



**Larry Wolff. *The Singing Turk. Ottoman Power and Operatic Emotions on the European Stage from the Siege of Vienna to the Age of Napoleon.* Stanford University Press, 2016. 504. ISBN 9780804799652 (electronic).**

Larry Wolff, author of one of the seminal books on the “invention” of eastern Europe by the choice spirits of the western European Enlightenment (1994) and a number of other important books and articles on aspects of Europe’s symbolic geography and the intricate process of civilizational mapping, has produced a fascinating study of European operas on “Turkish” subjects, composed and performed in the course of the “long” eighteenth century, from the Siege of Vienna (1683) to the 1820s. Bringing together insights from musicology and cultural and political history, Wolff presents us with a wide-ranging survey of significant representations of “singing Turks.” Such representations, the author suggests, partially reflected the changing perceptions of the Ottoman Empire in the West but were also linked to current political problems such as the validation of monarchical authority and the limits of royal power.

In his Introduction, Wolff addresses the important issue of *why* the time period specified in the book’s title became “the century of Turkish subjects in European opera” (1). As late as the middle of the seventeenth century the Ottoman Empire was still perceived as a threat. The wars of the Holy League, which culminated in the Christian victory in the Battle of Vienna and the conquest of Hungary by Habsburg Austria, changed that, without automatically turning the “Empire of the Turk” into the proverbial “Sick Man of Europe.” On the other hand, the modern “Eastern Question” of how to manage the dissolution of that empire without causing a major military clash between the “old” continent’s “great powers” gradually rose to international prominence in the 1820s, the decade of the Greek War of Independence. The early nineteenth century also witnessed the beginning of modern Mediterranean colonialism, with the French occupying the Ottoman dependency of Algeria in 1830 (3). According to Wolff, it was within the intervening age of Enlightenment that the Ottoman Empire was perceived as a fit subject for musical theatre as “religious prejudice was somewhat moderated, and intellectual curiosity about other cultures was greatly stimulated” (2). Within this context, the Muslim-dominated Empire evoked mixed feelings in Europeans: Wolff speaks of “a balance of fear, interest, curiosity, titillation, entertainment, and even sympathy” (2). He further maintains that by representing “the Turk” Europeans could explore “what it meant to be European” (2).

In his overview of musical performances, Wolff dwells at some length on Venice and Vienna as principal sites for the production and performance of operas on “Turkish” subjects. As “neighbours and enemies” of the Ottoman Empire, these capitals of the so-called *Triplex Confinium* (the triple border of the Habsburg, Ottoman and Venetian states) were familiar with Ottoman society, culture and politics. Venetians were particularly fascinated by the encounter between Tamerlane (the Mongol ruler Timur or Timurlenk, “Timur the Lame”) and Bajazet (the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid). Venetian audiences were deeply moved by the spectacle of the once mighty sultan enslaved by his powerful enemy (Wolff 20-23). However, operas featuring the humiliation of Bajazet were also performed in other European cities. Thus, in 1724, Handel produced his own *Tamerlano* in London, with the Italian tenor Francesco Borosini singing the part of Bajazet (32).

Paris was yet another important operatic capital but its relation to the Ottoman Empire was totally different: France had been an Ottoman ally since the sixteenth century when it even joined forces with the dreaded *Kapudan Pasha* Hayrettin Barbarossa to sack Nice, a vassal city of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. The citizens of Paris had never experienced anything like the Ottoman siege of Vienna or fought against the Turks in battle. As a result Paris “became the site of a more whimsical operatic relation to Turkishness” (4). French representations of “the Turk” ranged from a musical comedy featuring Harlequin disguised as a

sultana in order to enter the harem (was this an artistic precedent for later Western intruders into the Grand Turk's seraglio – such as Byron's Don Juan?) to fantasies of “the generous Turk,” whose unexpected magnanimity surprised both Christian captives on the stage and audiences (4).

The 1730s saw the emergence of a new storyline: the drama of the captive European woman, who prefers to remain with her Ottoman pasha or sultan rather than return to Christendom (79). Interestingly, Mary Wortley Montagu recounts a story of a “Christian woman of quality” in Letter XLVIII of her famous epistolary travelogue that bears some resemblance to such dramas. However, the motivation of the new type of operatic heroine markedly differed from that of Montagu's real or imagined acquaintance, who chose to stay and marry an Ottoman pasha in order to avoid being confined to a convent in Spain. The operatic heroine “reconceiv[ed] her own captivity as an opportunity for mastery, for reforming and even civilizing the Ottoman Empire” (79). Based on Jean-François Marmontel's tale “Soliman II,” Charles-Simon Favart's 1762 musical comedy *Les trois sultanes* projected a humorous image of the powerful Ottoman Sultan Süleyman I, known in the West as “the Magnificent,” while his wife Roxolana (Hürrem) was recast as a Frenchwoman intent upon instructing him in “the pleasures of equality” (89). Wolff argues that Favart's comic opera was instrumental in “redeeming” Roxolana whose earlier image in the West had been mostly negative (94).<sup>1</sup>

Performed in 1782, almost a hundred years after the Ottoman defeat at the gates of Vienna, Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio* became the eighteenth century's most famous opera on a “Turkish” subject. Central to it was the figure of a decidedly comic Turk: the pasha's overseer Osmin, raging upon the stage and evoking laughter from the audience (Wolff 148). This was a clear indication that “the Turk” did not inspire fear any more. On the other hand, the speaking role of the magnanimous Pasha Selim, who releases his Christian captives at the end of the *Singspiel*, must have turned him into “a theatrical mirror for the Habsburg emperor Joseph II,” thus demonstrating that “Turkish” operas could be used effectively in the Enlightenment debate over the nature and “desirable degrees” of royal power (188–89).

Wolff's survey also includes a number of other works of musical theatre. Special emphasis is laid on Rossini's early work (227–248), his celebrated *L'italiana in Algeri* (272–280), “the libertine adventures of [his] Turkish traveller” (283–304), and, finally, *Le siège de Corinthe*. Performed to great acclamation in Paris in 1826, *Le siège* presented “the last operatic role for a singing Turk” (359). The age of “singing Turks” was passing in Europe as the Ottoman Empire went into a decline, which it attempted to reverse by embarking on a series of modernizing reforms. Those reforms brought it closer to the West and made it appear less “exotic.” As a result “Ottoman subjects [grew] less easily conceivable upon the European operatic stage” (375). On the other hand, Orientalism in the Saidean sense was a tangible presence on the nineteenth-century political and cultural scenes, and one of Wolff's closing vignettes presents a picture of the future British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli acting out his “Turkish” fantasies of indolence, luxury and exotic dress during his Oriental tour in the 1830s. At the same time, the Ottoman Sultan himself wore European clothes and to Disraeli's disappointment, “affect[ed] all the affable activity of a European prince” (quoted in Wolff 378).

In closing, it must be pointed out that *The Singing Turk* pushes our knowledge of the “long” eighteenth century and the relationship between art and perceptions of “otherness” a lot further. The book provides a context for additional critical inquiry into European-Ottoman relations and challenges us to revise our interpretative practices by searching for novel perspectives.

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

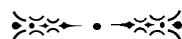
**Ludmilla Kostova**

---

<sup>1</sup> For details of Roxolana's sixteenth- and seventeenth-century representations in Western culture, see my article in the present issue.

---

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Prof. Ludmilla Kostova, PhD, Department of English and American Studies, University of Veliko Tarnovo, 2 Teodosi Tarnovski St., Veliko Tarnovo 5003, Bulgaria. @l.kostova @uni-vt.bg



**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

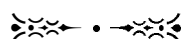
works for discussion makes the critical analysis fairly innovative because it focuses on the aforementioned issues in the cultural and literary contexts of eastern Europe. The author's own history of migration, her personal dealings with feelings of displacement and "not belonging" give her a unique 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

directed from the text producer to the text recipient and there is a very limited possibility of obtaining relevant feedback. Moreover, the attractiveness of a tourism text is in the skilful combination of both verbal and non-verbal components which fulfil a variety of functions and are culturally determined. Several communication theories are presented and critically examined with the aim of providing useful guidelines for text producers and translators in their mission to create powerful textual effects. Last but not least, the tourism text is presented as a bridge between cultures and language communities. The author maintains that cross-cultural encounters have “visible” and “non-visible” components related to the cultural specificity reflected in tourism texts. She argues that as far as tourism products are concerned, cultural specificity should be regarded as a key feature which requires a coherent interpretation and calls for ingenious and effective translation solutions.

The second chapter is devoted to the original text seen as a point of reference, an “information offer,” but most significantly, as a basis for translation into different languages. To this end, the author considers some of the key aspects of the creation of the original text such as its intended effect, the text production skills, needed for the achievement of this effect, and various factors influencing the process of creation. By providing useful examples the author outlines the distinctive features of tourism texts (regarded as “multi-semiotic complexes”) which can be used as reliable criteria by translators but at the same time can pose serious problems by impeding the translation process. These include the types and functions of tourism texts and how these parameters influence the choice of a global translation strategy. In addition, attention is drawn to the macrostructure of the tourism text and its intra-textual parameters such as textual coherence and specific lexical, grammatical and stylistic features, as well as to the presence of non-verbal elements. The logical conclusion at which the author arrives is that in order to produce a high-quality translation and overcome any “deficits” that the source text may possess, the translator should take into account the interests of the client, who has commissioned the translation, as well as those of the potential readers of the target text.

In view of the fact that tourist service providers and recipients belong to different linguistic and cultural communities, the third chapter explores the creation of translations of tourism texts and the qualities of end products. The author focuses on a number of problems and difficulties encountered by translators. Such problems are meticulously categorized and explained. They are examined through the prism of different translation theories, such as Holz-Mänttari’s Theory of Translational Action (2009), Nord’s 1988 didactic model and the text typology proposed by Reiss (1982), which are applicable to informative and promotional texts in the sphere of tourism. Using the theoretical frameworks under discussion, the author summarizes the most valuable and useful ideas, which can be of great help to translators – teamwork, avoiding blind fidelity to the source text, thorough understanding of the stages of the translation process and the activities performed at each stage, the choice of a strategy consistent with the translation *skopos* and loyalty to the client, who has commissioned the translation, and potential target text recipients. The author argues that the growing tendency for creating products for “infotainment” – for both information and entertainment – calls for the use of evaluative and emotive descriptors in the tourism text. By tapping relevant language resources translators are expected to do their best to recreate these descriptors in the respective “tonality” of the receiving culture.

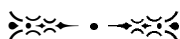
In conclusion, it must be pointed out that the author offers a well-referenced, balanced and comprehensive text which is likely to attract both readers with an interest in theory and professional translators with practical concerns. The book makes a significant contribution to research in the field of translation and suggests interesting avenues for future investigation.

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

**Ralitsa Demirkova**

---

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Dr Ralitsa Demirkova, Department of English and American Studies, University of Veliko Tarnovo, 2 Teodosi Tarnovski St., Veliko Tarnovo 5003, Bulgaria. @ r.demirkova@uni-vt.bg



**Markus Janka (Hrg.) und Michael Stierstorfer (Hrg.). *Verjüngte Antike: Griechisch-römische Mythologie und Historie in zeitgenössischen Kinder- und Jugendmedien*. Universitätsverlag Winter, 2017. 1+392. ISBN 978-3-8253-6715-2.**

The beginning of the twenty-first century has seen an unprecedented boom of creative transformations and adaptations of themes and motifs from Ancient Greek and Roman mythology and history in literary works and media, intended primarily for children and young adults. This renewed fascination with classical antiquity has given rise to an emergent field of interdisciplinary inquiry at the intersection between classical reception studies and children's literature. The book under consideration is the latest scholarly attempt to further the academic study of this imaginative engagement with classical material by exploring new avenues of investigation and identifying opportunities for fruitful synergy with other disciplines.

The essays in the collection were first presented at the “Medusa und Co. Reloaded” conference, held at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich on 6-8 October, 2015. The innovative edge of the volume resides in its broadening of the scope of investigation in three directions. Unlike previous research in the field, the case studies in the collection expand the focus of analysis beyond children's literature in English to include works in German, French, Italian and Russian as well. This linguistic diversity is matched by the variety of genres and media manifestations, ranging from young adult adventure novels through picture books and comics to cartoons and films. The resultant kaleidoscopic wealth of material is interpreted through the prism of a wide spectrum of theoretical and methodological frameworks from classical reception studies, classical philology, children's literature, media studies, film studies, pedagogy and theology. Each case study offers an interdisciplinary approach specifically tailored to the complexities of the works under consideration.

The volume comprises an introduction and seventeen case studies thematically organized into four sections. The first section presents essays on the didactic aspects of the introduction of students to classical themes and history. Laura Zinn dwells on the representations and functions of schools within the narratives of three young adult mythic fantasy series. Another interdisciplinary investigation is delivered by Anita Schilcher and Michael Stierstorfer. Drawing on different theoretical views of the objectives of engagement with literary works within the school context, the authors make a compelling case for the educational potential of Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* pentalogy and argue for the inclusion of its German translation into German literature classes.

The second – and largest – section of the volume, which comprises six comprehensive case studies, focuses on postmodern adaptation and innovation of classical material in a variety of media contexts. The opening essay by the volume's editors Markus Janka and Michael Stierstorfer offers insightful exploration of the theme of fragmented families in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and its imaginative transformations in three contemporary works for young adult audiences. The first part of the study presents an in-depth analysis of Ovid's treatment of the myths of Perseus, Theseus and Hercules and recognizes the vast innovative potential inherent in his text. The second part explores the adaptation of the myths for the purposes of problematizing unconventional family configurations: the patchwork family in Riordan's *Percy Jackson* series, single parenthood in the German short feature film *Mia und der Minotaurus* (2012) and adoptive relationships in the film *The Legend of Hercules* (2014).

The third section is devoted to contributions drawing on methodological and conceptual input from the field of film studies. Volker Müller's essay opens with a comparative analysis of two of Plato's dialogues, *Timaeus* and *Critias*, in order to identify the distinctive elements of the myth of Atlantis. The author then traces the variation of the myth in J.R.R. Tolkien's *Silmarillion*, the German translation of Albert Uderzo's French comics *La galère d'Obélix*, Disney's animated feature *Atlantis: the Lost Empire* (2001) and its 2003 sequel, and the BBC *Atlantis* TV series. Another valuable contribution to the volume is Hanna Paulouskaya's exploration of the ideologically motivated engagement with Greek mythology in Soviet animated features between the 1960s and the 1980s. She combines a detailed cinematic analysis of three films with interviews with their directors to elucidate the way the sociocultural context of film production determined the myth variation. The author identifies a range of motivations for the adaptations – from conforming to Russian fairy tale models to the narratives' use as vehicles for state propaganda.

The final section of the volume is devoted to Roman history and comprises three case studies on the transformation of the figures of Cicero and Gaius Julius Caesar. Katarzyna Marciniak's contribution endeavours to piece together a comprehensive understanding of the reception of Cicero in contemporary children's literature by exploring its multifarious representations in literary works and popular culture in English, German, Italian and Polish. The author's diachronic analysis starts with an investigation of the narrative, ethical and didactic strategies of bringing Cicero closer to younger audiences in three novels from the first part of the twentieth century and traces their application in recent literary works.

In closing, the multifaceted nature of the volume makes it a compelling reading for scholars of a wide range of academic disciplines. It lives up to the introduction's promise to explore opportunities for synergetic collaboration between different fields. The book thus lays the foundation for future cross- and interdisciplinary research.

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

**Veselka Vasileva-Petkova**

---

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Veselka Vasileva-Petkova, PhD student, Department of English and American Studies, University of Veliko Tarnovo, 2 Teodosi Tarnovski St., Veliko Tarnovo 5003, Bulgaria. @ v.vasileva@uni-vt.bg



**Plamen Gaptov, Maria Georgieva and Jonathan McCreedy, editors.**  
***Ireland-Europe. Cultural and Literary Encounters.***  
**St. Kliment Ohridski University Press, 2017. ISBN-978-954-07-4273-1**

The raising of questions about Ireland and Irishness at the heart of an international conference, held in 2015 at Sofia University, Bulgaria, is a certain prerequisite for cultural dialogue. The event seems instinctively synchronous with the current debates on UK and Europe's post-Brexit future. Thus, it can definitely be argued that the conference proceedings, collected under the title of *Ireland-Europe. Cultural and Literary Encounters*, came out at a time when the political, economic and cultural encounters between Europe and England-Ireland have been persistently redefined.

Tapping the rich repertoire of comparative studies, a discipline that has caught up with the current enhanced speed of cross-cultural mobility, the collected papers display a wide range of theoretical positions and techniques both within and across disciplines. Thematically structured in five sections, two of which pay tribute to W.B. Yeats and James Joyce, the spectrum of the discussions retracts and expands from literary and linguistic analysis to questions of a more precise contextual detail such as "multilingual language usage in Ireland" under EU legislation, or "nineteenth-century English visions of Ireland." One of the sections, "Ireland and Bulgaria: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Western-Eastern Postcolonial Struggles," intriguingly detects sites of cross-cultural encounter in literary works that project Ireland and Bulgaria as equally affected by processes of modernization. While Ludmilla Kostova argues that G.B. Shaw's play *Arms and the Man* represents a "conjectural history" of Bulgaria's post-liberation modernization, James Gallacher's article is concerned with contending visions of Irish modernity in a post-revolution generation of authors who challenge "the romantic narratives of the Literary Revival" (126) that had furnished its beginnings.

All of the articles in the collection consider, but also read beyond, the concept of a "national cultural space," locating Irishness both as a container of and an entity contained in a linguistic and cultural multiplicity. Exploring the nature of multilingualism and code-switching in *Finnegans Wake*, Jonathan McCreedy contends that Joyce's "dense dream language... – known within criticism as "Wakese" – incorporates the appearance of over fifty world languages and they are often used simultaneously" (65); Marina Sneseva analyses the challenged position of Dublin bilinguals, and Boryana Bratanova locates Irish and Bulgarian comparatively in the European Union's multilingual space.

The opening section of the book applies a similar research angle, demonstrating how Yeats's work can be read as a hub of multicultural intersections. Dominik Wallerius and Yarmila Daskalova detect them through the lens of gender studies and ageing. Daskalova's paper contributes an insightful mythopoetic paradigm of comparison between Yeats and the Bulgarian poet P.K. Yavorov. Nikolay Todorov considers the plasticity of Yeats's symbolism in one of its more distinctive forms – that of the “gyres.” He traces the cultural trajectory of this figure from Ancient Greek philosophy to Yeats's mythography, contending that while “gyration” is the plastic expression of a “personalized duration” (38), it casts forth a mesh of cross-cultural connections to ancient, classical and modern philosophies as well as to Eastern theosophy.

The other two sections of the book, “Nineteenth-Century English Visions of Ireland” and “James Joyce in Translation,” dwell on cases of English literary and cultural spatiotemporal reconstruction of Ireland and Irishness. Zelma Catalan and V.M. Budakov's papers consider the role of creative interpretation and speculative expectation in the production of Ireland within and beyond particular historical contexts. While Catalan's contribution discusses what form the creative reception of Thackeray's *The Luck of Barry Lyndon* yields in Stanley Kubrick's twentieth-century cinematic interpretation, Budakov observes how nineteenth-century speculative fiction, like Tom Creer's *A Modern Daedalus*, chronicles imaginary versions of forthcoming historical situations. Both scholars conclude that Irishness is negotiable and its clear-cut demarcation against difference turns out to be biased and non-productive. In a similar vein, the final section of the book suggests that Irishness is translatable – both in terms of cultural actuality and linguistic effort. While Marina Dobrovolskaya and Marija Girevska's articles focalize the challenges of translating Joyce in, respectively, Russian and Macedonian, Teodora Tzankova reads *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in the tradition of self-portrayal observing, in a more general sense, how language and narration operate in literary attempts at personal and collective self-location.

Edited by Plamen Gaptov, the late Maria Georgieva and Jonathan McCreedy and published by St. Kliment Ohridski University Press, the collected conference proceedings are carefully arranged in thematic areas that integrate smoothly to produce Ireland from multiple research angles. What glues them together is the conviction that discussions like the present comparative effort work against insularity and encourage an expanded cross-border perception of cultural actuality through a dynamic and healthy dialogue.

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

**Petya Tsoneva**

---

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Dr Petya Tsoneva, Department of English and American Studies, University of Veliko Tarnovo, 2 Teodosi Tarnovski St., Veliko Tarnovo 5003, Bulgaria. @ p.tsoneva@uni-vt.bg

