



# Compilation, Combination, Translation, Interpretation Reader's Obligations to *Dictionary* of the *Khazars* by Milorad Pavić

Lenka Pánková

On the surface, Milorad Pavić's *Dictionary of the Khazars: A Lexicon Novel in 100,000 Words* (1984) offers plenty of sources on the fall of a mysterious Khazar civilization and related matters in three ideologically incongruent lexicons: Christian, Islamic and Jewish. Yet, beyond the facts regarding the puzzling disappearance of the Khazars and their tongue predicated on their presumed conversion to Christianity, Islam or Judaism, much else is at stake. The "right" reading, collation, translation and compilation of the *Dictionary's* three sections may also bring about a return to greater human perfection, which is here symbolized by the physical composition of man's angelic ancestor, Adam Cadmon / Adam Ruhani / Adam, the brother of Christ.<sup>1</sup> The recurrent synthetic efforts performed by the novel's re-incarnated characters with three distinct cultural backgrounds, in conjunction with the author's alleged support of the Serbian cause in the Balkan Wars, have created controversy related to the former Yugoslavia. Interestingly, the desire to identify the relationship between the novel and Yugoslavia's composition/decomposition, if any, has given rise to a critical debate characterized by diametrically opposed points of view. Aleksandar Jerkov, for example, perceives the *Dictionary* as "a book that [...] surpassed all the famous examples from the history of tolerance in literature".<sup>2</sup> Andrew Wachtel, on the contrary, dubs Pavić's writing a "literary demolition of Yugoslavia".<sup>3</sup> Tatjana Aleksić claims that "for every destructive attempt the novel offers a creative counter-effort. Thus the narrative is not atomized for the sake of meaningless destruction, but for the purpose of

---

1 The link between the Khazars' calamity and the loss of their language, on one hand, biblical Tower of Babel episode, on the other, has been pointed out previously. Cf. BEEBEE, T. O., *Transmesis: Inside Translation's Black Box*, Basingstoke 2012.

2 JERKOV, A., *Is the New Paradigm in the Balkans Old Enough? An Introduction to Postpoetics, the First Step*, in: *European Review*, Vol. 23, No. 3, p. 393; available in: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279170126\\_Is\\_the\\_New\\_Paradigm\\_in\\_the\\_Balkans\\_Old\\_Enough\\_An\\_Introduction\\_to\\_Postpoetics\\_the\\_First\\_Step](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279170126_Is_the_New_Paradigm_in_the_Balkans_Old_Enough_An_Introduction_to_Postpoetics_the_First_Step).

3 WACHTEL, A., *Postmodernism as Nightmare: Milorad Pavić's Literary Demolition of Yugoslavia*, in: *Slavic and East European Journal*, Vol. 41, No. 4, p. 627.



(re)creating a new and arguably more unified body/narrative".<sup>4</sup> As explained above, the "re-creation" involves not only facts concerning the Khazar civilization's demise but also the extinct Khazar language and mankind's angelic ancestor. This article will focus on the ways in which Pavić represents the re-composition process, while emphasizing its obstacles, its endlessness, its transcendent nature and its dependence on the reader's textual and extra-textual involvement.

The Christian, Islamic and Jewish lexicons, dispersed and deprived of mutual dialogue, repeatedly resurface from the 8<sup>th</sup> century until 1982, when the novel ends — if it ever does. "It is an open book, and when it is shut it can be added to; just as it has its own former and present lexicographer, so it can acquire new writers, compilers, and continuers."<sup>5</sup> The two most significant means used to ensure continuity are the transmigration of souls and the reader's involvement discussed below. Nevertheless, the task falls primarily upon the repeatedly re-incarnated participants in the Khazar polemic, whom the *Dictionary* captures in the 8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> centuries (Cyril or Constantine the Philosopher — Isaac Sangari — Farabi Ibn Kora), the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Avram Brankovich — Samuel Cohen — Jusuf Masudi) and the 1980s (Dr. Dorothea Schultz — Dr. Muawia — Dr. Suk). The transmigration, in fact, functions akin to translation for in both processes the invariant remains yet becomes expressed through different means.<sup>6</sup> On their mission through centuries the triads run into multiple obstacles, ranging from spatial, linguistic, cultural and religious distances, through interfering demons and the imperfection of human post-lapsarian languages.

Firstly, each of the three re-incarnated dream hunters is always born into one of the three camps religiously/culturally pitted against each other (Jewish, Christian and Islamic). As a result, they need to overcome vast geographical, cultural and, in some cases, metaphysical distances together with mutual linguistic incomprehension to reach each other. To give a specific example, the seventeenth-century Christian Constantinople diplomat Avram Brankovich, "one of the authors of this book,"<sup>7</sup> dreams of someone reciting a poem in a tongue unknown to the dreamer. Pavić, in fact, provides us with the poem's text in Hebrew, thus placing the reader in an analogous situation at once more and less complicated than Brankovich's. Brankovich, at least, became acquainted with the oral version in his sleep while the novel's reader simply faces six incomprehensible lines in Hebrew. The situation draws our attention to the above-mentioned issues of reading, interpretation and translation at the *Dictionary's* very core. Upon consulting a rabbi, Brankovich learns the name of the poem's compiler (not its author), which provides a textual clue to the reader armed with the Hebrew sources. The entry on the poem's compiler, Judah Halevi, in turn leads the reader to its author, Samuel Cohen, a Dubrovnik Jew. His lexicon entry, when matched with

4 ALEKSIĆ, T., *National Definition through Postmodern Fragmentation: Milorad Pavić's Dictionary of the Khazars*, in: *The Slavic and East European Journal*, Vol. 53, No. 1, p. 88.

5 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary of the Khazars: A Lexicon Novel in 100,000 Words. A Female Version*, Trans. Christina Pribičević-Zorić, New York 1989, p. 11.

6 See BEEBEE, T. O. — PÁNKOVÁ, L., *Milorad Pavić's Dictionary of the Khazars as Translational Fiction*, in: *Serbian Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2, p. 357.

7 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. 24.



Brankovich's, tells us that Cohen and Brankovich metamorphose into each other in their dreams. "For he had long since stopped feeling like Avram Brankovich in his dreams. [...] In the evenings he felt as if he were awakened by someone else's fatigue; in the mornings he felt as if though he might fall asleep, because somewhere someone felt rested, alert and awake."<sup>8</sup> In order to be able to communicate their Khazar discoveries to each other, thus contributing to Adam Ruhani's re-creation, they must meet in the same physical reality. Their personal encounter in a military camp, nevertheless, does not further their common mission as Brankovich is only able to see Cohen, for an instant, when awakening in his own death. According to Wachtel, "the desire for synthesis [...] is seen as a utopian and foolhardy quest; for when it is achieved, synthesis leads not to perfect knowledge, but rather to immediate death and destruction."<sup>9</sup> Yet the two characters' 17<sup>th</sup>-century demise is not final for, as we know, they will be re-incarnated in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century (and perhaps countless times beyond that). Furthermore, there remains someone to profit from the information surrounding their tragic personal encounter. This is the novel's reader, who, in fact, carries a heavy interpretational burden indeed.

"Only someone who can read through the sections of one book in their proper order can create the world anew,"<sup>10</sup> writes Pavić. At the same time, however, being a hypertext precursor, the *Dictionary* "can be read in an infinite number of ways," either as "a holy book or a crossword puzzle,"<sup>11</sup> he adds on the same page. Incidentally, the "holy book" or "crossword puzzle" reading dilemma reflects the rift between modern and postmodern approaches to Grand Narratives. Just as the reader is invited to use Pavić's 1994 novel *Last Love in Constantinople* for fortune-telling, the *Dictionary of the Khazars* might be used to test the reader's tendency to pursue modern or postmodern interpretation models. In Tomislav Z. Longinović's words, "these new models [...] begin to project a desire for the knowledge of the ever elusive "total reality." This quest for totality comes after the limits of representation have been surpassed by the awareness that "reality" is a process of constant and necessary invention."<sup>12</sup> While the latter option relegates the reading process to the sphere of entertainment pure and simple, the former puts the reader alongside Kabbalists or alchemists.<sup>13</sup> While Kabbalists and alchemists explored various combinations of numbers, letters or elements, the reader matches lexicon entries to approximate the Khazar (and divine) Truth. This transforms him/her into another compiler of the *Khazar Dictionary* and a co-author of Pavić's novel.

The mission is, unfortunately, first interrupted even before the reader reaches the Christian, Islamic and Jewish dictionaries. How do we fathom the self-contr-

8 Ibid, p. 44.

9 WACHTEL, A., c. d., p. 636.

10 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. 11.

11 Ibid, p. 11.

12 LONGINOVIĆ, T. Z., *Chaos, Knowledge, and Desire: Narrative Strategies in The Dictionary of the Khazars*, in: *Review of Contemporary Fiction*, Vol. 18, No. 2, p. 184.

13 For the link between Pavić's *Dictionary* and the Kabbala, see BEEBEE, T. O. — PÁNKOVÁ, L., op. cit., pp. 355–356.



dictionary label “Reconstruction of the original (1691) Daubmannus edition (destroyed in 1692), including its most recent revisions”<sup>14</sup> Recent revisions contradict the very notion of the original’s reconstruction. As Ivan Callus points out, recent revisions likewise undermine another one of Pavić’s subtitles, “a dictionary of the dictionaries on the Khazar question”<sup>15</sup> since “[s]uch a volume would be a metadictionary, to which definitiveness and authoritativeness should be indispensable”.<sup>16</sup>

The author then opens his preliminary notes with the following promise: “The author assures the reader that he will not have to die if he reads this book,”<sup>17</sup> a significant one as the book/Book will be more or less explicitly linked to death in multiple ways throughout the *Dictionary*. Since only one poisoned and one auxiliary copy were available between 1692 and the current fictional reconstruction (or revision) of the *Dictionary*, the probability of physical death penalty for tackling this forbidden book, was fifty percent.<sup>18</sup> The *Dictionary*’s transfer as part of a noble family’s inheritance has been causing mysterious deaths for centuries. Nevertheless, the family’s last member to own the poisoned copy avoids death by using the *Dictionary*’s individual leaves to skim off the fat from his soup and immediately tossing them out without reading. It is not possessing the *Dictionary* but the desire to comprehend and actively use it that kills. Parrots and the scribe Father Theoctist Nikolsky, who puts much emphasis on “trying not to comprehend or interpret anything,”<sup>19</sup> in the *Dictionary*, while memorizing it, are quite safe. The link between death and forbidden wisdom/knowledge is widespread, reaching far beyond the Bible into ancient mythologies.<sup>20</sup> The *Dictionary*’s reader was to expect expiry upon the words “*Verbum caro factum est*” (“The Word became flesh”), which are a Biblical example of inter-semiotic translation or transmutation seen by Jakobson as “interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems” (114).<sup>21</sup> The *Dictionary*’s compilation as such, in fact, aims at a transmutation, as far as recreating Adam Ruhani’s body is concerned. In this context it becomes clear why “in 1692 the Inquisition destroyed all the copies of Daubmannus edition” minus two, while “in the Moslem [Moorish] community, an eight-hundred-year ban was placed on reading the “silver copy” and in the Jewish community it became “subject to periodic attacks by learned men”.<sup>22</sup> If approached from this perspective, the demons interfering with the *Dictionary*’s compilation are merely God’s servants, meting out well-deserved punishments for human presump-

---

14 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. 6.

15 Ibid, p. 6.

16 CALLUS, I., *Cover to Cover: Paratextual play in Milorad Pavić’s Dictionary of the Khazars*, in: *Electronic Book Review*, available in: <http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/inter-netnation/lexicographic>.

17 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. 1.

18 Pavić’s reference to Umberto Eco’s *The Name of the Rose* has been observed repeatedly.

19 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. 323.

20 The connection was also noted independently in ALEKSIĆ, T., op. cit., pp. 86–104.

21 JAKOBSON, R., *On Linguistic Aspects of Translation*, in: VENUTI, L. (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader*, London 2000, p. 114.

22 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. 5.



tion. Nevertheless, since the three lexicons contradict each other, most significantly on the final outcome of the Khazar polemic, the Jewish, Islamic and/or Christian authorities clearly forge facts in order to champion their specific ideology. This opens up the possibility that earthly religious institutions in the novel serve not God but Satan, similarly to “The Legend of the Great Inquisitor” in Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*.<sup>23</sup> When destroying textual sources, the demons also indirectly interfere in the reader’s own interpretative efforts, which are further complicated by unreliable narrators.

Even if all the lexicon entries were to be collected, then, two additional problems emerge. 1) What criteria do we use to exclude lies, mystifications and false statements? 2) How do we use human language to approach the divine Truth? According to Sevast, “nouns are for God and verbs for man”<sup>24</sup> while Cohen tells us that “[t]he fact that nouns are destined to lie in the nature of human names is only further proof that they do not belong to the same order of words that create God’s name”.<sup>25</sup> According to the Yellow Book,

the truth cannot be understood on its own, like a lie, but only by comparing it with lies, by comparing the white space with the letters of our Book, because the white spaces in *The Khazar Dictionary* mark the translucent places of the divine truth and name (Adam Cadmon), and the black letters between the white spaces are where our eyes cannot penetrate beyond the surface.<sup>26</sup>

It is hardly insignificant that Pavić, having spent most of his life in socialist Yugoslavia, recommends reading between letters, reading between lines to transcend lies and get closer to the Truth. More importantly, however, after Babel, a.k.a. the extinction of Khazarian, human tongues fall short of the task. These days, “words come not from the head or the soul but from the world, from sticky tongues and malodorous jaws; they have all long since been picked dry, spewed out and become pulp from constant chewing. They have not been *whole* for a while”.<sup>27</sup> Wholeness, as we know, is *the* major theme in the *Dictionary*. Some entities are shown in an undesirable state of imperfection and division. This concerns, for instance, individual languages or humanity split into males and females, whose mind and body are subject to further fragmentation. These plead for re-unification, after which the completed *Dictionary* should possess a magical potential equal to the Word in “*Verbum caro factum est*” (“The Word became flesh”).

As shown above, the compilation process in the novel itself has been colliding with political, linguistic, cultural and religious obstacles. The synthetic *opus* thus hinges, in addition to the heroes’ re-incarnation, on the reader. Beebee ranks the reader’s ac-

---

23 In Dostoevsky’s novel, Jesus Christ returns to this world to discover that Catholic institutions, represented by the Grand Inquisitor, are not on his side but against him.

24 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. 93.

25 *Ibid*, p. 225.

26 *Ibid*, p. 258.

27 *Ibid*, p. 304.

tive textual interpretation and extra-textual synthetic activity among Pavić's anti-closural devices.<sup>28</sup> The author himself highlights the necessity of these repeatedly, if cryptically. In a clear allusion to Christ's parable of the sower,<sup>29</sup> Pavić employs an organic metaphor involving gradual growth after the sowing act.

The reader's ear may perhaps retain some of the saliva from the writer's mouth, words borne by the wind with a grain of sand at the bottom. Over the years, voices will settle around that grain, as in a shell, and one day it will turn into a pearl, into a black goat-cheese, or into a void when the ears shut like a shell. And least of all does this depend on the sand.<sup>30</sup>

In parallel to Christ's parable, several possible outcomes are listed in a cryptic form, whose exegesis is very difficult, if not impossible. In parallel to the parable, the final outcome depends not on the sower but on the message's recipient.<sup>31</sup> In parallel to the parable, some listeners/readers are more privileged in comparison to others. Nevertheless, while Jesus goes on to explain the parable's meaning in Matthew 13:18–23, Pavić's disciples must speculate on the reading practices that will help them avoid negative results. Pavić revisits several earlier propositions in the novel concerning the process of reading and subsequent interpretation. Correct reading supplemented by appropriate voices gathering around the grain will result in a precious reward, anything else will be not merely neutral but even detrimental to the addressee. Avoiding the *Dictionary* altogether is, according to the book's epigraph, punishable by death: "Here lies the reader/who will never open this book. / He is here forever dead."<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, the author also makes it clear that one, singular, unitary conclusion about the novel's cryptic meaning remains beyond our reach. As mentioned earlier, Pavić promises, tauntingly, that "someone who can read through the sections of one book in their proper order can create the world anew".<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, we as readers always arrive too late since the correct order of entries was already supposedly shattered by translating the three *Dictionaries* from Hebrew, Arabic

---

28 BEEBEE, T. O., *Transmesis...*, p. 164.

29 "A farmer went out to sow his seed.<sup>4</sup> As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up.<sup>5</sup> Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow.<sup>6</sup> But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root.<sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants.<sup>8</sup> Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.<sup>9</sup> Whoever has ears should listen." Matt 13:3–9, in: *The Holy Bible*, available in: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+13&version=NIV>.

30 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. 334.

31 "you [the disciples] have been given the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. It has not been given to outsiders" Matt 13:10–11, in: *The Holy Bible*, available in: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+13&version=NIV>.

32 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. ii.

33 *Ibid*, p. 11.



and Greek into a single language, Serbian. Among the gravest problems, we must certainly note the novel's proclaimed tri-partite linguistic situation. "The reader [...] traverses a text in Serbian (or in English) that tells him it was originally composed in at least three other languages,"<sup>34</sup> as Beebee points out. The Serbian original itself is, therefore, passed off as a translation, marking the *Dictionary* as an example of translational fiction. Translations from Serbian into tongues with differing alphabets further change the order of entries in the lexicon novel. Even if perusing the entries in a linear manner is only one among the methods of reading recommended by the author, it will be likely favored by many as readers are traditionally taught to proceed in this manner. In that case, each new published translation produces a novel with a different ending, a fact not lost on Pavić himself.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps even worse, in its ending the novel reiterates nostalgia for the type of reader who, similarly to humankind's angelic ancestor Adam, is now extinct; "today people do not have enough solitude to be able to read books, even dictionaries, without harm".<sup>36</sup> This is, indeed, a very puzzling proposition. As a matter of fact, as we know, reading this particular *Dictionary* has never been harmless. Historically, as its consumer you risked poisoning, death from demons and breaking a religious law. As far as bodily harm related to the *Dictionary's* perusal is concerned, the situation has surely improved: in contrast to the past, by reading the *Dictionary* you no longer risk death as explained above. The harm might, in fact, concern not so much the reader as the book itself. In the same paratextual passage, Pavić claims that "a book can be cured or killed in the reading".<sup>37</sup> Not only does this statement confirm that the novel is a living and vulnerable entity, similarly to the seed in Christ's parable discussed above. It also spells out the book's need for the reader's active participation, which has the potential to heal it, whatever that might signify.

The reader's task turns out to be both textual and extra-textual, if possible. Early in the novel, Pavić nostalgically attacks contemporary reading practices: "today's reading audience believes that the matter of imagination lies exclusively within the realm of the writer and does not concern them in the least."<sup>38</sup> If the audience wishes to disprove the statement, passive consumption of the *Dictionary* must be avoided or, in Barthes's words, "[t]he Text (if only by its frequent 'unreadability') decants the work [...] from its consumption and gathers it up as play, activity, production, practice. This means that one try to abolish (or at the very least to diminish) the distance between writing and reading".<sup>39</sup> Co-authoring this novel, in a certain specific sense, means becoming one among its characters for the book professes to deal mainly with the cryptic text's keepers, disseminators and inter-

34 BEEBEE, T. O., *Transmesis...*, p. 156.

35 For a more detailed description of different endings in different languages see PAVIĆ, M., in: <http://khazars.com/en/biografija-milorad-pavic/pocetak-i-kraj-romana>.

36 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. 334.

37 *Ibid.*

38 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. 11.

39 BARTHES, R., *From Work to Text*, in: LEITCH, V. B. (ed.), *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, New York 2001, p. 1474.



preters. The most reliable assembly method, if the frequently unreliable narrator is to be trusted, transcends the literary realm even if it cannot be achieved without the *Dictionary's* aid as both a *grimoire* for the operation and a distinguishing sign for the event's participants. Pavić's instructions, in "The Closing Note on the Usefulness of This Dictionary," read as follows:

Let that lovely woman with quick eyes and languid hair who, in reading this dictionary and running through her fear as through a room, feels lonely, do the following. On the first Wednesday of the month, with the dictionary under her arm, let her go to the teashop in the main square of town. Waiting for her there will be a young man who, like her, has just been overcome by a feeling of loneliness, wasting time by reading the same book. Let them sit down for a coffee together and compare the masculine and feminine exemplars of their books. [...] [T]he book will fit together as a whole, like a game of dominoes, and they will need it no longer. [...] what comes next is their affair alone, and it is worth more than any reading.<sup>40</sup>

The passage, rich in allusions, shows multiple intertextual links to phenomena dependent on the union between male and female principles. For instance, Paolo and Francesca's reading matter in Dante's *Inferno* performed similarly to *Dictionary of the Khazars* above. "The book and writer both, / Were love's purveyors. / In its leaves that day, / We read no more."<sup>41</sup> More significantly for our discussion, we should note especially the speech on humankind's initial wholeness in androgyny delivered by Aristophanes in Plato's *Symposium* and the alchemical wedding, in which male and female elements, in their proper combination, promise to become transmuted into the Philosopher's Stone.

In addition to being "love's purveyors,"<sup>42</sup> as we have seen, *Dictionary of the Khazars* and its author take it upon themselves to promise the reader many glorious things, including humankind's salvation through correct textual interpretation. Led on by the promise, its heroic compilers have persevered since the 8<sup>th</sup> (or 9<sup>th</sup>) century, religious bans, murderous demons, cultural, geographical, historical and linguistic divisions notwithstanding. While the *Dictionary* promises this tradition's continuation through further re-incarnations of its characters, much responsibility has been transferred to the novel's reader, who "is being led astray on purpose, as the narrator constantly assures him that there is an order underlying the chaos, and that it is the reader's duty to discover it".<sup>43</sup> With luck we will still be engaged in the *Dictionary's* exegesis in our retirement homes. And in our next life, of course. Isn't reincarnation an automatic perk for the *Dictionary's* compilers and co-authors?

---

40 PAVIĆ, M., *Dictionary...*, p. 335.

41 ALIGHIERI, D., *The Divine Comedy*, in: The Harvard Classics, available in: <http://www.bartleby.com/20/105.html>.

42 Ibid.

43 LONGINOVIĆ, T. Z., c.d., p. 189.

**ABSTRACT****COMPILATION, COMBINATION, TRANSLATION, INTERPRETATION:****READER'S OBLIGATIONS TO DICTIONARY OF THE KHAZARS BY MILORAD PAVIĆ**

The article focuses on the problems of intercultural communication, translation and textual interpretation highlighted in Milorad Pavić's celebrated 1984 novel, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The novel consists of three lexicons, namely Jewish, Muslim and Christian sources on the fall of the Khazar civilization, which resulted from the nation's conversion to one of the three faiths. The lexicons' entries are not only occasionally mutually exclusive but also scattered across the three cultures so that their compilers must bridge geopolitical, cultural, religious and linguistic divides. Yet, the task is vital as the *Dictionary's* re-composition has the potential to bring about humankind's redemption. The novel calls for the reader's active involvement in the composition process not only during the reading process but also beyond, in extra-textual reality. The life-literature boundary is further blurred by the author's presumed political engagement in the conflict in former Yugoslavia, whose reflection in the novel has been claimed by certain critics.

**KEYWORDS**

Intercultural communication; translation; *Dictionary of the Khazars*; Milorad Pavić; problems of interpretation

**ABSTRAKT****KOMPILACE, KOMBINACE, PŘEKLAD, INTERPRETACE:****ČTENÁŘSKÝ ZÁVZEK VŮČI CHAZARSKÉMU SLOVNÍKU MILORADA PAVIĆE**

Článek se zabývá problémy interkulturní komunikace, překladu a interpretace textu, na které Milorád Pavić klade důraz ve svém slavném románu z roku 1984, *Chazarský slovník*. Román se skládá ze tří lexikonů obsahujících židovské, muslimské a křesťanské zdroje o pádu chazarské civilizace v důsledku náboženské konverze k jednomu z těchto tří náboženství. Jednotlivé lexikony si nejenom příležitostně odporují, ale jsou také rozptýleny mezi tři výše zmiňované kulturní oblasti, takže jejich kompilátoři musí překonávat geopolitické, kulturní, náboženské a jazykové hranice. Tento úkol je však vysoce důležitý, neboť opětovné sestavení slovníku může přinést lidstvu vykoupení. Román po čtenáři žádá aktivní zapojení do procesu kompozice nejen během četby, ale i v reálné skutečnosti mimo text. Hranici mezi literaturou a skutečností stírá také otázka autorova možného politického zapojení během konfliktu v bývalé Jugoslávii, jehož odraz někteří kritici v románu spatřují.

**KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA**

Interkulturní komunikace; překlad; *Chazarský slovník*; Milorad Pavić; problémy interpretace

**Lenka Pánková**

Russian Division, Department of Foreign Languages, Metropolitan University Prague  
lenka.pankova@mup.cz