

Alexandra Glavanakova. *Transcultural Imaginings. Translating the Other, Translating the Self in Narratives about Migration and Terrorism*. Critique and Humanism Publishing House, 2016. 262. ISBN-978 954 587 201 3.

Identity formation (construction) has been one of the main preoccupations of literary theorists and critics over the last few decades and especially since the end of the twentieth century. The theoretical toolbox of the scholars in this field has been growing ever larger, with postcolonial studies contributing some of the most useful analytical tools.

Eastern Europe has been one of the regions which have begun to attract increasing attention from theorists. The application, however, of the postcolonial approach to this ambiguous geographical and cultural area can be rather precarious and – if simplification and obscuration are to be avoided – can only be done with a fair amount of modification of the postcolonial theoretical tools. Examples of such a successful application are Ludmilla Kostova's book *Tales of the Periphery: the Balkans in Nineteenth-Century British Writing* (1997) and Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans* (1997).

Alexandra Glavanakova's book *Transcultural Imaginings. Translating the Other, Translating the Self in Narratives about Migration and Terrorism* also makes a valuable and original contribution to the postcolonial paradigm by aptly utilizing the theoretical concept of transculturalism in the geographical context of eastern Europe and the Balkans. In times when such a great number of seemingly stable binaries are being called into question in all kinds of theoretical – and purely analytical – contexts, Glavanakova uses this concept to probe various aspects of forming (and sometimes dissipation) of cultural identity by critically analysing an impressive variety of texts. One particular merit of the book is that the author not only sets out to move beyond the hindering and constructed – though well entrenched – binary oppositions, but succeeds in this endeavour by constantly emphasizing and illuminating the so-called “third space” (16) and by focusing on the fascinating and traumatic ways in which the Self sometimes identifies with the Other and forms a fluid and ambiguous new entity with it. In this respect the author has selected an array of texts which demonstrate the complex and ambivalent relationship between the writing subject and the Other and at the same time provide numerous examples of manifestations of Otherness. These manifestations, as stated by Glavanakova herself, are never dichotomous and always appear in the form of innumerable interminglings and oppositions.

The interdisciplinary approach is another aspect of the work which contributes to a fruitful analysis. One could argue, of course, that in the contemporary context of literary and cultural criticism such an approach is virtually obligatory, but having in mind that a proper approach does not guarantee an insightful and clear analysis, the author has used it very adroitly to make her points. She acknowledges the interdisciplinary nature of transculturalism by pointing out that it “is a critical term which originates from the social sciences: social psychology, anthropology and philosophy” (84). The interdisciplinary approach helps the author to demonstrate how intercultural encounters (especially between cultures of the East and the West) contribute to – and largely cause – the hybridization of individual identities in an increasingly globalized world. She achieves this by analysing texts by Bulgarian, French, American, Canadian and Pakistani writers.

Occasionally, certain minor theoretical contradictions and arguable points can be perceived in the first part of the book. For instance, in the preface Glavanakova argues that the theoretical perspective of transculturalism is “more inclusive” and “more nuanced” than other approaches such as postcolonialism, “which are often associated with... politically coloured attitudes” (18). This leaves the impression that political attitudes are to be avoided in her analysis. Towards the end of part one, however, the author states that “it is impossible to think [of] the transcultural separately from the ideological and the political” (96). This contradiction could have been avoided by simply acknowledging that, as Debbie Lisle has demonstrated in her book *The Global Politics of Contemporary Travel Writing* (2006), political attitudes do not necessarily represent a hindrance and can even be helpful to a deeper understanding of the issues under analysis.

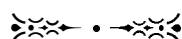
The processes of identity formation and the narratives of migration are carefully analysed in Part 2 of the book where Glavanakova discusses texts by writers of Bulgarian origin such as Miroslav Penkov, Radka Yakimov and Zachary Karabashliev. The problems of personal and cultural identity are put under the author's analytical microscope whose effectiveness is enhanced by the introduction and detailed discussion of important contemporary issues such as marginalization, displacement and cultural insularity. The choice of authors and

works for discussion makes the critical analysis fairly innovative because it focuses on the aforementioned issues in the cultural and literary contexts of eastern Europe. The author's own history of migration, her personal dealings with feelings of displacement and "not belonging" give her a unique analytical perspective and work to her advantage in her critical approach to the texts. The inclusion of photographs at the end of the book adds a valuable perspective to Glavanakova's analysis.

**Department of English and American Studies
University of Veliko Tarnovo**

Pavel Petkov

CORRESPONDENCE: Dr Pavel Petkov, Department of English and American Studies, University of Veliko Tarnovo, 2 Teodosi Tarnovski St., Veliko Tarnovo 5003, Bulgaria. @ p.petkov@uni-vt.bg



Lyudmila Ivanova. *Lost or Found in Translation?*

Originali i prevodi v sferata na turizma.

Gramma Publishing House, 2016. 223. ISBN 978-954-2943-07-5

The rapid development of the tourist industry and its enormous impact on most sectors of the economy calls for greater attention to original and translated tourism texts. *Lost or Found in Translation? Originali i prevodi v sferata na turizma (Lost or Found in Translation? Original Texts and Translations in the Sphere of Tourism)* is an excellent monograph by Lyudmila Ivanova, which focuses on the specific character of such texts by providing a multi-aspectual description of the problem areas related to the process of their creation, translation and the ways in which they function in their respective cultures. The key role of tourism texts in providing information, bringing together different cultural traditions and facilitating intercultural communication suggests that they should be examined in a broad context. To this end, the author of the book provides an extensive theoretical background and practical insights into current problems and at the same time opens up new vistas for research in the area.

The book comprises an introduction, three chapters and a conclusion. It also provides a substantial bibliography. Each chapter ends with a short summary, which recaps all main issues discussed in it and offers some concluding remarks. The author manages to maintain a balance between theory and practice and thus generates valuable meanings and inferences.

The introduction states, in a very convincing way, the rationale of the research, its purpose and the problems to be addressed. The monograph investigates the complexity of tourism texts as instruments of intercultural communication. Attention is drawn to major difficulties that translators may encounter when dealing with such texts. The textual corpus, which is studied, comprises mostly Bulgarian tourism texts and translations into German. Some texts in Russian and English are also provided to illustrate a number of translation problems and suggest feasible solutions.

The first chapter of the book examines tourism texts in connection with tourism products and as powerful communication tools in intercultural encounters. It provides answers to various questions related to the definition of concepts such as "tourism" and "tourism product" and to key participants in the process of the creation or production of tourism texts. According to the author, tourism is a multi-faceted, dynamic and complex phenomenon and its complexity accounts for the exceptional thematic variety of texts connected with it. In her view, some of the major problems to do with the creation of tourism texts are, on the one hand, due to legal constraints concerning the transfer and delegation of responsibilities to individuals and institutions involved in the process of creation/production. However, they may also arise from a lack of expertise and professional know-how. The chapter further dwells on the specificity of tourism texts as instruments of communication. The author defines the communication flow in which such texts are involved as asymmetrical and unilateral insofar as it is