appendix of the book, as it is usual in case of other books of this character. Despite the drawbacks mentioned above, the book is easily read and will surely help students and PR practitioners to get necessary information on the topic. We appreciate the theoretical as well as practical approaches to the issues the author dealt with, and it is obvious that Hejlová managed to combine theory and praxis in a 'reader-friendly' manner.

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In the Big U.S.A Little Slovakia Has Got the Most Prestigious Award

Juraj Vojtek

A Conference is just a conference, like many others... At least that is what sceptic scholars often tend to say. However, even those doubting academics have to admit that this statement cannot be applied to all conferences. The meeting of literary scientists and historians, translation theorists as well as professional translators which took place on 7th and 8th October 2015 in New York, precisely at the Grolier Club in Manhattan, is undoubtedly one of the scientific events deemed highly of. This particular conference was meant to be – and we have to emphasize that it really was – a remarkable closure of more than six-year-long project of the Lewis Carroll Society for North America that is, certainly in the field of expertise in question, unique and so to say even breakthrough. Not to mention the fact that it would have been unfeasible in the pre-digital era.

The conference as well as the parallel exhibition *Alice in World of Wonderlands*, subtitled *The Translations of Lewis Carroll's Masterpiece* introduced and at the same time evaluated the given project, more specifically its main outcome – the three-volume publication *Alice in a World of Wonderlands* (General Editor Jon Lindseth) published earlier this year by American publishing house Oak Knoll Press. The publication, noteworthy in all respects, is exceptional in both form (more than 2500 pages in A3 format weighing 9.3 kilograms) and content.

The first volume titled *Essays* consists of studies elaborating the work of the book's translators – it is necessary to say that this elaboration is not limited to national languages used by the translators but also takes into account dialects, slangs, and even historically outworn forms of English (Old English, Middle English, etc.). The fact that *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (commonly shortened to *Alice in Wonderland*) by Lewis Carroll (1832 – 1898) is, right after The Bible and Shakespeare's plays, the third most translated literary work in the world is hardly a part of common knowledge, at least in case of Slovakia. However, Carroll's most famous book has not assumed this position by accident – even if we do not take into consideration the author's genius writing which unites nonsense with logic to result in matchless comic, it may be concluded that the work markedly attracts the attention of its translators thanks to its own 'untranslatability'. *Alice in Wonderland* is full of ambiguity, plays on words, word formations based on parables (often also rhymed), and other particularities encountered by all translators, but rarely to this extent. In our opinion, Lewis Carroll's work proves – more than any other literary work – that translation is a kind of interpretive art. The score is set and clear: *Alice*. It is precisely about the way and ability of a translator to interpret *Alice* using a different language, presenting the story in a different society and culture, often at a different time; the aim here is, on the one hand, to preserve its English character and, on the other hand, to replace 'Englishness' by 'Slovakness' when necessary, namely in order to make the text comprehensible for the target readers (it is important to underline the fact that the reader of the translation should be able to perceive or take the translated text as perfectly as the primary English reader embraces the original work). As it is often said, translations tend to reduce some features of original texts in favour of enriching them in other aspects.

As we have mentioned above, the process of translation is never an easy task to fulfil – this statement is true twice as much when we talk about *Alice*. Even if we consider similar cultures – to apply a certain amount of simplification, let us call them European – this still seems to be a serious problem. The extent of related issues is, however, certainly broader in case of culturally and geographically distant countries and languages

– literally speaking, we common Europeans cannot even imagine how much of a riddle it must be to translate *Alice* to non-European languages. During the conference it was stated that certain South African communities perceive ‘hat’ as a synonym of precedence, superiority, something evil, but in *Alice* the Hatter plays a different role. Another problem is associated with the fact that some of the original cultural realities do not exist in different languages... One of the book’s chapters is named *A Mad Tea-Party* but the Old English (700 – 1100) does not include the word ‘tea’. Therefore it was necessary to look for an expression that would refer to a comparably popular beverage. Of course, it is possible to continue in counting and mentioning numerous amounts of other non-existing equivalents. That is why the first volume of the publication is very impressive and educative, mostly for translation theorists as well as for professional translators.

However, it is necessary to point out that the second volume called *Back Translations* is very interesting as well. The project participants were supposed to select two different versions of translation of the same chapter – by the way the one already mentioned – *A Mad Tea-Party* – and translate them back to English. Our previous words claim that every translation functions as a certain semantic shift. In this case, however, we may talk about shifting the shift. Once more: such a procedure is very valuable in terms of both translation theory and practice.

The third volume titled Checklists consists of bibliographies associated with all *Alice* issues, including those published in the Braille letters, all literary, film, and radio adaptations of the book, not to forget posters. The content is also enriched by photographic portraits and short biographies of the co-authors. Slovakia is represented by Juraj Vojtek, the author of the essay titled *A Humble Tribute to Lewis Carroll by His Slovak Translator* (the first volume, pages 546 – 549). The publication also includes Juraj Vojtek’s photographic portrait and short CV (page 823), the first back translation of the chapter *A Mad Tea-Party* by Juraj Vojtek (*Alenkiné dobrodružstvá v Divotvornej krajine*, Bratislava, Mladé letá, 1959, originally translated by Šarlota Barániková and Krista Bendová, the second volume, pages 628 – 631), and the second back translation by Canadian translator Jan George Frajkor and Juraj Vojtek (*Alicine dobrodružstvá v krajine zázrakov*, Bratislava: Jaspis, 1996, originally translated by Viera Vojtková and Juraj Vojtek, pages 632 – 634). Slovak bibliographical units included in various parts of the third volume were also written by Juraj Vojtek.

And finally, a small afterword that follows the article’s headline...The exhibition was held in the same premises as the conference itself and installed showcases presented the issues of *Alice* published in various (to be more specific, one hundred and seventy) languages and years. The Slovak issue of *Alice* published by Slovart in 2010 was exhibited in the front (honorary) part of the hall as well as the portraits of Slovak translators Viera Vojtková and Juraj Vojtek and illustrator Dušan Kállay (who was, along with the publisher, awarded a Grand Prix) – both translators and illustrator were also awarded the certificates and ribbons.

Alexander Matuška

(1910 – 1975)

Ladislav Volko

Being a subtle analyst of society, its stratification, values, direction, historical ambiguities, rises and falls, he identified all sorts of social contexts. He saw and was aware of the limits he was surpassing through his writing. He was also a prime essayist, expressing the dialectic of historical and current events by using a brusque tone not only in his literary and critical writing, but also in many of his public performances, polemics and confrontations. “The seeker of historical continuity – angry about conscious discontinuity, distortions of character, deformations of literature, empty flattery and insults, thoughtless agreements and vices, familiar in real life and literature”, writes his continuator Rudolf Chmel.

He was an involuntary sociologist, just as many men of letters in the past and even at present. He could perfectly describe the diseases of society, the position of intellectuals, narrow-mindedness, unjustified glorification of historical facts, taking words out of context, hidden and open animosity only because the author of uttered words is different from us, and also turncoats.

He was able to capture a complex matter in detail and through details; he could capture the complexity of an artistic work in the context of national culture or society. His credo was based on demanding criteria of European context and moral justice. “The truth of facts that were too obvious was always suspicious for him. He always had his words ready, when he needed a knife for battle, a glove to slap a face or a stone that, so elegantly and provocatively, broke the windows of the rigid world. But he hesitated when he was supposed to express absolute truth,” said Miroslav Válek about him.

His life was no bed of roses, as he was an author brave enough to uncover the vices of life and literature. He was a kind-and-cruel ironist, thus possessed qualities that are sometimes hard to be forgiven. “He had a strange and complicated personality full of contradictions, a rich, mysterious and sensitive soul. For his judgments expressed in literature, objections were useless. He was a critical emperor. Fair and fearless.” This is how the writer Ladislav Ťažký characterised him. The young generation of intellectuals loved him, admired him and took each opportunity to share their ideas with him, provoke him or boast with their knowledge about modern movements unfamiliar to their Master. The young are like that and it is an inevitable fact. In late December 1968, after we were forced to leave Café Kriváň, we continued our heated discussion at Martin Bútor’s house. Master Matuška seated me next to him. “Mr Poliak, just sit here”, he said, “so that I do not leave”. I promised to drive him home.

We focused on the Master, asked him insolent questions and discussed that brute force needs to be defied, not to lose spirit, who else other than intellectuals should step up, etc. When it was too much, despite the wine, Master Matuška said: “... do you even know what mill-wheels are? They will grind you, pulverize you...” His face turned red and his hands demonstrated how the wheels would grind us... “You don’t know what happened?!” Then he stood up and commanded me: “Mr Poliak, let us go...” I drove him and a few others who could fit into a Fiat 1100.

He polemized in speech and in writing – monographs or short reflections, studies that eliminated taboos, he exceeded topics. He expressed his opinions about a wide range of issues. A critic once said that such people often drive us crazy, but it was not like that with Alexander Matuška, as he knew how to capture the essence of a problem, describe it with language typical of Matuška, full of fitting similes and, for some, excessive irony.

Had he focused only on Svetozár Hurban Vajanský, the members of Štúr’s revolutionary national movement, Rudolf Jašík or Jozef Cíger Hronský, whose monographs and literary works are highly inspirational even today, he would have fulfilled the nature of his critical contribution to Slovak writing. His study years in Prague inspired his entire artistic life with a real connection to the existence of nation. He measured reality with European criteria. He always bore in mind historical contexts and that is why he wrote about Karel Čapek in the monograph *A Person Against Destruction – An Attempt of Karel Čapek* (1963). It was the first monograph written about Čapek, not only in Slovakia but also in the Czech Republic, and a sort of rehabilitation of this world-renowned writer.

Alexander Matuška forever remains an inspiring essayist, polemicist, connoisseur of European literature, synthetic and a seeker of truths. He built a vault, his firm stylistic bridge into the future – as Vladimír Mináč puts it. His work needs to be present, as it is more contemporary than we believe. As he said himself, “Today we can laugh about what used to hurt. Because today, something else hurts.”

Today Caricaturist

Kazo Kanala

(* 1946)

Ladislav Volko

Kazimír and Kazisvet were two names of characters from children bedtime stories that used to frighten me. Even their names (note: names derived from the Slovak word *kazit* – to ruin or to spoil) suggested that nothing good could happen in their presence or proximity. However, in the presence and proximity of Kazo Kanala, many good things happen. He is a caricaturist, illustrator, sketcher as well as the founder and president of the Slovak Union of Cartoonists, president of the Federation of European Cartoonists Organisation for Slovakia, organiser and curator of several exhibitions, and author of the visual designs of 36 animated movies, especially for children. Since 1993, he has been visiting children with oncological diseases in the Children's University Hospital in Bratislava every Thursday. In the former regime, he tried many professions (technician, stagehand, boilerman, employee of a funeral company, cleaner, day and night guard) – look at his universities, as Maxim Gorkij would say.

It is difficult to create a list of all the places where he has had exhibitions because there have been so many of them all over the world. The list would be shorter if we counted just the places where he has not had an exhibition. Brazilians have grown so fond of him that he has become an honorary member of the Brazilian Cartoonists Association. Kazo Kanala is a sensitive observer of life around him, even the more distant one, and he properly records it in writing. His twisted clumsy little people call for attention to the excessively technical society which tends to put nonsense on a pedestal; however, one can still feel the author's wish for harmony and meaningfulness.

A huge man's breasts with a tie and irrational head, frequently full of papers, at other times looking for a better self, or a liquid head serving as a monumental tombstone warning us about infinite drudgery and vanity. Contrasting and moving somewhere, searching inside labyrinths, everything sketched with a simple line, all these artistic specifics underly the author's desire to overcome the madness of our times. The quintessence of his work as a cartoonist is a simple picture of a man with a watering can, watering a sprout on a cut down tree. This is us! Kazo Kanala and his works have only shown us a mirror.

