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Dining with Faustus: (Dis)Taste in Translating the Gastronomical

Abstract: The novel *Viltotais Fausts jeb Papildināta un pārlabota pavārgrāmata* (*Mock Faustus, or, The Corrected Complemented Cooking-Book*), published in 1973 by the Latvian writer Marģers Zariņš (1910–1993), is arguably the first Latvian postmodern novel. As the title suggests, it is a reworking of the Faustian motif in a gastronomical manner. The reaction to the novel from critics and readers at the time of its publishing produced polemical attitudes. One of the more extreme remarks was that this novel should be translated into the Latvian language, pointing mostly to the linguistic challenges the reader must face. The text abounds in archaisms, neologisms, obscure dialectal idioms, expressions from other languages, etc. The majority of them are tied to gastronomy, resulting in a fictional amalgam of both Latvian and foreign cuisines. However, the gastronomical is further seasoned with a cornucopia of references from all fields of culture in many languages. Thus, it challenges the reader at the utmost level in terms of comprehensibility.

Although it has already been mentioned that *Mock Faustus* is a challenging read, even for the native Latvian reader, there are some translations of this novel into other languages. In this paper, I will focus on two translations – the Russian (1981) and English (1987) – and outline the specific challenges the translators had to face when dealing with a text with such complex linguistic and stylistic features. This includes the labyrinthine use of cultural references – in particular the gastronomical ones – around which the whole text of the novel is orbiting. I will also indicate how, in some cases, the translations completely change the cultural constellations of the source text. This reveals how the translators, like chefs, have to improvise when some of the ingredients of a dish (or, in this case, a text) are missing in the target culture.

Keywords: gastropoetics; gastrotranslation; gastronovel; translation; translatability; Faustus; Marģers Zariņš

Introduction

Literary texts classified by scholars as "gastronovels" (Radu, 2011) attempt to unite two great pleasures into one – the gastronomical and the textual or linguistic. The Latvian writer Marģers Zariņš has produced one such novel, *Viltotais Fausts jeb Papildināta un pārlabota pavārgrāmata* (*Mock Faustus, or, The Corrected Complemented Cooking-Book*, 1973). Both from a linguistic and gastronomical perspective, the text is extremely demanding from the reader as various languages are fused, multilingual puns are employed, and several epochs of both Latvian and international cuisines are mixed. Additionally, all of it is garnished with many references from several arts.

The translation of such novels, quite predictably, often produces only derivatives (not in a bad sense!) of such complex texts. The same happens when a cuisine is adapted to local tastes or locally available ingredients or cooking practices – something gets transformed in the process. When both the combination of food and the language of a work of fiction are translated, the results become simultaneously predictable and unpredictable. Without a doubt, the translator has to be creative and adapt the literary cuisine to the ingredients: i.e., to the words and cuisine available in the target culture. Still, the manner in which this is accomplished brings many surprises.

The translation of multilingual gastronomy in works of literary fiction poses several challenges for the translator. Gastronomy itself, in everyday context, is a demanding task for a translator. The task is even more complex when translating the phantasmagorical gastronomical features of a novel that is a close relative to the Joycean language of *Finnegans Wake*. Such features abound in the gastronovel *Mock Faustus*. Food and language are the fundamental elements of the identity of a community. When mixed together in an extravagant manner in a work of literary fiction, the translation shows the particular specifics of a culture that are difficult to transfer to the target audience, thus revealing the issues that translators have to encounter in intercultural translations.

By examining a few vivid examples of the Russian and English translations of the novel, this paper will point out several problems with translating both the culinary culture itself and the linguistic aspects encountered in such a work in which even the author himself, at times, reflects upon the (un)translatability of such aspects.

Translating Multilingual Gastronomy and Identity

In the field of food studies, two seminal studies can be regarded as the starting points of the whole field. One is the article by Roland Barthes, *Pour une psycho-sociologie de l'alimentation contemporaine* (1961), in which the gastronomical aspect of a culture is characterised as a sign-system that produces its own cultural meanings. A counterpart to this article is *Mythologiques* (1964–1971) by Claude Lévi-Strauss, where the role of food as an essential component of any culture is established and the idea of the "triangle culinaire" is proposed.

The assumptions that "food is an important marker of identity for any culture" (Raghavan et al., 2015, 1) and that "food is central to the understanding of any culture" (Srinivas, 2007, 86) is accepted as commonplace in food studies. It is possible to describe a culture, or at least a fundamental part of it, by the gastronomical sphere of the culture. The depiction of gastronomy in art also serves as a good starting point to study the features of the identity of a particular culture or community. Food and (national) identity are closely connected. For example, in the foreword to her monograph on food in 19th century British literature, Annette Cozzi proposes that "food is one of the most fundamental signifiers of national identity, and literary representations of food [...] reveal how that identity is culturally constructed" (Cozzi, 2010, 5).

Gastropoetics (a term coined in Parama, 2002) is the study of food and food related phenomena in literature (and other arts) which reveals how these phenomena function in literary texts, as well as what they reveal about individuals and society. The term "culinary text" can refer to any type of text that could be called gastronomical (e.g., a cookbook), whereas "gastronovel" is to be understood more narrowly as a term in literary studies. This refers to novels in which the gastronomical is of major importance. More generally, the term "gastroliterary text" can also be applied. Another term – "recipistolary prose" (Witt, 1999, 11) – is applied to texts in which the narrative is interwoven with recipes, although other types of gastronomical interjections could be present.

The food writer Kyla Wazana Tompkins connects gastroliterary texts and the identity issues included therein in her observation that "the meal is a cultural text in and of itself, which can be read formally – through the differential relationships between their separate parts – and in terms of the larger narratives of national/cultural identity that surround it" (Tompkins, 2005, 252).

The connection between food and other aspects of culture, and the vast possibilities of interpreting these in literary texts, is described by the literary critic Terry Eagleton in his article "Edible Ecriture" (1997), where he states: "If there is one sure thing about food, it is that it is never just food [...] Like the post-structuralist text, food is endlessly interpretable." Decoding the gastronomical signs in fiction "[affords] an extraordinary flexibility of interpretation as [a] symbol, metaphor, code, and language" (Fellner, 2013, 242), as food is one of the most important sign-systems of a culture.

Cuisines and languages are in the process of mixing more and more in our everyday lives. The semiotician Fabio Parasecoli notes that "as the level of complexity grows, in order to be decoded, food codes must be interpreted in connection with wider cultural 'texts'" (Parasecoli, 2011, 655). Thus, literary texts in which multiple languages and multiple cuisines are present simultaneously pose a set of problems for a translator. Paraphrasing Anthi Wiedenmayer (2016, 29), food can be translated only up to a degree. She adds that "examining the degree to which concrete culinary customs or food contribute to the collective conception and construction of a society, one could easily reach the limits of (un)translatability – in the sense that translating [becomes] extremely difficult, though not impossible" (Wiedenmeyer, 2016, 29). This also holds true in the case of Zariņš, and the translations of *Mock Faustus* show the wide array of approaches to the problem of translating food in fiction.

One of the reasons why gastronovels pose such problems for translators is the fact that in both cultural and linguistic terms, "food and culinary culture works as extra *couleur locale*"[1] (Wiedenmeyer, 2016, 38). The translation of linguistically complex and culturally specific gastronomical passages can lead to either the incompatibility of menus or many footnotes in the translation. This does not always make the real or imaginary food items more comprehensible, which might also lead to deviations of style in the translation, particularly in satirical or grotesque gastronovels.

Although the problems of translating food are very well-known in translation studies, extensive research on such a niche subject as translating gastronomy in fiction are few (for some articles touching upon this subject, see Stano,

1 Although Wiedenmeyer spoke about modern crime novels, this observation can be applied to other genres, such as gastronovels.

2016 and Chiaro & Rossato, 2015). One of the most comprehensive studies of this topic is *La traduzione è servita: ovvero Food for Thought* ("Translation is Served: That is Food for Thought", 2004) by the Italian translation scholar Rosanna Masiola Rosini. In this volume of nearly 600 pages, she compares the translations of food-related phenomena in the fictional works of many languages (e.g., Italian, French, English). She concludes that when food is being translated, the usual translating techniques are applied similarly to other realms of culture (Rosini, 2004, 545–547) – *calchi* (calques), *equivalenza semantica* (semantic equivalence), *equivalenza comunicativa/pragmatica* (communicative/pragmatic equivalence), descrizione (description), modulazione (modulation), adattamento (adaptation), addomesticamento (domestication) and *eliminazione/compensazione* (elimination/compensation).

Marģers Zariņš and the *Mock Faustus*

Marģers Zariņš was a Latvian composer and writer. He made his literary debut in 1969 at the age of 59 with the publication of a short story *Elizejas lauku Mocarts* ("Mozart of the Elysian Fields"). In 1973, his first novel *Viltotais Fausts jeb pārlabota un papildināta pavārgrāmata* (*Mock Faustus, or, The Corrected Complemented Cooking-Book*) was published. To this day, it remains his most prominent and renowned literary achievement.

The novel is what could be classified as a satire, a gastronovel, or a recipistolary novel. The plot is an alternative history of Latvia between the years 1930 and 1945, when the political regime changed five times. The plot is driven by the two main characters – Jānis Vridriķis Trampedahs and Kristofers Mārlovs – who are assigned the roles of Faustus and Mephistopheles, respectively. However, these roles are reversed during the novel; hence the "mock" Faustus. Throughout the novel, Mārlovs tries to rewrite and update the cookbook previously published by Trampedahs. This endeavour constitutes the "mock" part of the title, as there are several self-ironical and self-derisory remarks in the narrative about the genre of cookbooks (or gastronovels) being ridiculous and trivial.

The gastronomical imagery, as the title of the novel suggests, plays the first violin. Coupled with linguistic experiments, it becomes the foundation of the whole text. The use of gastronomy in literary texts for satirical purposes is

a popular strategy. The most prominent texts composed in the same manner include the prosimetric adventure novel *Satyricon* by Petronius (27–66), in which the scene of Trymalchio's dinner is the most vivid in gastronomical terms, and the Renaissance novel *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1532–1564) by the French writer François Rabelais (1494–1553). Both are mentioned in Zariņš' novel, but the latter has served as one of the paragons for his text, both gastronomically and linguistically.

The poetics of the novel by Zariņš are quite complex, but we can identify several obvious main features. Zariņš conglomerates many layers and epochs of the Latvian language into a utopian linguistic hybrid that uses dialectal expressions, archaisms, neologisms, etc., to an extensive and overwhelming degree. Furthermore, the style of early Latvian cookbooks is adopted. To this, a mix of expressions in foreign languages and countless literary intertextual references are added. Similar poetics are common in gastronovels. For example, the Latvian migrant and recipistolary novel *Šampinjonu derība* ("The Champignon Testament", 2002) by Laima Muktupāvela (now Kota) also mixes many cuisines and languages. Still, the presence of both real, historical, but no longer familiar cuisine combined with the fictional and imaginary cuisines in the style of Rabelais or Petronius also contribute to the complexity of the novel. In many of his articles, the Latvian literary critic Guntis Berelis describes this novel as the prime example of Latvian postmodern prose, as an anti-novel or metaliterature (e.g., Berelis, 1999, 227–235).

As the language used in the novel is extremely creative (one might even argue that it is autotelic and tasteless), the translation of both separate gastronomical items and the intonation of vivid gastronomical passages demands a creative approach from the translator.

Translating the Mock Faustian Menu

As the description of the novel has already suggested, it is hardly comprehensible, even for a native speaker/reader of Latvian. Thus, it is quite surprising that translations of the novel even exist. The first full translation from the original was in Czech in 1978 by Vojtěch Gaja and Anděla Janoušková. The next translation of the novel was published in 1981 in Russian and was translated by Валда Волковская

(Valda Volkovskaya). In the same year, it was also translated in Estonian from its original language by Ita Saks. Other translations – Bulgarian, Slovakian, Romanian (see Bibliography for full titles and translators) and the English by Раиса Боброва (Raissa Bobrova) – are made from the Russian. Some excerpts from the novel have also been translated into Polish (Silova, 2004, 87, 92).

The complexity of translating this text is made even more challenging due to the extensive use of not only many obscure, ancient, unfamiliar and made-up words, but foods and other gastronomical items as well. The intercultural relations in the translation of gastronomy play a significant part in the translation, as the translation of tastes, cuisines and gastronomy is a challenge also outside the literary realm.

The translation of *Mock Faustus* in English is a version of what could be called an imaginary English (or Soviet English, for the sake of the argument), as the translator is not a native speaker of English. One might suspect that this might provide a creative outcome equal to the original, but in fact it provides a very bleak and plain version of the original that, although formally correct in most instances, lacks the style and tone of the novel.

These particular translations and the specific passages from them are chosen to compare how the gastronomical is translated into a language (Russian) from the original language (Latvian) with how it is done from another translation (from Russian into English). In other words, there is room for analysis of the translation of the gastronomical language when it is "fresh" versus "reheated".

The first example will show how culturally specific foods are translated, as well as how recipes and the possible or impossible translations of them into other languages are either successful or not. The foods are *skābputra* and *kami*, which are discussed during the first encounter between Trampedahs and Mārlovs (Zariņš, 1973, 39–40). *Skābputra* is, as the most recent edition of the Latvian-English dictionary translates descriptively, "sour barley and curds soup" (Veisbergs, 2020). *Latviešu literārās valodas vārdnīca* (the Dictionary of Latvian Literary Language) defines it thus: "Ieskābēta miežu putraimu putra, kas lietojama aukstā veidā" ("slightly fermented pearl barley, used refrigerated") (Zinātne, 1989). *Kami*, in the same dictionary, is defined as "pienā vai rūgušpienā iejauktu sautētu un apgrauzdētu rudzu, miežu, zirņu, pupu miltu maisījums" ("a mixture of rye, barley, pea, and bean flour into milk or curdled milk") (Zinātne, 1980). It must be noted that both of these foods were still quite popular during the times

which are depicted in the novel (1930s), but not so much during the writing of the novel (1970s). Nowadays, both of them are considered as national cultural heritage, but they are not very widespread or popular.

In the Russian translation "skābputra" is transliterated as "скаба путра" (*skaba putra*), which indicates that this food has no popular counterpart in the Russian cuisine. This is the situation in most cases with food translation – the translation simply becomes a loanword in the target language (e.g., pizza, sushi etc.). The English translation employs the same approach and, surprisingly, adds the Latvian diacritics (*skāba putra*). In both translations, these items are italicised to indicate that it is not a proper word of the respective languages. It must be noted that "skābputra", when referring to this particular dish, is a compound word, both in the Latvian language and the text of the novel. However, the disjointed forms "skāba putra" and "скаба путра" just mean "a sour porridge/ soup" that can be attributed either to the taste or the state (i.e., stale food) of these types of foods in general.

During the episode of eating "skābputra" and "kami", and discussing the recipe of these foods, Mārlovs asks Trampedahs why this recipe is not included in his cookbook. The answer is "Kami ir pārāk lokāls jēdziens, lai to iekļautu internacionālo ēdienu sarakstā" (Zariņš, 1973, 39) ["*Kami* is too local to be included in the list of international dishes"]. He continues with this remark: "Kā, piemēram, francūzim lai izskaidro, kas ir skābputra? *Le gruau aigre*? Kāpēc *le gruau*? Kāpēc ne *gachis*? Varbūt – *le gruau fumier?*" (Zariņš 1973, 40) ["How, for example, could one explain to a Frenchman what is "skābputra"? *Le gruau aigre*? Why *le gruau*? Why not *gachis*? Maybe – *le gruau fumier?*"[2]]. Although these reflections are retained in the Russian, the English translation partially omits them, only mentioning "How could I explain what *kami* is to a Frenchman, say, or an Englishman?" (Zariņš, 1987, 39), adding the "Englishman" (which one does not find in the original), as it is a translation into English. However, the particular reflections on how one could represent the foods in French, viz. English, are omitted altogether.

Looking at the text in the original language, one could argue that either Zariņš does not have sufficient knowledge of French or that he includes some

2 The translations in the square brackets where no reference is given are made by the author of this paper. The French words that are obviously incorrect, are printed in the book as written here; also later editions retain the same writing.

puns in these lines. "Le gruau aigre" could be a literal translation of "skābputra", but of course this name has no meaning in French. At the same time, it could also point to the dish "hachis", although it is not similar to "skābputra". Also, the "gruau fumier", apart from the strange literal meaning, could be a pun in gastronomical terms and refer to "fumet", which is kind of a thick broth that, in a way, is similar to "skābputra" from a visual perspective. So, even the original text poses several problems as to how the possible (mis)translations or misspellings should be interpreted in the first place.

After the problem of naming the foods, Zariņš discusses the translation of culinary items and the preparation process. The most common challenges are the unavailability of ingredients as well as the unfamiliar methods of preparation. In addition, Zariņš uses a lot of archaic and strange words in the description of the preparation of "kami", after some of which he puts either exclamation or question marks in order to show that these specific words would cause problems for a proper and adequate translation. For example, "... izber uz izklaidus palagiem (!), lai saulē izkalst un apsmird (!), šauj karsti izkurinātā maizes krāsnī (?)..." (Zariņš, 1973, 40) ["throw them sparsely onto sheets (!), so they dry out and gain a little stench (!), push into a heated bread oven (?)..."; in (Zariņš 1987, 39), this excerpt is rendered thus: "empty the lot onto a sheet, spread it out to dry and go a little bad in the sun, then scoop it up into a pot, place the pot in a very hot oven..."]. Both the Russian and English translation omit the punctuation altogether. Therefore, the thought process of the narrator regarding the translatability of gastronomical phenomena is not fully rendered. However, if the process of preparation were to be translated, then it would sound strange. Trampedahs concludes, "Neiespējami! Izklausās kā zirgu barība – elpe vai odre... Ko gan angļi sāktu domāt par kurzemniekiem?" (Zariņš, 1973, 40) ["Impossible, isn't it? Sounds like fodder for a nag... What would the English think of us!"] (Zariņš, 1987, 40). Thus, Zariņš points to an extremely common problem in translating gastronomy: food is very culturally specific, and it is rare that one can find appropriate equivalents in different cultures and languages. Therefore, translations would make a wrong impression about the food.

Another example involves mixing gastronomy with both real and fictional literary references. In this passage, the dish "Viltotais Fausts", or "Mock Faustus" from the title of the book, is mentioned. In a state of delirium caused by a shortage of food during the Nazi occupation of Latvia, Mārlovs is rereading

the cookbook written by Trampedahs (Zariņš, 1973, 315–317). Here, Zariņš introduces a "citation", supposedly from Virgil's *Bucolica*, in which a kind of a salad is described. First, this work was attributed to Virgil, but in contemporary scholarship it is known as *Appendix Virgiliana* (ca. 1st century), a part of which includes the poem "Moretum", to which Zariņš alludes. The definition of "moretum" is given as a "country dish composed of garlic, rue, vinegar, [and] oil" (Clarendon Press, 1891). Nevertheless, Zariņš uses it for his own literary and fictional aims and renames this poem as "Ars optima ad faciendo vinegretum divinum" (sic!). It should be noted that the Russian translator corrects the grammatically unsound Latin of Zariņš. Thus, the name of the cited poem becomes "Ars optima ad faciendum vinegreti divini" ["The best way to make a divine vinegret"]. This is one of the very many examples from which it is possible to conclude that the English translation was made from the Russian, as the title of this poem is rendered not as in the Latvian source text, but as it stands in the Russian translation.

In this case, Zariņš introduces a new word into Latin – "vinegretum" – referring to a salad prepared mainly from beetroots, potatoes, carrots, pickles, onions, and vinaigrette as a dressing. In the Russian translation, it poses no problems as "винегрет" (vinegret) refers exactly to the same salad as in Latvian. However, in the English translation, it is called "vinaigrette", which can cause problems for understanding the passage properly. Vinaigrette is more or less known to be the so-called French dressing rather than a salad that is popular in both Russia and Latvia, which, if written in this form, is usually described as Russian vinaigrette to make the distinction. For the curious ones, a quick Google image search will show the great difference between "vinaigrette" in French and English, and "vinegrets" in Latvian.

Being a thoroughly intertextual novel, it not only has a number of linguistic layers, but also styles. Many critics and translators of the novel have called it a polystylistic text (see Laizāns, 2020 for a discussion on remarks from literary critics on the language and style of the novel). To provide the full enjoyment of this literary meal, the changes in style also pose certain problems. Although the "Moretum" is cited as being composed in elegiac couplet, both the original "Bucolica" and pseudo-Virgilian "Moretum" are in dactylic hexameter. This discrepancy is probably the reason why the Russian translator has corrected not only the title of the poem, but also rendered it into dactylic hexameters, which

would be more fitting to the original Latin poem. However, in the English translation, the poetry is omitted entirely.

The last example of translating gastronomy is a conversation between Mārlovs and two female characters – Daila and her mother – regarding a recipe where champignons are among the ingredients. This example shows that even when equivalent notions and terms in other cultures are at hand, the translation of a mix of references that point to several epochs and language layers, especially when food is involved, still presents difficulties.

Mārlovs asks whether the recipe of a certain fish dish is a secret. In answer, the cook replies by describing the process of preparation. She says that the fish should be put into a kettle where "kurā jau saceptas purslas iekšā" (Zariņš, 1973, 240) ["where there already are fried champignons"]. Although it is from an archaic dialect, the word "purslas" is one way to describe champignons in Latvian (Čikāgas (1956) identifies it as possibly "hydnum imbricatum"; the synonym of "purslas" refers to it as "briedenes", which, according to Izglītības (1923), is explained as "Der Champignon (agaricus campestris)", meaning "champignon"; both of these are edible mushrooms). The Russian translation chooses to translate this first variation of the champignon name as "навозник". This name refers to the fungal genus "coprinus", which is a part of the agaricaceae family to which Zariņš refers. However, the English translation renders this as "dung-mushroom" (Zariņš, 1987, 220), probably to illustrate both the dialogue situation in the original (where the cook is interrupted by the hostess, who proposes a more appropriate name for the mushroom) and the name one reads in the Russian translation – "навозник" – which is reminiscent of the word "навоз", meaning dung or manure.

An interruption follows – "Fui! Daila, nesaka – purslas, saka šampigjoni, – pamāca māte" (Zariņš, 1973, 240) ["Yuck, Daila, you don't say "purslas", you say champignons, – the mother instructs"] – where the mother of the cook suggests saying "šampigjoni" instead of "purslas". However, "šampigjoni" is a mispronunciation of the official version of "šampinjoni" ("champignons") in Latvian. In this way, Zariņš uses his linguistic style to express the level of education of his protagonists and create the satirical and comical tone of the novel. This is one item in the original text that is retained in the Russian but still does not do the scene justice. Although it is rendered in Russian as "шампигноны", the conversation omits the line where in the original text the word for mushrooms is corrected to "шампиньоны" ("šampinjoni"). The English translation also omits the

mention of a mistaken rendition of champignons and provides the proper name, thus destroying the polemics between the correct and improper use of language.

Further on, Mārlovs gets involved in the conversation with an interjection that the correct Latvian name for these mushrooms is "briedenes". The Russian translates it as "Народное название – печерицы" (Zariņš, 1981, 180) ["The folk call it hawk's wing"]. In this case, the Russian translation provides an equal name for the situation that is described in the novel, as the Russian name "печерицы" is a synonym to "шампиньоны" (agaricus campestris). The English translation omits this third element of the conversation on the proper name of champignons altogether.

Also in this fragment, Zariņš reflects on the relationship between language and gastronomy. To sum up this short food talk, Daila (the cook) says, "Briedenes ... jā, kur es paliku? Briedenes, šampinjonus, purslas – tas ir viens un tas pats..." (Zariņš, 1973, 241) ["Hawk's wing... yes, where was I? Hawk's wing, champignons, button mushrooms – they are one and the same thing..."]. Through the mouth of his character Daila, Zariņš expresses that it doesn't matter what we call a certain ingredient as long as we are talking about the same thing. Quite paradoxically, the translations also show this, even with the omissions of certain parts of the dialogue. For example, the Russian translation also introduces the fourth name given in the original, which was omitted before: "Печерицы, шампиньоны, навозники — разницы нет" (Zariņš, 1981, 180). Meanwhile, the English version provides only the two variations employed in the translation: "Mix the dung-mushrooms – or champignons – it makes no difference" (Zariņš, 1987, 221). One could argue that leaving out some potentially unimportant linguistic ingredients from the translation might still give the general idea of both the topic and the style of a certain passage (or of the whole novel). It could also be argued that this might not give a full picture of the linguistic menu of a novel composed in a certain mode of multilingual poetics and the gastronomical vocabulary that is expressed in that language.

Conclusion

The differences between languages and cuisines pose the danger of rendering the translation not only illegible and incomprehensible, but distasteful and

unpalatable as well. The title of the novel is very appropriate, even in the source language. We are invited to taste a non-existent food and to do so with the help of a language that is hard to understand, even for a native speaker. The same holds true for the translations. They confuse and give only a vague concept about the true taste of the novel. Just as is the case with foreign cuisines outside of their original environment, they get mixed and adapted to local tastes and ingredients, thus producing hybrids (which is not always a bad thing).

Multilingual literature is a challenge for both the reader and, even more so, for the translator. Likewise, the realm of cuisines and their contemporary fusion is a difficult task for both a gourmand and a translator. As the examples in the article show, an even more demanding situation presents itself where a multilingual novel abounds in imagined and fictional dishes and foods. Therefore, translating multilingual gastroliterature is a courageous endeavour that, in the boundaries of one particular text, leaves the reader both unsatisfied and oversaturated at the same time.

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