

## ABSTRACT

Miroslav Holub, the most translated of twentieth-century Czech poets, has an integral place in Anglophone literature, yet he has received little attention from Czech literary critics. The aim of this bachelor thesis is to shed light on questions that arise from this singular situation. First and foremost, in what ways and for what reasons has Holub's poetry become an integral part of the Anglophone tradition and what artistic features allowed its consolidation? This thesis explores the aspects of Holub's poems and of the cultural and political contexts that helped the positive reception of his work abroad. Since Holub's poetry engaged with the British and American literary tradition in its translated version, the main focus of this thesis is on the differences and similarities between the dynamics of Holub's oeuvre in the original and in English.

The first part of the thesis introduces Holub's poetry from the Czech point of view. The genealogy of his work is outlined in its broader literary and social circumstances, especially within the context of the Poetry of the Everyday. To understand this context, a part of this chapter is dedicated to his biography. The core of the second chapter is the description of Holub's poetic language. This aims to determine whether such a language is suitable or unsuitable for a transference into another language. In other words, this part deals with the question of what is, from the linguistic point of view, lost in translation.

In the second part of the thesis, Holub is presented from an international perspective. Drawing briefly on theories of World Literature and Transnationalism, both of which concentrate on movements of literary elements and inspirations across the national borders rather than on national-historical approaches, I focus on the mutual influence of Holub's poetry and English-writing authors. Further, the third chapter attempts to document Holub's encounters with the Anglophone world. One section is also dedicated to Holub's personal approach to the political situation, since this, coupled with the changing political situation, influenced the reception of his poetry in one way in his homeland, and in another abroad.

In the last part of the thesis, both of the above perspectives are brought into confrontation on various levels. Firstly, the impact of a broader political and cultural context—the Cold War at the time—is discussed. The Cold War had an immense influence on different spheres of life, including the arts and its perception. The two points of view from the different sides of the Iron Curtain are compared and contrasted. Through the analysis of translation as of a medium that allows poetry to acquire transnational—and in some cases even universal—

features, the focus in the fourth chapter closes in on analyses of individual poems and on the comparison of their appearances in original and in translation, both from the formal and the contextual standpoints. The end of the thesis concentrates on the way Holub works with the interconnection of concrete and abstract elements on the contextual level of his poems. This allows readers to interpret his poetry from either a very narrow perspective or from a very universal point of view; as a consequence of this, the poetry is attractive to a broad, heterogeneous audience. The thesis comes to the conclusion that Holub's deliberate work on the level of poetics as well as on the formal and contextual levels is a very favorable starting point for his poetry's transmission and later positive reception in the Anglophone canon.

#### KEY WORDS

Miroslav Holub, *Poems Before & After*, Poetry of the Everyday, Czech poetry in English translation, poetry in time of the Cold War, Transnationalism