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BACHELOR THESIS

**Twelve Years a Slave: translation and stylistic
analysis of 2 chapters of Solomon Northup's
narration**

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this bachelor thesis, titled “Twelve Years a Slave: translation and stylistic analysis of 2 chapters of Solomon Northup’s narrative”, is my own work and that all the sources I used are included in the reference list.

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Prague, April 4th 2015

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Abstract

This bachelor thesis is concerned with the translation and stylistic analysis of Solomon Northup's narration *12 Years a Slave*. The aim of the thesis is to introduce the issues a translator has to deal with while translating from the English language to the Czech language. The first part is practical and it deals with the translation of 2 chapters from the book. The theoretical part is focused on analyzing the translating process with regard to various linguistic aspects.

Key words

12 Years a Slave, Translation, Solomon Northup, dialect, syntax, direct speech, lexical aspect, morphological aspect

Abstrakt

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá překladem a stylistickou analýzou příběhu Solomona Northupa *12 let v řetězech*. Cílem této práce je seznámit čtenáře s tím, co řeší překladatel při překládání z anglického do českého jazyka. První část je praktická a zabývá se překladem dvou kapitol z knihy. Teoretická část se zaměřuje na analýzu překladatelského procesu skrze různé lingvistické aspekty.

Klíčová slova

12 let v řetězech, překlad, Solomon Northup, dialekt, syntax, přímá řeč, lexikální aspekt, morfologický aspekt

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1 Introduction

There are two main reasons why I have chosen this theme. First and foremost, I have been fascinated by the work of translators for many years. I have admired their ability to translate a text without changing its tone and long have I thought that not many people realize the difficulty behind this process. I had the first opportunity to become aware of some of the issues a translator has to deal with in my second year at the university when I enrolled in a translation course. The other reason for choosing this topic is the story of Solomon Northup himself. To use a decidedly non-scholarly phrase, both the book and the movie took my breath away. Due to my fascination with the field of expertise and the subject itself – i.e. with the act of translating and by the book – I decided for this theme.

12 Years a Slave is a memoir by Solomon Northup, a free black man, who was kidnapped and kept in slavery for 12 years. While narrating the story, Northup's English is very precise, even bookish and slightly dated by modern day standards. This makes the book linguistically interesting since his expression frequently stands in sharp contrast with the dialect of his masters and other slaves.

The practical part consists of the translation of 2 chapters from *12 Years a Slave*. They were chosen owing to the presence of direct speech as it differs from the language of the narration. Apart from translating, the aim of the thesis is to analyze the translating process so as to present and explore certain difficulties that may occur when translating.

2 Solomon Northup and *12 Years a Slave*

Solomon Northup was an African American free man born at the beginning of the 19th century. He was skillful in many fields, including lumberjacking, farming or playing the violin. In 1841, Solomon was offered a musical job in a circus by two white men. As it was a lucrative offer, he traveled with them to Washington, D.C., where he was kidnaped and sold into slavery.

After introducing the reader with his life as a free man in New York, Solomon talks about all the horror he was facing when being a slave. The two men with whom he travels to Washington intoxicate him. When he wakes up in a dark room, he tells the slave trader that he is a free man, for which he is brutally whipped and told not to mention this fact ever again. He is renamed to Platt and taken to Louisiana where he is sold to Master Ford. Master Ford is a generous and kind man. However, due to some financial difficulties, Solomon is sold to a severe carpenter, John M. Tibeats. Being constantly treated in an unfair manner, Solomon loses his temper and after being unjustly whipped by Tibeats, he takes the lash and whips him back. Tibeats' hatred towards Solomon results in selling him to another slave owner named Edwin Epps. Epps is a very cruel and abusive master. Solomon tells many horrifying stories about the years he spent on his plantation. After almost losing all his hope, he meets a Canadian carpenter Bass with whom he works on a project for Epps. After a while Solomon finds him very kind and trustworthy and decides to tell him the truth about his life, asking him to deliver a letter to his friends. Seeing slavery as an unjust act, Bass helps him and sends the letter as he is asked. After the long 12 years of slavery, Solomon is taken back to New York to his wife and three children. The book *12 Years a Slave* was written and published in 1853, the first year of his freedom.

3 Translation

Chapter IX.

As the sun approached the meridian that day it became insufferably warm. Its hot rays scorched the ground. The earth almost blistered the foot that stood upon it. I was without coat or hat, standing bare-headed, exposed to its burning blaze. Great drops of perspiration rolled down my face, drenching the scanty apparel wherewith I was clothed. Over the fence, a very little way off, the peach trees cast their cool, delicious shadows on the grass. I would gladly have given a long year of service to have been enabled to exchange the heated oven, as it were, wherein I stood, for a seat beneath their branches. But I was yet bound, the rope still dangling from my neck, and standing in the same tracks where Tibeats and his comrades left me. I could not move an inch, so firmly had I been bound. To have been enabled to lean against the weaving house would have been a luxury indeed. But it was far beyond my reach, though distant less than twenty feet. I wanted to lie down, but knew I could not rise again. The ground was so parched and boiling hot I was aware it would but add to the discomfort of my situation. If I could have only moved my position, however slightly, it would have been relief unspeakable. But the hot rays of a southern sun, beating all the long summer day on my bare head, produced not half the

Kapitola IX.

Když se slunce přiblížilo k vrcholu, začalo být nesnesitelné vedro. Horké paprsky rozpálily zem, až by měl člověk puchýře, kdyby se na ni postavil. Stál jsem bez kabátu i klobouku, vystaven té žhavé záři. Velké krůpěje potu se mi řinuly po tváři a máčely můj sporý oděv. Nedaleko za plotem vrhaly broskvoně na trávu chladivé, lahodné stíny. Za možnost sedět pod jejich větvemi bych s radostí dlouhý rok pracoval, namísto té rozpálené trouby, ve které jsem se nacházel. Byl jsem ale pořád svázán a stál jsem s lanem, jež mi viselo okolo krku, na stejném místě, na kterém mě Tibeats s jeho kamarády nechal. Nemohl jsem se pohnout ani o kousek, jak pevně mě uvázali. Kdybych se tak mohl opřít o tu tkalcovnu, byl by to vskutku ten největší přepych. Byla ale úplně mimo dosah, i když byla vzdálená asi jen šest metrů. Chtěl jsem si odpočnout, ale bylo mi jasné, že bych nebyl schopen se znovu vzpřímit. Země byla tak vyprahlá a rozpálená a já věděl, že by to situaci akorát zhoršilo. Kdybych býval mohl změnit polohu, alespoň nepatrně, byla by to nepopsatelná úleva. Ostré paprsky jižního slunce, jež mě šlehaly do hlavy, nezpůsobovaly ani polovinu utrpení, které jsem zažíval kvůli bolavým končetinám. Zápěstí, kotníky a svázané nohy a ruce začaly natékat a lano, jež je svazovalo, se

suffering I experienced from my aching limbs. My wrists and ankles, and the cords of my legs and arms began to swell, burying the rope that bound them into the swollen flesh.

All day Chapin walked back and forth upon the stoop, but not once approached me. He appeared to be in a state of great uneasiness, looking first towards me, and then up the road, as if expecting some arrival every moment. He did not go to the field, as was his custom. It was evident from his manner that he supposed Tibeats would return with more and better armed assistance, perhaps, to renew the quarrel, and it was equally evident he had prepared his mind to defend my life at whatever hazard. Why he did not relieve me—why he suffered me to remain in agony the whole weary day, I never knew. It was not for want of sympathy, I am certain. Perhaps he wished Ford to see the rope about my neck, and the brutal manner in which I had been bound; perhaps his interference with another's property in which he had no legal interest might have been a trespass, which would have subjected him to the penalty of the law. Why Tibeats was all day absent was another mystery I never could divine. He knew well enough that Chapin would not harm him unless he persisted in his design against me. Lawson told me afterwards, that, as he passed the plantation of John David Cheney, he saw the

zařezávalo do nateklého masa.

Chapin chodil celý den na terase tam a zpátky, ke mně se ale ani jednou nepřiblížil. Zdál se mi velmi neklidný. Díval se nejdříve svým směrem a poté na cestu, jako by očekával, že každým okamžikem někdo přijede. Měl zvykem chodit na pole, tentokrát ale nešel. Z jeho vystupování bylo zřejmé, že předpokládá, že se Tibeats vrátí s více a lépe ozbrojenými pomocníky, nejspíš za účelem znovu rozpoutat onu roztržku. Stejně tak jsem na něm viděl, že byl za jakýchkoliv okolností připraven hájit můj život. Proč mně ale nepomohl, proč mě nechal trpět ten celý šílený den, jsem nevěděl. Jsem si ale jist, že to nebylo z nedostatku soucitu. Možná jen chtěl, aby Ford viděl lano kolem mého krku a ten surový způsob, kterým mě svázali. Také je možné, že kdyby se jiným pletl do majetku, na který nemá věcné právo, dopouštěl by se přestupku a dle zákona by byl vystaven pokutě. Další záhadou pro mě byla celodenní absence Tibeatse. Věděl moc dobře, že by ho Chapin nepotrestal, kdyby nepokračoval ve svých lstech proti mé osobě. Později mi Lawson řekl, že když projížděl plantáží Johna Davida Cheneyho, viděl tu trojici, a že když je míjel, tak se

three, and that they turned and looked after him as he flew by. I think his supposition was, that Lawson had been sent out by Overseer Chapin to arouse the neighboring planters, and to call on them to come to his assistance. He, therefore, undoubtedly, acted on the principle, that "discretion is the better part of valor," and kept away.

But whatever motive may have governed the cowardly and malignant tyrant, it is of no importance. There I still stood in the noon-tide sun, groaning with pain. From long before daylight I had not eaten a morsel. I was growing faint from pain, and thirst, and hunger. Once only, in the very hottest portion of the day, Rachel, half fearful she was acting contrary to the overseer's wishes, ventured to me, and held a cup of water to my lips. The humble creature never knew, nor could she comprehend if she had heard them, the blessings I invoked upon her, for that balmy draught. She could only say, "Oh, Platt, how I do pity you," and then hastened back to her labors in the kitchen.

Never did the sun move so slowly through the heavens—never did it shower down such fervent and fiery rays, as it did that day. At least, so it appeared to me. What my meditations were—the innumerable thoughts that thronged through my distracted brain—I will not attempt to give

otočili a ohlédli. Myslím si, že Tibeats předpokládal, že dozorce Chapin poslal Lawsona, aby pobouřil sousední plantážníky a vyzval je, aby mu přišli na pomoc. On se proto, bez pochyby, řídil zásadou, že „moudřejší ustoupí,“ a držel se dál.

Ať už měl ale ten zbabělý a zlomyslný tyran jakýkoliv motiv, není to důležité. Pořád jsem tam stál, vystaven polednímu slunci, a sténal bolestí. Bylo to dávno před svítáním, co jsem naposledy něco pozřel. Bolestí, žízní a hladem jsem začínal omdlávat. Pouze jednou za ten den, ve chvíli největšího horka, se za mnou odvážila přijít trošku vystrašená Rachel, která mi navzdory dozorcovu přání přidržela šálek vody u úst. To pokorné stvoření vůbec netušilo, ani by tomu snad nebylo schopné porozumět, jak vděčný jsem byl za ten vlahý doušek. Jediné, co řekla, bylo „Ach, Platte, jak já tě lituji“ a pak pospíchala pracovat zpět do kuchyně.

Nikdy neplulo slunce po obloze tak pomalu a nikdy nebyly paprsky tak horké a ostré jako tehdy. Alespoň mně to tak připadalo. Mé úvahy, včetně nesčetného množství myšlenek, jež se mi honily hlavou, se nebudu pokoušet vysvětlovat. Stačí jen říci, že během celého dlouhého dne jsem ani

expression to. Suffice it to say, during the whole long day I came not to the conclusion, even once, that the southern slave, fed, clothed, whipped and protected by his master, is happier than the free colored citizen of the North. To that conclusion I have never since arrived. There are many, however, even in the Northern States, benevolent and well-disposed men, who will pronounce my opinion erroneous, and gravely proceed to substantiate the assertion with an argument. Alas! they have never drunk, as I have, from the bitter cup of slavery. Just at sunset my heart leaped with unbounded joy, as Ford came riding into the yard, his horse covered with foam. Chapin met him at the door, and after conversing a short time, he walked directly to me.

"Poor Platt, you are in a bad state," was the only expression that escaped his lips.

"Thank God!" said I, "thank God, Master Ford, that you have come at last."

Drawing a knife from his pocket, he indignantly cut the cord from my wrists, arms, and ankles, and slipped the noose from my neck. I attempted to walk, but staggered like a drunken man, and fell partially to the ground.

Ford returned immediately to the house, leaving me alone again. As he reached the piazza, Tibeats and his two friends rode up.

jednou nedošel k závěru, že by otrok z jihu, kterého krmí, odívá, bičuje a chrání jeho pán, byl šťastnější než svobodný občan tmavé pleti ze severu. K takovému závěru jsem od toho dne nedošel nikdy. Mnoho benevolentních a příznivě nakloněných lidí, dokonce i v severních státech, budou ale pokládat můj názor za mylný a následně obhajovat své tvrzení. Ach běda! Oni se nikdy nenapili, tak jako já, z hořkého šálku otroctví. Při západu slunce mi srdce poskočilo nespoutanou radostí, když se na dvoře objevil pan Ford na koni. Chapin se s ním setkal u dveří a po krátké konverzaci vyrazil mým směrem.

„Ubohý Platte, jsi na tom špatně,“ bylo to jediné, co mi řekl.

„Díky Bohu!“ řekl jsem, „díky Bohu, pane Forde, že jste konečně přijel.“

Vytáhl si z kapsy nůž a rozhořčeně odřízl provaz z mých zápěstí, paží a kotníků a sundal mi smyčku z krku. Pokusil jsem se o chůzi, ale motal jsem se jak opilý a upadl jsem k zemi.

Ford vyrazil okamžitě zpátky k domu a opět mě nechal samotného. Když dorazil k verandě, přijel Tibeats a jeho dva přátelé.

A long dialogue followed. I could hear the sound of their voices, the mild tones of Ford mingling with the angry accents of Tibeats, but was unable to distinguish what was said. Finally the three departed again, apparently not well pleased.

I endeavored to raise the hammer, thinking to show Ford how willing I was to work, by proceeding with my labors on the weaving house, but it fell from my nerveless hand. At dark I crawled into the cabin, and laid down. I was in great misery—all sore and swollen—the slightest movement producing excruciating suffering. Soon the hands came in from the field. Rachel, when she went after Lawson, had told them what had happened. Eliza and Mary broiled me a piece of bacon, but my appetite was gone. Then they scorched some corn meal and made coffee. It was all that I could take. Eliza consoled me and was very kind. It was not long before the cabin was full of slaves. They gathered round me, asking many questions about the difficulty with Tibeats in the morning—and the particulars of all the occurrences of the day. Then Rachel came in, and in her simple language, repeated it over again—dwelling emphatically on the kick that sent Tibeats rolling over on the ground—whereupon there was a general titter throughout the crowd. Then she described how Chapin walked out with his pistols and rescued me, and how Master

Následoval dlouhý dialog. Klidné tóny Fordova hlasu se mísily s ostrým přízvukem Tibeatse, nebyl jsem ale schopen rozpoznat, o čem hovoří. Nakonec ti tři znovu odjeli, zjevně ne zrovna v dobrém rozmaru.

Pokusil jsem se zvednout kladivo, abych ukázal Fordovi, že jsem schopen pokračovat v práci na tkalcovně, ale hned zase z mé ochablé ruky vypadlo. V přitmě jsem se doplázil do chatky a lehl si. Bylo mi přílišně. Všechno mě bolelo a byl jsem nesnesitelným utrpením. Brzy došli z pole ostatní. Rachel, která pozorovala Lawsona, všem řekla, co se stalo. Eliza a Mary mi opekly kus slaniny, ale neměl jsem chuť k jídlu. Na to upražily kukuřičné zrno a udělaly kávu. To bylo jediné, co jsem byl schopen pozřít. Eliza mě utěšovala a byla velice hodná. Zanedlouho byla chatka plná otroků. Shlukli se okolo mě a pokládali mi spoustu otázek týkající se ranní roztržky s Tibeatsem a zajímali je podrobnosti všeho, co se ten den odehrálo. Potom se do diskuze zapojila Rachel a svou prostou mluvou to vše znovu zopakovala. Vášnivě se rozhovořila o onom kopnutí, kterým jsem Tibeatse svalil k zemi, načež se všichni zasmáli. Poté začala líčit, jak Chapin vyšel ven s pistolemi a zachránil mě a jak pan

Ford cut the ropes with his knife, just as if he was mad.

Ford nožem odřízl lana, jak zběsilý.

By this time Lawson had returned. He had to regale them with an account of his trip to the Pine Woods—how the brown mule bore him faster than a "streak o'lightnin"—how he astonished everybody as he flew along—how Master Ford started right away—how he said Platt was a good nigger, and they shouldn't kill him, concluding with pretty strong intimations that there was not another human being in the wide world, who could have created such a universal sensation on the road, or performed such a marvelous John Gilpin feat, as he had done that day on the brown mule.

Mezitím se vrátil Lawson. Všechny bavil popisem výletu do Pine Woods; jak ho ta hnědá mula nesla rychleji než blesk; jak každý tu rychlost obdivoval; jak se pan Ford ihned vydal na cestu; jak říkal, že Platt je dobrý negr a že by ho neměli zabíjet. Zakončil to poměrně siláckými slovy, že na tomto světě není jiného člověka, jenž by na cestě dokázal vytvořit tak všestranný rozruch, nebo vykonat tak úžasný čin ve stylu Johna Gilpina, jako on na té hnědé mule.

The kind creatures loaded me with the expression of their sympathy—saying, Tibeats was a hard, cruel man, and hoping "Massa Ford" would get me back again. In this manner they passed the time, discussing, chatting, talking over and over again the exciting affair, until suddenly Chapin presented himself at the cabin door and called me.

Ty laskavé bytosti se mnou soucítily. Říkaly, že Tibeats je bezcitný a nelidský muž a že doufají, že se mě Ford znovu zastane. Tímto způsobem si krátily čas, diskutovaly, klábosily a znovu a znovu rozebíraly onu vzrušující roztržku, dokud se ve dveřích neobjevil Chapin, který si mě zavolal.

"Platt," said he, "you will sleep on the floor in the great house to-night; bring your blanket with you."

„Platte,“ řekl, „dneska budeš spát v hlavní budově na zemi, vem si s sebou deku.“

I arose as quickly as I was able, took my blanket in my hand, and followed him. On the way he informed me that he should not

Zvedl jsem se tak rychle, jak jsem byl jen schop, vzal jsem si deku a šel za ním. Po cestě mi oznámil, že by se nedivil, kdyby se

wonder if Tibeats was back again before morning—that he intended to kill me—and that he did not mean he should do it without witnesses. Had he stabbed me to the heart in the presence of a hundred slaves, not one of them, by the laws of Louisiana, could have given evidence against him. I laid down on the floor in the "great house"—the first and the last time such a sumptuous resting place was granted me during my twelve years of bondage—and tried to sleep. Near midnight the dog began to bark. Chapin arose, looked from the window, but could discover nothing. At length the dog was quiet. As he returned to his room, he said,

"I believe, Platt, that scoundrel is skulking about the premises somewhere. If the dog barks again, and I am sleeping, wake me."

I promised to do so. After the lapse of an hour or more, the dog re-commenced his clamor, running towards the gate, then back again, all the while barking furiously.

Chapin was out of bed without waiting to be called. On this occasion, he stepped forth upon the piazza, and remained standing there a considerable length of time. Nothing, however, was to be seen, and the dog returned to his kennel. We were not disturbed again during the night. The excessive pain that I suffered, and the dread of some impending danger, prevented any

Tibeats vrátil před úsvitem - že mě hodlá zabít - a neměl by mít šanci udělat to beze svědků. Kdyby mě bodl do srdce v přítomnosti stovky otroků, ani jeden z nich by proti němu nemohl na základě Louisianských zákonů svědčit. V hlavní budově jsem si lehl na zem a snažil se usnout. Bylo to poprvé a naposledy za celých dvanáct let otroctví, kdy mi bylo přiděleno tak honosné místo. Okolo půlnoci začal štěkat pes. Chapin vstal, koukl se z okna, ale nikoho tam neviděl. Pes nakonec ztichl. Když se vrátil do svého pokoje, řekl:

„Plette, myslím si, že se tam ten mizera někde schovává. Jestli začne pes štěkat a já budu pořád spát, tak mě probud’.“

Slíbil jsem, že ho vzbudím. Zhruba za hodinu začal pes s tím povykem znovu. Běhal k bráně, tam a zpátky a nepřestal zuřivě štěkat.

Chapina jsem budít nemusel, z postele vstal sám. Šel na verandu a dlouhou dobu tam postával. Nic ale neviděl a i pes se vrátil zpět do boudy. Po zbytek noci byl už klid. Trpěl jsem ale nesnesitelnou bolestí a strachem z hrozícího nebezpečí, a tak jsem si vůbec neodpočnul. Zdali se Tibeats té noci vrátil na plantáž, nebo ne, a zdali hledal příležitost, jak se mi pomstít, ví asi jen on

rest whatever. Whether or not Tibeats did actually return to the plantation that night, seeking an opportunity to wreak his vengeance upon me, is a secret known only to himself, perhaps. I thought then, however, and have the strong impression still, that he was there. At all events, he had the disposition of an assassin—cowering before a brave man's words, but ready to strike his helpless or unsuspecting victim in the back, as I had reason afterwards to know.

At daylight in the morning, I arose, sore and weary, having rested little. Nevertheless, after partaking breakfast, which Mary and Eliza had prepared for me in the cabin, I proceeded to the weaving house and commenced the labors of another day. It was Chapin's practice, as it is the practice of overseers generally, immediately on arising, to bestride his horse, always saddled and bridled and ready for him—the particular business of some slave—and ride into the field. This morning, on the contrary, he came to the weaving house, asking if I had seen anything of Tibeats yet. Replying in the negative, he remarked there was something not right about the fellow—there was bad blood in him—that I must keep a sharp watch of him, or he would do me wrong some day when I least expected it.

While he was yet speaking, Tibeats rode in, hitched his horse, and entered the house. I

sám. Tenkrát jsem se ale domníval, a i dnes si to myslím, že tam byl. V každém případě měl povahu vraha, krčícího se před slovy statečného muže, ale připraven udeřit bezmocnou a nic netušící oběť do zad, jak jsem se později dozvěděl.

Vstal jsem brzy ráno. Vzhledem k tomu, že jsem si moc neodpočinul, mě všechno bolelo a byl jsem vyčerpaný. Jakmile jsem pojedl něco málo ke snídani, kterou pro mě Mary a Eliza připravily v chatce, vydal jsem se do tkalcovny a začal zase normálně pracovat. Stejně jako ostatní mistři měl i Chapin těsně po probuzení ve zvyku sednout na koně, jež je vždy osedlán a připraven nějakým otrokem, a jet na pole. Dnes tomu tak ale nebylo. Místo toho přišel do tkalcovny a zeptal se mě, jestli jsem už viděl Tibeatse. Poté, co jsem mu odpověděl, že neviděl, poznamenal, že je s Tibeatsem něco v nepořádku, že v něm koluje zlá krev a měl bych si na něho dávat velký pozor, nebo že mi něco provede v momentě, kdy to budu nejméně očekávat.

Zatímco ke mně stále mluvil, přijel Tibeats, uvázal koně a vstoupil do domu. Moc jsem

had little fear of him while Ford and Chapin were at hand, but they could not be near me always.

Oh! how heavily the weight of slavery pressed upon me then. I must toil day after day, endure abuse and taunts and scoffs, sleep on the hard ground, live on the coarsest fare, and not only this, but live the slave of a blood-seeking wretch, of whom I must stand henceforth in continued fear and dread. Why had I not died in my young years—before God had given me children to love and live for? What unhappiness and suffering and sorrow it would have prevented. I sighed for liberty; but the bondman's chain was round me, and could not be shaken off. I could only gaze wistfully towards the North, and think of the thousands of miles that stretched between me and the soil of freedom, over which a black freeman may not pass.

Tibeats, in the course of half an hour, walked over to the weaving-house, looked at me sharply, then returned without saying anything. Most of the forenoon he sat on the piazza, reading a newspaper and conversing with Ford. After dinner, the latter left for the Pine Woods, and it was indeed with regret that I beheld him depart from the plantation.

Once more during the day Tibeats came to me, gave me some order, and returned.

se ho nebál, když byli Ford a Chapin na blízku. Stále se mnou být ale nemohli.

Ach! Jak silně mě tenkrát tížilo otroctví. Den co den jsem musel dříť, snášet týrání, zesměšňování a posmívání, musel jsem spát na tvrdé zemi, žít se nejobyčejnějšími pokrmy a nejen to, byl jsem otrokem krvelačného mizery, kterého jsem musel snášet s nepřetržitým strachem a hrůzou. Proč jsem jen nezemřel, když jsem byl mladý, než mi Bůh dal děti, pro které mohu žít a které mohu milovat? Zabránilo by to tolika neštěstí, utrpení a žalu. Toužil jsem po svobodě, ale byl jsem spoután řetězy otroka, jichž nebylo možné se zbavit. Mohl jsem pouze toužebně hledět směrem na sever a myslet na těch tisíc mil ležících mezi mnou a půdou svobody, přes které svobodný muž černé pleti nesmí přejít.

Během půl hodiny přišel Tibeats do tkalcovny, ostře na mě pohlédl a beze slova se zase vrátil zpět. Většinu času dopoledne strávil čtením novin na verandě a konverzováním s Fordem. Ford odjel po večěři do Pine Woods. Mrzelo mě, když jsem ho viděl odjíždět z plantáže.

Tibeats za mnou přišel ten den ještě jednou, dal mi nějaký příkaz a odešel. Tkalcovnu

During the week the weaving-house was completed—Tibeats in the meantime making no allusion whatever to the difficulty—when I was informed he had hired me to Peter Tanner, to work under another carpenter by the name of Myers. This announcement was received with gratification, as any place was desirable that would relieve me of his hateful presence.

Peter Tanner, as the reader has already been informed, lived on the opposite shore, and was the brother of Mistress Ford. He is one of the most extensive planters on Bayou Bœuf, and owns a large number of slaves.

Over I went to Tanner's, joyfully enough. He had heard of my late difficulties—in fact, I ascertained the flogging of Tibeats was soon blazoned far and wide. This affair, together with my rafting experiment, had rendered me somewhat notorious. More than once I heard it said that Platt Ford, now Platt Tibeats—a slave's name changes with his change of master—was "a devil of a nigger." But I was destined to make a still further noise, as will presently be seen, throughout the little world of Bayou Bœuf.

Peter Tanner endeavored to impress upon me the idea that he was quite severe, though I could perceive there was a vein of good humor in the old fellow, after all.

"You're the nigger," he said to me on my

j jsme během týdne dokončili a Tibeats se mezitím o onom problému vůbec nezmínil. Informovali mě, že mě pronajmul Petru Tannerovi a že budu pracovat pod jiným tesařem jménem Myers. Tato zpráva mě potěšila, jelikož každé místo bez jeho nesnesitelné přítomnosti bylo žádoucí.

Peter Tanner, jak už byl čtenář obeznámen, bydlel na protějším břehu a byl bratrem paní Fordové. Je jedním z vlastníků nejrozsáhlejších plantáží v Bayou Boeuf a vlastní také spoustu otroků.

Velmi radostně jsem se vydal k Tannerovi. Dozvěděl se o mých nedávných problémech, o tom, že jsem zbičoval Tibeatse, což ostatně bylo brzy známo široko daleko. Díky této události a mému experimentu na raftu jsem byl poněkud proslulý. Nejednou jsem zaslechl, že Platt Ford, nyní Platt Tibeats (jméno otroka se mění, jakmile otrok změní pána) je „černej prevít“. Bylo mi ale předurčeno vyvolat ještě další nepokoje a to v prostředí Bayou Boeuf.

Peter Tanner se ve mně snažil vzbudit dojem, že je přísný. Všiml jsem si ale, že to je v jádru dobrák.

„Ty seš ten negr,“ řekl mi po mém příchodu

arrival—"You're the nigger that flogged your master, eh? You're the nigger that kicks, and holds carpenter Tibeats by the leg, and wallops him, are ye? I'd like to see you hold me by the leg—I should. You're a 'portant character—you're a great nigger—very remarkable nigger, ain't ye? I'd lash you—I'd take the tantrums out of ye. Jest take hold of my leg, if you please. None of your pranks here, my boy, remember that. Now go to work, you kickin' rascal," concluded Peter Tanner, unable to suppress a half-comical grin at his own wit and sarcasm.

After listening to this salutation, I was taken charge of by Myers, and labored under his direction for a month, to his and my own satisfaction.

Like William Ford, his brother-in-law, Tanner was in the habit of reading the Bible to his slaves on the Sabbath, but in a somewhat different spirit. He was an impressive commentator on the New Testament. The first Sunday after my coming to the plantation, he called them together, and began to read the twelfth chapter of Luke. When he came to the 47th verse, he looked deliberately around him, and continued—"And that servant which knew his lord's will,"—here he paused, looking around more deliberately than before, and again proceeded—"which knew

– „Ty seš ten negr, kterej zbičoval svýho pána, hm? Ty seš ten negr, co kopal a držel tesaře Tibeatse za nohu a seřezal ho, co? Jen si zkus držet za nohu mě. Myslíš si, že seš kdoví jak důležitěj a skvělejš, vid'?" Já bych tě zbičoval. Já bych z tebe ty záchvaty vzteku dostal. Jen se chop mý nohy, jestli chceš. Žádný tvý fóry tady trpět nebudu, kamaráde, to si zapamatuj. Teď mazej do práce, ty jeden neřáde," ukončil to Peter Tanner, neschopen potlačit napolo komický úšklebek nad vlastním důvtipem a sarkasmem.

Po vyslechnutí tohoto pozdravení si mě vzal na starosti Myers. Pracoval jsem pod jeho vedením měsíc, což těšilo jak jeho tak i mě.

Stejně jako William Ford měl i jeho švagr Tanner ve zvyku číst svým otrokům v neděli Bibli, ale v jaksi jiném duchu. Byl to působivý komentátor Nového Zákona. První neděli po mém příchodu na plantáž svolal otroky a začal číst Lukášovu dvanáctou kapitolu. Když se dostal k čtyřicátému sedmému verši, záměrně se podíval kolem sebe a pokračoval: „A ten služebník, který znal vůli svého Pána," – zde se odmlčel, rozhlédl se kolem ještě rozvázněji než před tím a pokračoval: " který znal vůli svého Pána a nepřipravil se" – přišlo další odmlčení – „nepřipravil se a nejednal podle

his lord's will, and prepared not himself"— here was another pause—"prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes."

"D'ye hear that?" demanded Peter, emphatically. "Stripes," he repeated, slowly and distinctly, taking off his spectacles, preparatory to making a few remarks.

"That nigger that don't take care—that don't obey his lord—that's his master—d'ye see?—that 'ere nigger shall be beaten with many stripes. Now, 'many' signifies a great many—forty, a hundred, a hundred and fifty lashes. That's Scriptor!" and so Peter continued to elucidate the subject for a great length of time, much to the edification of his sable audience.

At the conclusion of the exercises, calling up three of his slaves, Warner, Will and Major, he cried out to me—

"Here, Platt, you held Tibeats by the legs; now I'll see if you can hold these rascals in the same way, till I get back from meetin'."

Thereupon he ordered them to the stocks—a common thing on plantations in the Red River country. The stocks are formed of two planks, the lower one made fast at the ends to two short posts, driven firmly into the ground. At regular distances half circles are cut in the upper edge. The other plank is

jeho vůle, bude hodně bit.“

„Slyšíte to?“ naléhal Peter důrazně. „Bit,“ zopakoval pomalu a zřetelně. Před tím, než pronesl pár připomínek, si sundal brýle.

„Ten negr, kterej se nestará a neposlouchá svýho Pána - svýho vlastníka - bude hodně zbitej. A to klidně i čtyřiceti, sto, stopadesáti ranama. To je písmo svatý!“ A tak Peter pokračoval s objasňováním tohoto tématu po dlouhou dobu, aby poučil své tmavé posluchače.

V závěru tohoto obřadu si zavolal tři ze svých otroků, Warnera, Willa a Majora, a poté zavolal na mě.

„Plette, tys držel Tibeatse za nohy, tak se teď podiváme na to, jestli dokážeš držet stejně i tyhle tři neřády, než se vrátím zpátky ze schůzky.“

Hned na to je poslal ke kládám, což je běžné na plantážích v okrese Red River. Klády jsou tvořeny ze dvou prken, přičemž to nižší prkno je připevněno na koncích ke dvěma krátkým kůlům, jež jsou pevně zaraženy do země. Na horní hraně jsou v pravidelných vzdálenostech vyřezány půlkruhy. Druhé

fastened to one of the posts by a hinge, so that it can be opened or shut down, in the same manner as the blade of a pocket-knife is shut or opened. In the lower edge of the upper plank corresponding half circles are also cut, so that when they close, a row of holes is formed large enough to admit a negro's leg above the ankle, but not large enough to enable him to draw out his foot. The other end of the upper plank, opposite the hinge, is fastened to its post by lock and key. The slave is made to sit upon the ground, when the uppermost plank is elevated, his legs, just above the ankles, placed in the sub-half circles, and shutting it down again, and locking it, he is held secure and fast. Very often the neck instead of the ankle is enclosed. In this manner they are held during the operation of whipping.

Warner, Will and Major, according to Tanner's account of them, were melon-stealing, Sabbath-breaking niggers, and not approving of such wickedness, he felt it his duty to put them in the stocks. Handing me the key, himself, Myers, Mistress Tanner and the children entered the carriage and drove away to church at Cheneyville. When they were gone, the boys begged me to let them out. I felt sorry to see them sitting on the hot ground, and remembered my own sufferings in the sun. Upon their promise to return to the stocks at any moment they were required to do so, I consented to

prkno je připevněno ke kůlům pantem, aby se to dalo otevírat a zavírat, stejným způsobem jakým se zavírá a otevírá třeba čepel kapesního nože. Na dolní hraně vrchního prkna jsou také vyřezány půlkruhy, takže když se prkna sevřou, je vytvořena řada kruhů, jež jsou dostatečně velké na umístění lýtka černocho, ale ne příliš velké, aby nemohla noha vyklouznout. Druhý konec vrchního prkna naproti pantu je připevněn ke kůlu pomocí zámku a klíče. Otrok je donucen si sednout na zem, když je vrchní prkno vyvýšeno a jeho nohy jsou přesně nad kotníky umístěny do kruhů. Poté se to uzavře a zamkne a otroka to tak drží spolehlivě a pevně. Velmi často se tam uzavírá místo nohy krk. Tímto způsobem jsou otroci drženi při bičování.

Warner, Will a Major byli podle Tannerova popisu negři, kteří kradli melouny a ničili sváteční neděli, a protože s touto podlostí Tanner nesouhlasil, pokládal za svou povinnost je uzavřít do klád. Podal mi klíče a společně s Myersem, paní Tannerovou a dětmi vstoupil do kočáru a odjel do kostela v Cheneyville. Jakmile byli pryč, kluci mě prosili, abych je pustil ven. Bylo mi líto je vidět, jak sedí na rozpálené zemi a vzpomněl jsem si na ty muka, jež jsem sám na slunci zažil. Když mi slíbili, že se do klád vrátí kdykoli to bude nutné, svolil jsem k tomu je pustit. Vděční za mou mírnost, a

release them. Grateful for the lenity shown them, and in order in some measure to repay it, they could do no less, of course, than pilot me to the melon-patch. Shortly before Tanner's return, they were in the stocks again. Finally he drove up, and looking at the boys, said, with a chuckle,—

"Aha! ye havn't been strolling about much to-day, any way. I'll teach you what's what. I'll tire ye of eating water-melons on the Lord's day, ye Sabbath-breaking niggers."

Peter Tanner prided himself upon his strict religious observances: he was a deacon in the church.

But I have now reached a point in the progress of my narrative, when it becomes necessary to turn away from these light descriptions, to the more grave and weighty matter of the second battle with Master Tibeats, and the flight through the great Pacoudrie Swamp.

Chapter XVI.

With the exception of my trip to St. Mary's parish, and my absence during the cane-cutting seasons, I was constantly employed on the plantation of Master Epps. He was considered but a small planter, not having a sufficient number of hands to require the services of an overseer, acting in the latter capacity himself. Not able to increase his force, it was his custom to hire during the

aby mi to do určité míry oplatili, neudělali chlapci nic jiného, než že mě zavedli na políčko s melouny. Krátce před Tannerovým příchodem byli znovu zpátky v kládách. Posléze přijel a dívaje se na kluky řekl se smíchem, -

„Aha! Dneska ste toho vlastně moc nenachodili. Já vás naučím. Postarám se o to, aby vás to jedení melounů na Boží den omrzelo, vy černý kaziči sváteční neděle.“

Peter Tanner se pyšnil tím, jak striktně dodržuje náboženské rituály: v kostele byl jáhnem.

Teď jsem došel ve vyprávění k bodu, kdy se musím odvrátit od těchto klidných popisů k více vážným a důležitějším záležitostem, jímž je druhý konflikt s panem Tibeatsem a útěk skrz Pacoudrie Swamp.

Kapitola XVI.

Když opomenu výlet do farnosti St. Mary a to, že jsem chyběl v sezónách sekání třtiny, byl jsem neustále zaměstnán na plantáži pana Eppse. Byl považován pouze za malého plantážníka s poměrně nízkým počtem otroků. Proto nepotřeboval služby dozorce a tu funkci zastával sám. Protože nebyl schopen navyšovat počet vlastních otroků, tak měl zvykem je během

hurry of cotton-picking.

On larger estates, employing fifty or a hundred, or perhaps two hundred hands, an overseer is deemed indispensable. These gentlemen ride into the field on horseback, without an exception, to my knowledge, armed with pistols, bowie knife, whip, and accompanied by several dogs. They follow, equipped in this fashion, in rear of the slaves, keeping a sharp lookout upon them all. The requisite qualifications in an overseer are utter heartlessness, brutality and cruelty. It is his business to produce large crops, and if that is accomplished, no matter what amount of suffering it may have cost. The presence of the dogs are necessary to overhaul a fugitive who may take to his heels, as is sometimes the case, when faint or sick, he is unable to maintain his row, and unable, also, to endure the whip. The pistols are reserved for any dangerous emergency, there having been instances when such weapons were necessary. Goaded into uncontrollable madness, even the slave will sometimes turn upon his oppressor. The gallows were standing at Marksville last January, upon which one was executed a year ago for killing his overseer. It occurred not many miles from Epps' plantation on Red River. The slave was given his task at splitting rails. In the course of the day the overseer sent him on an errand, which occupied so much time that it was not

hektického období sběru bavlny najímat.

Na větších pozemcích, kde dělá padesát, sto nebo i dvě stě pracovníků, se přítomnost dozorce považuje za nutnou. Tito muži jezdí po poli na koních, bez výjimky, pokud vím, vyzbrojeni pistolemi, nožem, bičem a doprovázeni několika psy. Takto vybaveni se pohybují vzadu za otroky a bedlivě je všechny pozorují. Mezi nutné předpoklady dozorce patří naprostá bezcitnost, surovost a krutost. Jeho povinností je postarat se o to, aby byla velká sklizeň, a když toho docílí, nezáleží na tom, kolik to stálo utrpení. Psi jsou potřeba v případě, že by se někdo pokusil vzít nohy na ramena, což se občas stává, když je otrok malátný nebo nemocný a není tak schopen vydržet ve své řadě nebo snášet bičování. Pistole jsou vyhrazeny pro jakékoliv mimořádné, nebezpečné okolnosti. Už se naskytly případy, kdy podobné zbraně byly nezbytné. Občas se stává, že se i otrok pomstí svému dozorci a to tehdy, když je vyprovokován k neovladatelnému šílenství. Loni v lednu stála v Marksville šibenice, na níž pověsili jednoho otroka za to, že zabil svého dozorce. Stalo se to několik málo mil od Eppsovy plantáže v Red River. Otrok dostal za úkol našťípat kulatinu na ploty. Během dne ho dozorce poslal ještě něco vyřídit, což vyžadovalo tolik času, že nebylo možné, aby práci vykonal. Druhý den ho povolal, aby podal vysvětlení, avšak to, že ztrátu času způsobilo ono vyřizování, ho

possible for him to perform the task. The next day he was called to an account, but the loss of time occasioned by the errand was no excuse, and he was ordered to kneel and bare his back for the reception of the lash. They were in the woods alone—beyond the reach of sight or hearing. The boy submitted until maddened at such injustice, and insane with pain, he sprang to his feet, and seizing an axe, literally chopped the overseer in pieces. He made no attempt whatever at concealment, but hastening to his master, related the whole affair, and declared himself ready to expiate the wrong by the sacrifice of his life. He was led to the scaffold, and while the rope was around his neck, maintained an undismayed and fearless bearing, and with his last words justified the act.

Besides the overseer, there are drivers under him, the number being in proportion to the number of hands in the field. The drivers are black, who, in addition to the performance of their equal share of work, are compelled to do the whipping of their several gangs. Whips hang around their necks, and if they fail to use them thoroughly, are whipped themselves. They have a few privileges, however; for example, in cane-cutting the hands are not allowed to sit down long enough to eat their dinners. Carts filled with corn cake, cooked at the kitchen, are driven into the field at noon. The cake is distributed

neomlouvalo. Nařídil mu, aby si klekl a obnažil si záda, protože bude potrestán. Byli v lese sami, tak daleko, že je nebylo vidět ani slyšet. Chlapec se podvoloval do té doby, než ho ta nespravedlnost přivedla k šílenství. Nepříčetný v bolesti rychle vstal, uchopil sekeru a doslova rozsekal toho dozorce na kusy. Vůbec se to nepokoušel zatajit, ale naopak pospíchal za svým pánem, celou událost mu vylíčil a prohlásil, že je připraven si zlo odpykat obětováním svého života. Zavedli ho na popraviště, a zatímco měl kolem krku provaz, zachovával odvážný a nebojácný postoj a svými posledními slovy svůj čin obhajoval.

Kromě dozorců jsou tu ještě poháněči, jejichž počet je dán počtem otroků na poli. Poháněči jsou černoši, kteří plní stejné množství práce jako ostatní otroci a musí se také postarat o jejich bičování. Biče jim visí kolem krku a v případě, že je nedokáží použít tak, jak je třeba, jsou zbičováni sami. Mají ale pár výhod; otroci se na rozdíl od poháněčů v období sekání třtiny nemohou posadit dostatečně dlouho na to, aby povečeřeli. Kukuřičné placky, jež se připravují v kuchyni a jsou následně poháněči na vozíkách rozváženy do pole,

by the drivers, and must be eaten with the least possible delay.

When the slave ceases to perspire, as he often does when taxed beyond his strength, he falls to the ground and becomes entirely helpless. It is then the duty of the driver to drag him into the shade of the standing cotton or cane, or of a neighboring tree, where he dashes buckets of water upon him, and uses other means of bringing out perspiration again, when he is ordered to his place, and compelled to continue his labor.

At Huff Power, when I first came to Epps', Tom, one of Roberts' negroes, was driver. He was a burly fellow, and severe in the extreme. After Epps' removal to Bayou Bœuf, that distinguished honor was conferred upon myself. Up to the time of my departure I had to wear a whip about my neck in the field. If Epps was present, I dared not show any lenity, not having the Christian fortitude of a certain well-known Uncle Tom sufficiently to brave his wrath, by refusing to perform the office. In that way, only, I escaped the immediate martyrdom he suffered, and, withal, saved my companions much suffering, as it proved in the end. Epps, I soon found, whether actually in the field or not, had his eyes pretty generally upon us. From the piazza, from behind some adjacent tree, or other concealed point of observation, he was perpetually on the watch. If one of us had

musí sníst co nejdříve.

Když se otrok přestane potit, což se stává často, v případě, že se namáhá více, než je schopen snést, spadne na zem a je úplně bezmocný. Poté je to na poháněči, aby ho odtáhl do stínu stojící bavlny, třtiny nebo vedlejšího stromu, kde na něho nalije džber vody či použije jiné způsoby, jež v něm znovu vyvolají pocení. Pak mu přikáže vrátit se na místo a otrok musí pokračovat v práci.

Když jsem poprvé přišel k Eppsovi, tak byl v Huff Power poháněčem jeden z Robertsových černochů jménem Tom. Byl to statný a nesmírně krutý člověk. Po Eppsově přemístění do Bayou Bœuf byla tato význačná pocta udělena mně. Až do mého odchodu jsem musel na poli nosit kolem krku bič. Když byl Epps s námi, tak jsem si nedovolil být shovívavý nebo se té funkci vyhýbat. Neměl jsem totiž takovou křesťanskou sílu ducha, jako jistá, dobře známá postavička Strýčka Toma, abych čelil jeho rozhořčení. Jedině tak jsem se vyhnul bezprostřednímu mučení a zároveň tím zabránil, aby trpěli ostatní. Jak jsem brzy zjistil, ať už byl Epps na poli nebo ne, tak nás většinou pozoroval a to buď z verandy, z poza nějakého stromu poblíž nebo z jiného utajeného místa. Byl stále ve střehu. Když byl někdo z nás během dne pomalý nebo líný, bylo velmi pravděpodobné, že nám to

been backward or idle through the day, we were apt to be told all about it on returning to the quarters, and as it was a matter of principle with him to reprove every offence of that kind that came within his knowledge, the offender not only was certain of receiving a castigation for his tardiness, but I likewise was punished for permitting it.

If, on the other hand, he had seen me use the lash freely, the man was satisfied. "Practice makes perfect," truly; and during my eight years' experience as a driver, I learned to handle the whip with marvelous dexterity and precision, throwing the lash within a hair's breadth of the back, the ear, the nose, without, however, touching either of them. If Epps was observed at a distance, or we had reason to apprehend he was sneaking somewhere in the vicinity, I would commence plying the lash vigorously, when, according to arrangement, they would squirm and screech as if in agony, although not one of them had in fact been even grazed. Patsey would take occasion, if he made his appearance presently, to mumble in his hearing some complaints that Platt was lashing them the whole time, and Uncle Abram, with an appearance of honesty peculiar to himself, would declare roundly I had just whipped them worse than General Jackson whipped the enemy at New-Orleans. If Epps was not drunk, and in one of his beastly humors, this was, in general,

všechno při návratu do obydlí vyčte. Šlo mu o to, aby zkritizoval všechna taková porušení, o kterých se dozvěděl. Viník si mohl být jistý, že přijde trest za jeho liknavost a mě potrestal za to, že jsem k tomu svolil.

Když mě ale naproti tomu viděl používat bič, jak se mi zachtělo, byl spokojen. „Cvičení dělá mistra,“ doopravdy; během těch osmi let, co jsem byl poháněčem, jsem se naučil bič ovládat s naprostou přesností a obratností. Dokázal jsem ho vymrštit jen tak tak vedle zad, ucha či nosu, ale nedotknout se ani jednoho z nich. Když jsme si všimli, že je Epps opodál nebo jsme z nějakého důvodu tušili, že se někde v blízkosti tajně plíží, začal jsem bič používat s vervou, a jak jsme se domluvili, ostatní se svíjeli a křičeli v bolestech, i když jsem nikoho z nich ani neškrábl. Když přišel Epps mezi nás, Patsey využívala situace ke stížnostem, a mumlala dostatečně nahlas, aby to slyšel, že je Platt pořád bičuje. Strýček Abraham, pro něhož bylo typické tvářit se upřímně, zase nemilosrdně prohlásil, že jsem právě zbičoval více, než General Jackson zbičoval nepřátele v New Orleans. Když nebyl Epps opilý nebo zrovna neměl jednu z těch svých příšerných nálad, dalo se to vydržet. V opačném případě za to ale samozřejmě jeden nebo i více z nás muselo trpět. Jeho

satisfactory. If he was, some one or more of us must suffer, as a matter of course. Sometimes his violence assumed a dangerous form, placing the lives of his human stock in jeopardy. On one occasion the drunken madman thought to amuse himself by cutting my throat.

He had been absent at Holmesville, in attendance at a shooting-match, and none of us were aware of his return. While hoeing by the side of Patsey, she exclaimed, in a low voice, suddenly, "Platt, d'ye see old Hog-Jaw beckoning me to come to him?"

Glancing sideways, I discovered him in the edge of the field, motioning and grimacing, as was his habit when half-intoxicated. Aware of his lewd intentions, Patsey began to cry. I whispered her not to look up, and to continue at her work, as if she had not observed him. Suspecting the truth of the matter, however, he soon staggered up to me in a great rage.

"What did you say to Pats?" he demanded, with an oath. I made him some evasive answer, which only had the effect of increasing his violence.

"How long have you owned this plantation, *say*, you d——d nigger?" he inquired, with a malicious sneer, at the same time taking hold of my shirt collar with one hand, and thrusting the other into his pocket.

hrubost občas nabývala vážných rozměrů a své otroky vystavoval nebezpečí. Dokonce se jednoho dne stalo, že se ten opilý šílenec chtěl pobavit tím, že mi podřízne krk.

Jednou jel do Holmesvillu na utkání ve střelbě, ale nikdo si neuvědomil, že už se vrátil. Zatímco jsem okopával, Patsey si vedle mě začala hlubokým hlasem z ničeho nic stěžovat: „Platte, to starý prase po mě chce, abych šla k němu, vidíš?“

Letmo jsem se koukl stranou, kde jsem ho spatřil, jak stojí bez hnutí na kraji pole a šklebí se, což bylo jeho zvykem, když byl pod vlivem alkoholu. Patsey se rozplakala, protože si byla dobře vědoma jeho sprostých úmyslů. Zašeptal jsem, ať nezvedá hlavu a pokračuje v práci, jako kdyby si ho nevšimla. Brzy to ale zaznamenal a celý rozzuřený se ke mně dopotácel.

„Co jsi to říkal Pats?“ zaklel. Odpověděl jsem mu vyhýbavě, což ještě zesílilo jeho zuřivost.

„Jak dlouho ti patří tahle plantáž, co, ty černej prevíte?“ dotazoval se se zlomyslným úšklebkem, zatímco měl jednu ruku v kapse a druhou mě držel za límec od košile. „Teď ti podříznu ten tvůj černej krk,“ řekl a vytáhl

"Now I'll cut your black throat; that's what I'll do," drawing his knife from his pocket as he said it. But with one hand he was unable to open it, until finally seizing the blade in his teeth, I saw he was about to succeed, and felt the necessity of escaping from him, for in his present reckless state, it was evident he was not joking, by any means. My shirt was open in front, and as I turned round quickly and sprang from him, while he still retained his gripe, it was stripped entirely from my back. There was no difficulty now in eluding him. He would chase me until out of breath, then stop until it was recovered, swear, and renew the chase again. Now he would command me to come to him, now endeavor to coax me, but I was careful to keep at a respectful distance. In this manner we made the circuit of the field several times, he making desperate plunges, and I always dodging them, more amused than frightened, well knowing that when his sober senses returned, he would laugh at his own drunken folly. At length I observed the mistress standing by the yard fence, watching our half-serious, half-comical manœuvres. Shooting past him, I ran directly to her. Epps, on discovering her, did not follow. He remained about the field an hour or more, during which time I stood by the mistress, having related the particulars of what had taken place. Now, *she* was aroused again, denouncing her husband and Patsey

si nůž z kapsy. Nebyl ale schopn ho otevřít jen jednou rukou, až ho nakonec uchopil do zubů. Bylo mně jasné, že se mu to brzy povede a tak jsem mu chtěl utéct, protože v jeho stavu bylo evidentní, že v žádném případě nežertuje. Měl jsem rozepnutou košili, a jak jsem se rychle otočil a odskočil od něho, košile se mi úplně svlékla ze zad, jelikož mě stále držel za límec. Teď už nebylo těžké mu uniknout. Snažil se mě dohonit a nemohl popadnout dech. Zastavil se a načerpával síly, zanádal si a začal mě znovu honit. Poté mě nařídil, abych k němu přišel a snažil se mě uchlácholit. Byl jsem ale opatrný a držel jsem si od něho odstup. Tímto způsobem jsme na poli udělali pár koleček, přičemž on několikrát zuřivě spadl na zem a já se mu uhýbal. Byl jsem více pobaven, než zděšen, protože jsem dobře věděl, že až vystřízliví, tak se svému opilectví bláhově zasměje. Konečně jsem zahlédl jeho ženu, jak stojí na nádvoří u plotu a pozoruje tu napolo vážnou a trochu komickou situaci. Proběhl jsem kolem něho a zamířil přímo za ní. Když ji Epps spatřil, přestal mě pronásledovat. Hodinu nebo dvě zůstal na poli, zatímco já jsem stál u ní a podrobně jí vysvětloval, co se stalo. Tentokrát byla zase rozčilená *ona* a rovným dílem kritizovala jak Patsey, tak i svého manžela. Později se Epps vydal směrem k domu. Byl už téměř střízlivý a kráčel zdrženlivě. S rukama za zády se snažil tvářit

about equally. Finally, Epps came towards the house, by this time nearly sober, walking demurely, with his hands behind his back, and attempting to look as innocent as a child.

As he approached, nevertheless, Mistress Epps began to berate him roundly, heaping upon him many rather disrespectful epithets, and demanding for what reason he had attempted to cut my throat. Epps made wondrous strange of it all, and to my surprise, swore by all the saints in the calendar he had not spoken to me that day.

"Platt, you lying nigger, *have I?*" was his brazen appeal to me.

It is not safe to contradict a master, even by the assertion of a truth. So I was silent, and when he entered the house I returned to the field, and the affair was never after alluded to.

Shortly after this time a circumstance occurred that came nigh divulging the secret of my real name and history, which I had so long and carefully concealed, and upon which I was convinced depended my final escape. Soon after he purchased me, Epps asked me if I could write and read, and on being informed that I had received some instruction in those branches of education, he assured me, with emphasis, if he ever caught me with a book, or with pen and ink, he would give me a hundred lashes. He said

jako nevinné dítě.

Když přišel blíž, paní Eppsová mu začala hrubě nadávat. Zahrnula ho několika dosti nezdvořilými přídomky a domáhala se vysvětlení, proč mi chtěl podříznout krk. Epps dělal, že vůbec o ničem neví a k mému údivu dokonce přísahal na všechny svaté, že se mnou celý den nepromluvil.

„Platte, ty prolhanej negře, mluvil sem s tebou?“ zeptal se mě nestydatě.

Odmlovat pánovi je nebezpečné a to i v případě, že máte pravdu. Nic jsem na to tedy neřekl, a když zašel do domu, vrátil jsem se zpátky na pole. O této události už jsme nikdy nehovořili.

Zanedlouho po tomto incidentu se málem odhalilo tajemství mého pravého jména a minulosti, jež jsem tak dlouho a důkladně skrýval. Byl jsem přesvědčen, že na této situaci bude záviset můj útek. Krátce po té, co si mě Epps koupil, se mě zeptal, jestli umím číst a psát. Řekl jsem mu, že jsem nějaké lekce tohoto typu obdržel, načež mě velmi důrazně ujistil, že kdyby mě někdy nachytil s knihou či s perem a inkoustem, dostal bych sto ran bičem. Řekl mi, že chce, abych rozuměl tomu, že „negři“, které si

he wanted me to understand that he bought "niggers" to work and not to educate. He never inquired a word of my past life, or from whence I came. The mistress, however, cross-examined me frequently about Washington, which she supposed was my native city, and more than once remarked that I did not talk nor act like the other "niggers," and she was sure I had seen more of the world than I admitted.

My great object always was to invent means of getting a letter secretly into the post-office, directed to some of my friends or family at the North. The difficulty of such an achievement cannot be comprehended by one unacquainted with the severe restrictions imposed upon me. In the first place, I was deprived of pen, ink, and paper. In the second place, a slave cannot leave his plantation without a pass, nor will a post-master mail a letter for one without written instructions from his owner. I was in slavery nine years, and always watchful and on the alert, before I met with the good fortune of obtaining a sheet of paper. While Epps was in New-Orleans, one winter, disposing of his cotton, the mistress sent me to Holmesville, with an order for several articles, and among the rest a quantity of foolscap. I appropriated a sheet, concealing it in the cabin, under the board on which I slept.

After various experiments I succeeded in making ink, by boiling white maple bark,

někdo koupil, jsou na to, aby pracovali, ne aby se vzdělávali. Nikdy se nezajímal o mou minulost nebo o to, odkud jsem přišel. Jeho paní se mě ale několikrát ptala na Washington, protože se domnívala, že je to mé rodné město. Nejednou podotkla, že nemluví, ani se nechovám jako ostatní „negři“ a že si je jistá, že jsem navštívil více míst, než přiznávám.

Vždycky jsem chtěl přijít na způsob, jak dopravit tajně dopis na poštu a poslat ho někomu z mých přátel nebo rodiny na severu. To, jak je taková záležitost obtížná, nemůže pochopit nikdo, kdo nemusel čelit všem těm drsným překážkám. V první řadě jsem neměl pero, inkoust ani papír. Zadruhé se otrok nemůže hnout z plantáže bez propustky a pošťák by mu navíc stejně nikdy dopis neposlal bez písemného souhlasu jeho vlastníka. Byl jsem otrokem devět let a vždy jsem byl ostražitý a pozorný. Alespoň do té doby, než jsem získal list papíru. Když byl Epps jednou v zimě v New Orleans, kde prodával bavlnu, jeho žena mě poslala do Holmesville. Chtěla přinést několik věcí, mezi kterými byla i spousta papírů. Jeden list jsem si přivlastnil a skryl ho v chatce pod prkno, na kterém jsem spal.

Po nejrůznějších experimentech se mi podařilo vyrobit inkoust vařením bílé

and with a feather plucked from the wing of a duck, manufactured a pen. When all were asleep in the cabin, by the light of the coals, lying upon my plank couch, I managed to complete a somewhat lengthy epistle. It was directed to an old acquaintance at Sandy Hill, stating my condition, and urging him to take measures to restore me to liberty. This letter I kept a long time, contriving measures by which it could be safely deposited in the post-office. At length, a low fellow, by the name of Armsby, hitherto a stranger, came into the neighborhood, seeking a situation as overseer. He applied to Epps, and was about the plantation for several days. He next went over to Shaw's, near by, and remained with him several weeks. Shaw was generally surrounded by such worthless characters, being himself noted as a gambler and unprincipled man. He had made a wife of his slave Charlotte, and a brood of young mulattoes were growing up in his house. Armsby became so much reduced at last, that he was compelled to labor with the slaves. A white man working in the field is a rare and unusual spectacle on Bayou Bœuf. I improved every opportunity of cultivating his acquaintance privately, desiring to obtain his confidence so far as to be willing to intrust the letter to his keeping. He visited Marksville repeatedly, he informed me, a town some twenty miles distant, and there, I proposed to myself, the letter should be

javorové kůry a z pírka vyškubnutého z kachny zhotovit pero. Když všichni v chatě usnuli, tak se mi povedlo za světla z uhlíků napsat na prkenné posteli poměrně dlouhý dopis. Byl adresovaný jednomu starému známému v Sandy Hill, jehož jsem v dopise obeznámil se svým stavem a naléhal na něho, aby učinil opatření, jež mi navrátí svobodu. Tento dopis jsem měl dlouho u sebe a přemýšlel, jak bych ho mohl bez rizika doručit na poštu. Nakonec přišel do sousedství jeden mizera jménem Armsby, do té doby cizí člověk, jež usiloval o pozici dozorce. Ucházel se o ni u Eppse a několik dnů se pohyboval kolem plantáže. Poté se přesunul k Shawovi, jež bydlel nedaleko, a pár týdnů u něho zůstal. Shawa obvykle obklopovali neschopní lidé podobného rázu. Sám byl proslulý jako nemorální člověk a hazardní hráč. Vzal si za ženu jednu ze svých otrokyň jménem Charlotte a v jeho domě vyrůstaly mulatské děti. Armsby byl nakonec donucen pracovat s otroky. Muž bílé pleti pracující na poli je v Bayou Bœuf vzácná a neobvyklá podívaná. Využil jsem každé příležitosti s ním navázat kontakt a toužil po získání jeho důvěry do té míry, abych mu mohl svěřit ten dopis. Řekl mi, že opakovaně jezdí do Marksville, což je město vzdálené asi deset mil, načež jsem si plánoval, že odtamtud by mohl ten dopis poslat.

mailed.

Carefully deliberating on the most proper manner of approaching him on the subject, I concluded finally to ask him simply if he would deposit a letter for me in the Marksville post-office the next time he visited that place, without disclosing to him that the letter was written, or any of the particulars it contained; for I had fears that he might betray me, and knew that some inducement must be held out to him of a pecuniary nature, before it would be safe to confide in him. As late as one o'clock one night I stole noiselessly from my cabin, and, crossing the field to Shaw's, found him sleeping on the piazza. I had but a few picayunes—the proceeds of my fiddling performances, but all I had in the world I promised him if he would do me the favor required. I begged him not to expose me if he could not grant the request. He assured me, upon his honor, he would deposit it in the Marksville post-office, and that he would keep it an inviolable secret forever. Though the letter was in my pocket at the time, I dared not then deliver it to him, but stating I would have it written in a day or two, bade him good night, and returned to my cabin. It was impossible for me to expel the suspicions I entertained, and all night I lay awake, revolving in my mind the safest course to pursue. I was willing to risk a great deal to accomplish my purpose, but

Pečlivě jsem rozmýšlel ten nejvhodnější způsob, jak se na něho s tímto tématem obrátit. Nakonec jsem došel k závěru, že se ho jednoduše zeptám, jestli by pro mě nemohl doručit dopis na poštu v Marksvillu až tam příště pojede, aniž bych mu prozrazoval, že už jsem ho napsal nebo mu řekl jakékoliv detaily o tom, co obsahuje. Báł jsem se totiž, že by mě mohl zradit. Věděl jsem o jeho lásce k penězům a bylo mi jasné, že ho budu muset motivovat, abych si získal jeho důvěru. Jednou jsem se nad ránem potichu vyplížil z chatky, a když jsem přecházel pole k Shawovi, zahlédl jsem ho, jak spí na terase. Měl jsem jen několik pěticentů, které jsem si vydělal hraním na housle. Všechny jsem mu je slíbil, když mi tu laskavost prokáže. Požádal jsem ho, aby mě nevyzradil, kdyby prosbu nemohl vykonat. Přísahal na svou čest, že dopis doručí na poštu v Marksvillu a že to navždy zachová v tajnosti. I když jsem měl v tu chvíli dopis v kapse, neodvážil jsem se mu ho předat. Řekl jsem mu, že ho napíšu během jednoho nebo dvou dnů, popřál mu dobrou noc a vrátil se do chatky. Nemohl jsem se zbavit podezření. Celou noc jsem byl vzhůru a přemýšlel o nejbezpečnějším způsobu, jak to provést. Byl jsem ochoten hodně riskovat, abych dosáhl svého cíle, ale kdyby se dopis jakkoliv dostal do rukou Eppsovi, byl by to konec. Přivádělo mě to

should the letter by any means fall into the hands of Epps, it would be a death-blow to my aspirations. I was "perplexed in the extreme."

My suspicions were well-founded, as the sequel demonstrated. The next day but one, while scraping cotton in the field, Epps seated himself on the line fence between Shaw's plantation and his own, in such a position as to overlook the scene of our labors. Presently Armsby made his appearance, and, mounting the fence, took a seat beside him. They remained two or three hours, all of which time I was in an agony of apprehension.

That night, while broiling my bacon, Epps entered the cabin with his rawhide in his hand.

"Well, boy," said he, "I understand I've got a larned nigger, that writes letters, and tries to get white fellows to mail 'em. Wonder if you know who he is?"

My worst fears were realized, and although it may not be considered entirely creditable, even under the circumstances, yet a resort to duplicity and downright falsehood was the only refuge that presented itself.

"Don't know nothing about it, Master Epps," I answered him, assuming an air of ignorance and surprise; "Don't know nothing

k šílenství.

Jak se brzy ukázalo, mé podezření bylo opodstatněné. Za dva dny, když jsme na poli očesávali bavlnu, se Epps posadil na plot stojící mezi jeho a Shawovou plantáží a dohlížel na to, jak pracujeme. Za chvíli se objevil Armsby, vylezl na plot a sedl si vedle něho. Seděli tam asi dvě nebo tři hodiny a mě celou tu dobu trápily obavy.

Ten večer, když jsem si griloval slaninu, vešel do chatky Epps s bičem v ruce.

„Takže, chlapče,“ řekl, „Dozvěděl jsem se, že tady mám učenýho negra, kterej píše dopisy a snaží se přesvědčit svoje bílý kamarády, aby mu je poslali. Nevíš náhodou, o koho se jedná?“

Mé nejhorší obavy se naplnily. Ačkoliv to, i za těchto okolností, nemusí být považováno za úplně chvályhodné, jediným východiskem bylo uchýlit se k neupřímnosti a naprostým lžím.

„Nevím, o čem to mluvíte, pane Eppi,“ odpovéděl jsem předstíraje, že jsem překvapený a nevím, oč se jedná. „Vůbec

at all about it, sir."

"Wan't you over to Shaw's night before last?" he inquired.

"No, master," was the reply.

"Hav'nt you asked that fellow, Armsby, to mail a letter for you at Marksville?"

"Why, Lord, master, I never spoke three words to him in all my life. I don't know what you mean."

"Well," he continued, "Armsby told me today the devil was among my niggers; that I had one that needed close watching or he would run away; and when I axed him why, he said you come over to Shaw's, and waked him up in the night, and wanted him to carry a letter to Marksville. What have you got to say to that, ha?"

"All I've got to say, master," I replied, "is, there is no truth in it. How could I write a letter without any ink or paper? There is nobody I want to write to, 'cause I haint got no friends living as I know of. That Armsby is a lying, drunken fellow, they say, and nobody believes him anyway. You know I always tell the truth, and that I never go off the plantation without a pass. Now, master, I can see what that Armsby is after, plain enough. Did'nt he want you to hire him for an overseer?"

"Yes, he wanted me to hire him," answered

nic o tom nevím, pane."

„Nebyls náhodou předevcírem v noci u Shawa?“ zeptal se.

„Ne, pane,“ odpověděl jsem.

„Nechtěl jsi náhodou po tom chlápku Armsbymu, aby ti poslal dopis do Marksville?“

„Proboha, pane, já jsem s ním nikdy v životě neprohodil ani tři slova. Nevím, o čem to mluvíte.“

„No,“ pokračoval, „Armsby mi dneska řekl, že mám mezi svýma negrama jednoho neřáda a že je potřeba na něho dohlídnout, jinak uteče pryč. A když jsem se ho zeptal proč, řekl mi, žes přišel v noci k Shawovi, vzbudil ho a chtěl po něm, aby donesl tvůj dopis do Marksville. Co mi na to povíš, hm?“

„Jediné, co vám na to mohu říct, pane,“ odpověděl jsem, „je to, že to není pravda. Jak bych mohl napsat dopis bez inkoustu a papíru? Není ani nikdo, komu bych psal, protože nemám žádný žijící kamarády, o kterých bych věděl. Říká se, že ten Armsby je ulhanej, věčně opilej chlap a nikdo mu stejně nevěří. Vy víte, že vždycky říkám pravdu a že nikdy neopustím plantáž bez dovolení. Vím, o co tomu Armsbymu jde, pane. Nechtěl po vás náhodou, abyste ho zaměstnal jako dozorce?“

„Jo, chtěl, abych ho zaměstnal,“ odpověděl

Epps.

"That's it," said I, "he wants to make you believe we're all going to run away, and then he thinks you'll hire an overseer to watch us. He just made that story out of whole cloth, 'cause he wants to get a situation. It's all a lie, master, you may depend on't."

Epps mused awhile, evidently impressed with the plausibility of my theory, and exclaimed,

"I'm d—d, Platt, if I don't believe you tell the truth. He must take me for a soft, to think he can come it over me with them kind of yarns, musn't he? Maybe he thinks he can fool me; maybe he thinks I don't know nothing—can't take care of my own niggers, eh! Soft soap old Epps, eh! Ha, ha, ha! D—n Armsby! Set the dogs on him, Platt," and with many other comments descriptive of Armsby's general character, and his capability of taking care of his own business, and attending to his own "niggers," Master Epps left the cabin. As soon as he was gone I threw the letter in the fire, and, with a desponding and despairing heart, beheld the epistle which had cost me so much anxiety and thought, and which I fondly hoped would have been my forerunner to the land of freedom, writhe and shrivel on its bed of coals, and dissolve into smoke and ashes. Armsby, the treacherous wretch, was driven from Shaw's

Epps."

„To je ono,“ řekl jsem. „Chce, abyste uvěřil tomu, že všichni plánujeme útěk, protože pak byste ho zaměstnal jako dozorce, aby nás pohlídal. Celý si to vymyslel, protože chce dosáhnout svýho. Je to všechno jen lež, pane, na to se můžete spolehnout.“

Epps se na chvíli zamyslel a byl evidentně ohromený věrohodností toho, co jsem mu řekl. Poté vyhrkl:

„Ať se propadnu, Platte, jestli nevěřím, že říkáš pravdu. Musí mě mít za hlupáka, když si myslí, že za mnou může přijít s takovýma historkama, co? Možná si myslí, že si se mnou může zahrávat; možná si myslí, že nic nevim a že se nedokážu postarat o vlastní negry, vid'?' Mazat med kolem pusu starýmu Eppsovi! Ha, ha, ha! Zatracenej Armsby! Poštvat na něho psy, Platte,“ řekl Epps a s několika dalšími poznámkami k Armsbyho povaze a svojí schopnosti postarat se o své záležitosti a o vlastní „negry“ opustil chatku. Hned jak odešel, hodil jsem dopis do ohně a s obrovskou beznadějí jsem pozoroval ten papír měnící se v popel. Vždyť mě stál tolik starostí a strachu - naivně jsem doufal, že se dostanu na svobodu. Armsby, ten proradný darebák, byl převezen na Shawovu plantáž, což pro mě byla úleva, protože jsem se bál, že by mohl to téma znovu vytáhnout nebo přesvědčit Eppse, aby mu věřil.

plantation not long subsequently, much to my relief, for I feared he might renew his conversation, and perhaps induce Epps to credit him.

I knew not now whither to look for deliverance. Hopes sprang up in my heart only to be crushed and blighted. The summer of my life was passing away; I felt I was growing prematurely old; that a few years more, and toil, and grief, and the poisonous miasmas of the swamps would accomplish their work upon me—would consign me to the grave's embrace, to moulder and be forgotten. Repelled, betrayed, cut off from the hope of succor, I could only prostrate myself upon the earth and groan in unutterable anguish. The hope of rescue was the only light that cast a ray of comfort on my heart. That was now flickering, faint and low; another breath of disappointment would extinguish it altogether, leaving me to grope in midnight darkness to the end of life.

Nevěděl jsem, kde mám hledat vysvobození. Naděje se v mém srdci objevily jen proto, aby mohly být následně zničeny. Nejlepší léta mého života pomíjely, cítil jsem, že předčasně stárnu a že ta dřina, trápení a tíživá atmosféra bažin nade mnou brzy dokončí svou práci a pošlou mě do sevření smrti, abych se rozpadl a byl zapomenut. Zrazen a bez naděje na pomoc jsem se mohl jen svalit na zem a sténat tím nepopsatelným utrpením. Naděje ve vysvobození bylo jediným světlem, jež vrhalo paprsky útěchy na mé srdce. Srdce, které se chvělo, bylo slabé a zkroušené a další závan zklamání by ho zcela uhasil a ponechal by mě tápat v půlnoční temnotě do konce života.

4 Stylistic Analysis

4.1 Syntactic aspect

Before analyzing individual syntactic aspects, I would like to clarify the syntactic structure of my translation in general. As the book was written in the 19th century, the syntax is quite complicated. The text contains very long sentences and the language itself is rather difficult. Although some parts of my translation might seem slightly unnatural, I believe it is appropriate to maintain the dated style of the original text. In view of this, the translation could have been informed by some mid 19th century Czech text as a stylistic template (i.e. the later phase of the Czech National Revival movement). However, this would have made the resulting Czech text even less accessible to modern day Czech reader, due to the lexical and stylistic specifics of mid 19th century Czech language. In addition to this, the translator would have needed to do very extensive research across various Czech National Revival texts in order to become reasonably acquainted with the lexis and the syntactical flourishes of that period. These were the two reasons why I eventually decided against this approach and opted instead for retaining a certain degree of literalist syntax and phraseology, which is otherwise frowned upon in translation but which I found quite beneficial in this case, as it gave the resulting Czech text a somewhat dated appearance.

4.1.1 Passive voice

Some difficulties concerning translation from English to Czech may occur when dealing with the passive voice. According to Knittlová, the passive structure is oftentimes retained mechanically by many beginning translators. Therefore, while translating, I had to keep in mind that the use of the passive is very rare in the Czech language if the explication of an agent is not avoided on purpose. (Knittlová, 94)

Examples:

- The gallows were standing at Marksville last January, upon which **one was executed** a year ago for killing his overseer. (17)
- Loni v lednu stála v Marksville šibenice, na níž **pověsili jednoho otroka** za to, že zabil svého dozorce. (17)
- We **were not disturbed** again during the night. (9)
- Po zbytek noci **byl už klid**. (9)

Nevertheless, one can see the Czech passive voice in case of professional or scientific expression. It also occurs when a subject is animate and an inanimate generator causes some mental states or feelings. (Dušková 265)

Example:

- Shortly after this time a circumstance occurred that came nigh divulging the secret of my real name and history, which I had so long and carefully concealed, and upon which **I was convinced** depended my final escape. (23)
- Zanedlouho po tomto incidentu se málem odhalilo tajemství mého pravého jména a minulosti, jež jsem tak dlouho a pozorně skrýval. **Byl jsem přesvědčen**, že na této situaci bude záviset můj útek. (23)

Since the narrator uses very elevated English, I decided to retain the passive voice in some parts of the text. That is perhaps one of the reasons why my translation might sound dated which is in fact the result of a conscious attempt to preserve mid 19th century stylistic idiosyncrasies.

Example:

- **He was considered** but a small planter, not having a sufficient number of hands to require the services of an overseer, acting in the latter capacity himself. (16)
- **Byl považován** pouze za malého plantážníka s poměrně nízkým počtem otroků. Proto nepotřeboval služby dozorce a tu funkci zastával sám. (16)

4.1.2 Participle

Other syntactic features a translator may find rather challenging are participle constructions. The way one decides to translate such constructions has a significant impact on the resonance of the text. When one uses too many cohesive elements, the text may become unnatural. Therefore, Jirí Bečka recommends using main clauses without conjunctions so as to preserve the original vibrancy of the text. (Knittlová 95)

„Ing-ové participium má stejný formální systém jako český přechodník. Rozlišuje čas přítomný a minulý a rod činný a trpný (*asking* žádaje, *being asked* jsa žádán, *having asked* požádav, *having been asked* byv požádán). Na rozdíl od češtiny se ho však užívá častěji a vedle vazeb obdobných vazbám českým se vyskytují též vazby, které v češtině nemají strukturní obdobu.“ (Dušková, 581)

There is a lesson a translator may learn from Dušková's conclusions, namely from her reference to the more frequent occurrence of –ing participles in English. This obvious asymmetry is often compensated for by different verb phrases.

Examples:

- I was without coat or hat, **standing** bare-headed, exposed to its burning blaze. (3)
- **Stál jsem** bez kabátu i klobouku, vystaven té žhavé záři. (3)
- **Drawing** a knife from his pocket, he indignantly cut the cord from my wrists, arms, and ankles, and slipped the noose from my neck. (6)
- **Vytáhl si** z kapsy nůž a rozhořčeně odřízl provaz z mých zápěstí, paží a kotníků a sundal mi smyčku z krku. (6)
- **Glancing** sideways, I discovered him in the edge of the field, **motioning** and **grimacing**, as was his habit when half-intoxicated. (21)
- Letmo jsem se **koukl** stranou, kde jsem ho spatřil, jak stojí bez hnutí na kraji pole a **šklebí** se, což bylo jeho zvykem, když byl pod vlivem alkoholu. (21)

When translating participle in the function of a complement, it is, according to *Mluvnice současné angličtiny na pozadí češtiny*, advisable to use an infinitive, complement clause with a Czech word “jak” or it is also possible to use a prepositional phrase. (Dušková 586)

Examples:

- I felt sorry to see them **sitting** on the hot ground, and remembered my own sufferings in the sun. (15)
- Bylo mi líto je vidět, **jak sedí** na rozpálené zemi a vzpomněl jsem si na ty muka, jež jsem sám na slunci zažil. (15)
- As late as one o'clock one night I stole noiselessly from my cabin, and, crossing the field to Shaw's, found him **sleeping** on the piazza. (26)
- Jednou jsem se nad ránem potichu vyplížil z chatky, a když jsem přecházel pole k Shawovi, zahlédl jsem ho, **jak spí** na terase. (26)

Even though it is rather unusual to use participles in Czech, in order to maintain the language style of the book, I chose to retain the participle in some sentences:

- Finally he drove up, and **looking** at the boys, said, with a chuckle, - (16)
- Posléze přijel a **dívaje se** na kluky řekl se smíchem, - (16)

4.1.3 Long sentences

One of the typical features of the text is the presence of long sentences. It might not bother the reader in the English version; however, it would sound rather confusing in the Czech translation. Therefore, I divided some of them.

Example:

- Carefully deliberating on the most proper manner of approaching him on the subject, I concluded finally to ask him simply if he would deposit a letter for me in the Marksville post-office the next time he visited that place, without disclosing to him that the letter was written, or any of the particulars it contained; for I had fears that he might betray me, and knew that some inducement must be held out to him of a pecuniary nature, before it would be safe to confide in him.
- Pečlivě jsem rozmýšlel ten nejvhodnější způsob, jak se na něho s tímto tématem obrátit. Nakonec jsem došel k závěru, že se ho jednoduše zeptám, jestli by pro mě nemohl doručit dopis na poštu v Marksvillu až tam příště pojede, aniž bych mu prozrazoval, že už jsem ho napsal nebo mu řekl jakékoliv detaily o tom, co obsahuje. Báł jsem se totiž, že by mě mohl zradit. Věděl jsem o jeho lásce k penězům a bylo mi jasné, že ho budu muset motivovat, abych si získal jeho důvěru.

4.2 Pragmatic aspect

„Volba jazyka, kterým je text ztvárněn, se řadí rovněž do sféry pragmatického aspektu. Tato volba má relevantní komunikativní hodnotu, když se použije v textu dialektů, jiných jazyků, nebo jde-li o netradiční použití jazyka... Autorům přitom nejde o autentické zachycení nespisovných projevů, ale o vytvoření jisté atmosféry, estetické funkce textu.“ (Knittlová, 105)

As for the pragmatic aspect, I believe it is very important for a translator to get to know the text properly before translating. As has been stated, it is vital to be able to portray the atmosphere through the chosen language. To do so, a translator should have some knowledge of a linguistic background. Also, it is important for him/her to perceive the way the characters express themselves throughout the book. Afterwards he/she should maintain the language register of a character, if the character does not purposely change it. As a result, a reader perceives the text as one unit.

4.2.1 Dialect

“Dialect is a variety of a language that is distinguished from other varieties of the same language by features of phonology, grammar, and vocabulary, and by its use by a group of speakers who are set off from others geographically or socially.” (Dictionary.com)

The story is narrated by the main hero Platt, whose English is very precise and elevated. However, there are many examples of substandard language formations in direct speech. Most of the slave owners, especially Master Epps, have a strong southern accent. One must be very careful not to exaggerate the dialect differences between those two varieties. In the same time, the contrast between them is one of the features that make the text linguistically interesting.

The linguistic reality of Louisiana has been influenced mainly historically, geographically and economically. There are three main language varieties in Louisiana. The first one is a French branch that developed from Colonial French, the second one is English that originated in Yat and Cajun English and the last one is Louisiana Creole. (alphaomegatranslations.com)

Louisiana Creole vernacular developed the south of Louisiana and it was the result of plantation slavery and French Colonialism. However, the dialect used in the book corresponds more to Yat (coming from “Where y’at?”), also known as a New Orleans dialect. Some of the linguistic phenomena include dropping “r” in the final position of a word or using a stress shift towards the initial position of a word (marked with a hyphen in the text). (alphaomegatranslations.com, en.wikipedia.org)

The treatment of vernacular varieties of English within this translation was informed by the recommended approaches towards dialectological translations, namely the following recommendation by Dagmar Knittlová.

“Výrazy nářečové, slangové, hantýrka atd. se někdy nazývají obecně *substandardismy*. Při jejich převádění lze obecně zachovávat jistá pravidla. Důležité je poznat příznakovou jazykovou vrstvu, odhadnout, jak dalece je relevantní, a když je, nalézt prostředek, jak naznačit, že je jí užito...Budeme-li hledat v češtině dialekt, který by měl podobný status a kulturní asociace jako použitý dialekt anglický, jde už o kulturní transplantaci a taková substance je riskantní.” (Knittlová, 112)

Owing to this advice, I made several changes in my translations. Because of some grammatical features, informal use of the language and the tone in general, I chose to utilize colloquial Common Czech while translating.

Examples:

- "Aha! **ye** havn't been strolling about much **to-day**, any way. I'll teach you what's what. I'll tire **ye** of eating water-melons on the Lord's day, ye Sabbath-breaking niggers." (16)
- „Aha! Dneska **ste** toho vlastně moc nenachodili. Já vás **naučím**. Postarám se o to, aby vás to jedení melounů na Boží den omrzelo, vy **černý** kaziči sváteční neděle.“ (16)
- "Platt," said he, "you will sleep on the floor in the great house **to-night**; bring your blanket with you." (8)
- „Platte,“ řekl, „dneska budeš spát v hlavní budově na zemi, **vem** si s sebou deku.“ (8)

As you can see in my translation, I decided to use “*ste*”, “*naučím*”, “*černý*” and “*vem*”, instead of using the equivalents of Standard Czech “*jste*”, “*naučím*”, „*černí*“ and „*vezmi*“. I did so owing to the expressions “*ye*”, “*to-day*” and “*to-night*” in the source text which seem to suggest that a dialect has been used. I demonstrated it on different words than the ones used in English since every language uses different signals for this purpose.

Other examples of some interesting linguistic features:

- "**Wan't** you over to Shaw's night before last?" he inquired. (28)
- „**Nebyls** náhodou předevcírem v noci u Shawa?“ zeptal se. (28)
- "**Hav'nt** you asked that fellow, Armsby, to mail a letter for you at Marksville?" (28)
- „Nechtěl jsi náhodou po tom chlápku Armsbymu, aby ti poslal dopis do Marksvilleu?“ (28)

Even though Platt uses very precise English during narrating, when conversing with his masters, he oftentimes uses the dialect employed by the other slaves so as not to sound different as it could lead to some dangerous consequences.

Examples:

- There is nobody I want to write to, 'cause **I haint got no** friends living as I know of. (28)

- Není ani nikdo, komu bych psal, protože **nemám žádný žijící kamarády**, o kterých bych věděl. (28)

There are some cases throughout the text when the dialect that is typical for certain characters of the story is not shown in a sentence. Nevertheless, when a character speaks in a specific way the whole time, it would be unnatural to change it and start using Standard English.

Examples:

- "Platt, you lying nigger, *have I?*" was his brazen appeal to me. (23)
- „Platte, ty **prolhanej negře**, mluvil sem s tebou?“ zeptal se mě nestydatě. (23)
- He just made that story out of whole cloth, 'cause he wants to get a situation. (29)
- Celý si to vymyslel, protože chce dosáhnout svýho. (29)

As you can see above, to maintain the same tone of the character and not to confuse the reader, I decided to keep Non-standard Czech while translating.

4.3 Lexical aspect

4.3.1 Names of characters and cultural specifics

Names of characters may or may not carry a meaning. According to Levý, when a name does not comprehend any semantic element, a translator can keep it in the original language. The letter rule also applies when a name does have a meaning but it is not relevant to the text. (Levý, 116)

„Při překladu jde přirozeně jen o význam, jenž má platnost v celku díla, nikoliv o významovost absolutní.“ (Levý, 116)

The book *12 Years a slave* does not contain any names whose meaning would be relevant to the story; therefore, they are not translated into the Czech language.

Examples:

- **Shaw** was generally surrounded by such worthless characters, being himself noted as a gambler and unprincipled man. (25)
- **Shawa** obvykle obklopovali neschopní lidé podobného rázu. Sám byl proslulý jako nemorální člověk a hazardní hráč. (25)

- With the exception of my trip to St. Mary's parish, and my absence during the cane-cutting seasons, I was constantly employed on the plantation of Master **Epps**. (16)
- Když opomenou výlet do farnosti St. Mary a to, že jsem chyběl v sezónách sekání třtiny, byl jsem neustále zaměstnán na plantáži pana **Eppse**. (16)

There is one surname in the text which could have been translated by a Czech equivalent, namely Mr. Ford which would be “pan Brod”. However, since I left all the other names in English and generally followed the advice written in *Umění překladu*, I left the name in English.

Example:

- "Thank God!" said I, "thank God, Master **Ford**, that you have come at last." (6)
- „Díky Bohu!“ řekl jsem, „díky Bohu, pane **Forde**, že jste konečně přijel.“ (6)

Furthermore, since it is typical for Czech female surnames to be furnished with the suffix “-ová”, I chose to use gender inflection when translating:

- As he approached, nevertheless, **Mistress Epps** began to berate him roundly, heaping upon him many rather disrespectful epithets, and demanding for what reason he had attempted to cut my throat. (23)
- Když přišel blíž, **paní Eppsová** mu začala hrubě nadávat. Zahrnula ho několika dosti nezdvořilými přídomky a domáhala se vysvětlení, proč mi chtěl podříznout krk. (23)

With regard to cultural specifics, some further clarification is needed with regard to the part where **Uncle Tom** is mentioned. Uncle Tom is the main character of the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* from H.B. Stowe. He is a slave with very strong religious beliefs and therefore he is always helpful to other slaves. Solomon Northup mentions Uncle Tom in connection with Tom's faith.

Example:

- If Epps was present, I dared not show any lenity, **not having the Christian fortitude of a certain well-known Uncle Tom** sufficiently to brave his wrath, by refusing to perform the office. (19)

- Když byl Epps s námi, tak jsem si nedovolil být shovívavý nebo se té funkci vyhýbat. **Neměl jsem totiž takovou křesťanskou sílu ducha, jako** jistá, dobře známá postavička **strýčka Toma**, abych čelil jeho rozhořčení. (19)

However, it is important to say that Uncle Tom was also very loyal to his master for religious reasons which might be one of the reasons why the term “Uncle Tom” started to be used as an insult. After the Civil Rights Movement in the early 1960s, African American readers started to criticize the character mostly because of him passively accepting slavery. People who feared participating in the movement were called Uncle Toms because they were believed to behave subserviently to the whites. Nowadays, it is summarily used as a descriptive term of a black person who is subservient to white people. (frredictionary.com, sparknotes.com, wisegeek.org)

4.3.2 Names of places

There are many local names in the text. Some of them do not have the same equivalent in the Czech language, such as Cheneyville and Marksville. Others, as Red River or Pine Woods, on the other hand, could be translated quite easily. Then, there are those whose meaning could be translated just partly; namely Bayou Bœuf.

I adhered the rules explained in section Names of characters. Due to the fact that the translation does not have any semantic value to the text, I left the names of places unchanged.

Examples:

- After dinner, the latter left for the **Pine Woods**... (11)
- Ford odjel po večeri do **Pine Woods**... (11)
- A white man working in the field is a rare and unusual spectacle on **Bayou Bœuf**. (25)
- Muž bílé pleti pracující na poli je v **Bayou Bœuf** vzácná a neobvyklá podívaná. (25)

The Red River has the Czech alternative „Červená řeka“, as one can see in the online dictionary slovník.cz. However, for the reasons depicted above and also for its unnatural sounding owing to the other local names kept unchanged, I kept the English words.

- It occurred not many miles from Epps' plantation on **Red River**. (17)
- Stalo se to několik málo mil od Eppsovy plantáže v **Red River**. (17)

4.3.3 Colloquialisms

Colloquialism is “a word, phrase, expression characteristic of ordinary or familiar conversation rather than formal speech or writing, as ‘she’s out’ for ‘she is not at home.’” (thefreedictionary.com)

Even though the book *12 Years a Slave* includes mainly formal language of the narrator, there are many colloquial features in the text, specifically in the direct speech. As one can see in the definition of colloquialisms above, the given example of colloquial expression differs extensively from the way it would be said formally. When translating, it is therefore important that a translator finds the most suitable way to express colloquialisms.

According to Knittlová, with regard to the lexical aspect, there are many non-standard and expressive phrases in Czech. Therefore, although the translation of colloquialisms is rather difficult matter, the Czech language has many ways to express them. A translator is not under an obligation to be literal. On the contrary, every language has different ways of expressing colloquialisms. In case of the English language the lexical aspect is more neutral. On that account, it is rather the matter of phonetic or grammatical deflections. (Knittlová, 107)

As you can see in the example attached, the Czech translation is fairly loose. The English version is full of contracted forms and non-formal phrases such as “*ain't ya*”, “*'portant*” or “*kickin*”. To maintain the tone, I chose to use Czech adjectives and pronouns with informal endings such as “*důležitéj*”, “*skvělej*”, “*mý*” or “*tvý*”.

Example:

- **I'd** like to see you hold me by the leg—I should. **You're** a '**portant** character—you're a great nigger—very remarkable nigger, **ain't ye?** **I'd** lash you—I'd take the tantrums out of **ye**. Jest take hold of my leg, if you please. None of your pranks here, my boy, remember that. Now go to work, you **kickin'** rascal," concluded Peter Tanner, unable to suppress a half-comical grin at his own wit and sarcasm. (13)
- Jen si zkus držet za nohu mě. Myslíš si, že seš kdoví jak **důležitéj** a **skvělej**, vid'? Já bych tě zbičoval. Já bych z tebe ty záchvaty vzteku dostal. Jen se chop **mý** nohy, jestli chceš. **Žádný tvý** fóry tady trpět nebudu, kamaráde, to si zapamatuj. Ted' mazej do práce, ty jeden neřáde," ukončil to Peter Tanner, neschopen potlačit napolo komický úšklebek nad vlastním důvtipem a sarkasmem. (13)

4.3.4 Blasphemy

Blasphemy is summarily defined as an “impious utterance or action concerning God or sacred things.”(dictionary.com)

There are two cases of blasphemy in the text that need further explanation regarding the way they have been translated, namely:

- "How long have you owned this plantation, *say*, you **d—d** nigger?" he inquired, with a malicious sneer, at the same time taking hold of my shirt collar with one hand, and thrusting the other into his pocket.(21)
- „Jak dlouho ti patří tahle plantáž, co, ty **černej prevíte?**“ dotazoval se se zlomyslným úšklebkem, zatímco měl jednu ruku v kapse a druhou mě držel za límec od košile. „Teď ti podříznu ten tvůj černej krk,“ řekl a vytáhl si nůž z kapsy. (21, 22)
- "I'm **d—d**, Platt, if I don't believe you tell the truth. (29)
- „**At' se propadnu**, Platte, jestli nevěřim, že říkáš pravdu. (29)

In both cases, “**d—d**” can readily be understood as a puritanically censored adjective “damned”. It was a customary practice in 19th century fugitive slave narratives to be rather sanctimonious with swearing, with the aim of appealing to Quaker and other Christian readers. The narrator thus most probably chose to use only the initial and the final letter as he did not want to be blasphemous. However, it is not possible to transfer the meaning without writing the whole word or a phrase since it would not be comprehensible to the reader.

When we take a look at the first sentence, “**d—d**” is translated as „černej prevíte”. At first, I had intended to be literal and use „zatracenej negře”. Then, nonetheless, I found my final choice more suitable. In the second sentence, I translated “**d—d**” as „At' se propadnu”. As one can see from both examples, there was no other way than to be specific.

4.3.5 Proverbs

Proverb is “a short pithy saying in frequent and widespread use that expresses a basic truth or practical precept.”(thefreedictionary.com)

There are two examples of a proverb in the source text. As you can see in the examples below, a translator does not translate individual words but he/she transfers the meaning of the whole lexical unit. According to Levý, such lexical phrases are for example proverbs, idioms or collocations. (Levý, 129)

Examples:

- He, therefore, undoubtedly, acted on the principle, that "**discretion is the better part of valor,**" and kept away. (5)
- On se proto, bez pochyby, řídil zásadou, že „**moudřejší ustoupí,**“ a držel se dál. (5)
- If, on the other hand, he had seen me use the lash freely, the man was satisfied. "**Practice makes perfect,**" truly; and during my eight years' experience as a driver, I learned to handle the whip with marvelous dexterity and precision, throwing the lash within a hair's breadth of the back, the ear, the nose, without, however, touching either of them. (20)
- Když mě ale naproti tomu viděl používat bič, jak se mi zachtělo, byl spokojen. „**Cvičení dělá mistra,**“ doopravdy; během těch osmi let, co jsem byl poháněčem, jsem se naučil bič ovládat se skvělou obratností a přesností. Dokázal jsem ho vymrštít jen tak tak vedle zad, ucha či nosu, ale nedotknout se ani jednoho z nich. (20)

4.3.6 Measures

„V překladu má smysl zachovávat jen ty prvky specifická, které čtenář překladu může cítit jako charakteristické pro cizí prostředí, tj. jen ty, které jsou schopny být nositeli významu „národní a dobová specifická“. Všechny ostatní, které čtenář nechápe jako odraz prostředí, pozbývají obsahu a poklesají na bezobsažnou formu, protože nejsou schopny konkretizace.“(Levý, 122)

Having considered the last mentioned advice from Levý, I translated the measures in the text in three different ways:

1. “Inch” would be translated to the Czech language as „palec”. Even though there might be some translators using the Czech equivalent, I find it unnatural. Also, not everyone is aware of the fact that 1 inch equals to 2,52 centimeters, therefore it could be uncomfortable for the reader not to be able to imagine the distance. Then there are cases when inches are converted to centimeters. However, the sentence from the example below is not the appropriate case, as saying „Nemohl jsem se pohnout ani o 3 centimetry, jak pevně mě uvázali“ would sound strange. Therefore, I chose to replace it by a word „kousek”, i.e. by a semantic approximation.
 - I could not move **an inch**, so firmly had I been bound. (3)
 - Nemohl jsem se pohnout ani o **kousek**, jak pevně mě uvázali. (3)

2. Another measure that occurred in the text was a mile. I personally feel that this measure is generally well known and it is specific for the American environment. Therefore, I decided not to convert it to kilometers.

- I could only gaze wistfully towards the North, and think of the **thousands of miles** that stretched between me and the soil of freedom, over which a black freeman may not pass. (11)
- Mohl jsem pouze toužebně hledět směrem na sever a myslet na těch **tisíc mil** ležících mezi mnou a půdou svobody, přes které svobodný muž černé pleti nesmí přejít. (11)
- He visited Marksville repeatedly, he informed me, a town some **twenty miles** distant, and there, I proposed to myself, the letter should be mailed. (25, 26)
- Řekl mi, že opakovaně jezdí do Marksville, což je město vzdálené asi **deset mil**, načež jsem si plánoval, že odtamtud by mohl ten dopis poslat. (25)

3. The last measure present in the text was a foot. As one might not be familiar with the fact that 1 foot equals approximately to 0,3 meters, I converted it to meters.

- But it was far beyond my reach, though distant less than **twenty feet**. (3)
- Byla ale úplně mimo dosah, i když byla vzdálená asi jen **šest metrů**. (3)

4.3.7 Purposeful omission

There are some words and phrases in the English part of the text that were omitted when being translated to Czech. The meaning of such words and phrases was clear from the context and they were therefore not needed.

Examples:

- I was without coat or hat, standing **bare-headed**, exposed to its burning blaze. (3)
- Stál jsem bez kabátu i klobouku, vystaven té žhavé záři. (3)

In this case, it is obvious that the character was bare-headed from the preceding part of the sentence “**I was without** coat or **hat**”, therefore the phrase “bare-headed” was omitted. A similar situation occurs in the example below. From the context, one already knows that the character did not have a hat.

- But the hot rays of a southern sun, beating all the long summer day on my **bare** head, produced not half the suffering I experienced from my aching limbs. (3, 4)

- Ostré paprsky jižního slunce, jež mě šlehalý do hlavy, nezpůsobovaly ani polovinu utrpení, které jsem zažíval kvůli bolavým končetinám. (3)

Another example of omission that can be found in the translation runs as follows:

- I arose as quickly as I was able, took my blanket **in my hand**, and followed him. (8)
- Zvedl jsem se tak rychle, jak jsem byl jen schopen, vzal jsem si deku a šel za ním. (8)

4.3.8 Periphrastic reformulation

Since the text is rather complicated as for the vocabulary, syntax and the usage of long sentences, it was sometimes necessary to reformulate certain parts to make them understandable for the reader.

Example:

- "You're the nigger," he said to me on my arrival—"You're the nigger that flogged your master, eh? You're the nigger that kicks, and holds carpenter Tibeats by the leg, and wallops him, are ye? I'd like to see you hold me by the leg—I should. **You're a 'portant character—you're a great nigger—very remarkable nigger, ain't ye?...**" (13)
- „Ty seš ten negr,“ řekl mi po mém příchodu – „Ty seš ten negr, kterej zbičoval svýho pána, hm? Ty seš ten negr, co kopal a držel tesaře Tibeatse za nohu a seřezal ho, co? Jen si zkus držet za nohu mě. **Myslíš si, že seš kdoví jak důležitěj a skvělejš, vid'?**...“ (13)

The translation of the highlighted sentence of the extract above was very challenging for me. At first, I had chosen to translate it word by word which, of course, sounded very unnatural. Therefore, I finally decided to reformulate it. I tried to do so without the sentence losing its ironical tone. I believe that the tone is more important than the literal translation that would sound bizarre.

4.4 Morphological aspect

4.4.1 Pronouns

„Čeština by neměla zájmen nadužívat (zejména pozor na zájmena přivlastňovací!), jsou ovšem případy, kdy je nutno na vázanost upozornit, především tehdy, když koncovka nerozliší, na koho či na co se odkazuje.“ (Knittlová, 101)

The frequent usage of pronouns is very typical for the English language. Nonetheless, it would be highly disturbing for the reader if some of the pronouns were translated to Czech. Thus, I tried not to overuse them while translating, as suggested by Knittlová. Let us have a look on some sentences from the text where the possessive and personal pronouns were omitted:

Possessive pronouns:

- With the exception of **my** trip to St. Mary's parish, and **my** absence during the cane-cutting seasons, I was constantly employed on the plantation of Master Epps. (16)
- Když opomenou výlet do farnosti St. Mary a to, že jsem chyběl v sezónách sekání třtiny, byl jsem neustále zaměstnán na plantáži pana Eppse. (16)
- Finally, Epps came towards the house, by this time nearly sober, walking demurely, with **his** hands behind **his** back, and attempting to look as innocent as a child. (23)
- Později se Epps vydal směrem k domu. Byl už téměř střízlivý a kráčel zdrženlivě. S rukama za zády se snažil tvářit jako nevinné dítě. (22, 23)

Personal pronouns:

- **He** assured me, upon his honor, ... (26)
- Přisahal na svou čest, ... (26)
- "Yes, **he** wanted me to hire him," answered Epps. (28, 29)
- „Jo, chtěl, abych ho zaměstnal,“ odpověděl Epps.“ (28, 29)

However, as I have already stated, sometimes it is necessary to retain the proverb in the phrase. In the example below, if the proverb was omitted, it would not be clear, whose manner is talked about:

- It was evident from **his** manner that he supposed Tibeats would return with more and better armed assistance, perhaps, to renew the quarrel... (4)
- Z **jeho** vystupování bylo zřejmé, že předpokládá, že se Tibeats vrátí s více a lépe ozbrojenými pomocníky, nejspíš za účelem znovu rozpoutat onu roztržku. (4)

4.4.2 Tenses

„V oblasti časové a způsobové kategorie nejčastější chybou překladatelů je nesprávná interpretace časů...Ještě méně adekvátní je zaměňování podmiňovacího způsobu a budoucího času v minulém vyprávění ...“ (Knittlová, 93)

If one intends to translate a text from English to Czech or vice-versa, the knowledge of English grammar is indeed crucial. Nonetheless, even if one is well aware of all the grammatical rules, he/she may accidentally make a mistake while translating when not paying enough attention. One of the frequent examples is, as stated in the quotation above by Knittlová, the incorrectly translated auxiliary verb “would”. The use of “would” in the past tense was quite frequent in the text.

Example:

- If Epps was observed at a distance, or we had reason to apprehend he was sneaking somewhere in the vicinity, I **would commence** plying the lash vigorously, when, according to arrangement, they **would squirm** and **screech** as if in agony, although not one of them had in fact been even grazed. Patsey **would take occasion**, if he made his appearance presently, to mumble in his hearing some complaints that Platt was lashing them the whole time, and Uncle Abram, with an appearance of honesty peculiar to himself, **would declare** roundly I had just whipped them worse than General Jackson whipped the enemy at New-Orleans. (20)
- Když jsme si všimli, že je Epps opodál nebo jsme z nějakého důvodu tušili, že se někde v blízkosti tajně plíží, **začal jsem** bič používat s vervou, a jak jsme se domluvili, ostatní se **svíjeli** a **křičeli** v bolestech, i když jsem nikoho z nich ani neškrábl. Když přišel Epps mezi nás, Patsey **využívala situace** ke stížnostem, a mumlala dostatečně nahlas, aby to slyšel, že je Platt pořád bičuje. Strýček Abraham, tvářící se se vši upřímností, jak pro něho bylo typické, zase nemilosrdně **prohlásil**, že jsem právě zbičoval více, než General Jackson zbičoval nepřátele v New Orleans. (20)

Another problem with regard to incorrect translation of tenses may occur while translating reported speech, when English sequence of tenses needs to be taken into account. In the given example, the correct translation is „řekl mi, že chce”. However, some may accidentally translate it as „řekl mi, že chtěl”.

- **He said he wanted** me to understand that he bought "niggers" to work and not to educate. (23, 24)
- **Řekl mi, že chce**, abych rozuměl tomu, že „negři“, které si někdo koupil, jsou na to, aby pracovali, ne aby se vzdělávali. (23, 24)

4.5 Other issues

4.5.1 Allusion

Allusion is “an implied or indirect reference to a person, event, or thing, or to a part of another text. Most allusions are based on the assumption that there is a body of knowledge that is shared by the author and the reader and that therefore, the reader will understand the author’s referent.” (Britannica.com)

In addition to the distinctly African American cultural allusion to Uncle Tom, addressed in subchapter 3.3, there is one example of an allusion from *12 Years a Slave* which needs to be clarified, namely a reference to another text. The author alluded to a drama from William Shakespeare, *Othello*. My first intention was to translate the allusion according to the Czech version of *Othello*. Nevertheless, having seen the text translated by E. A. Saudek, I decided not to do so as it would not correspond to the language of the 19th century when *12 Years a Slave* was written.

Allusion from *12 Years a Slave* and my translation:

- I was "**perplexed in the extreme.**" (27)
- Přivádělo mě to k šílenství. (26, 27)

The English version of *Othello* by William Shakespeare and the Czech version translated by E. A. Saudek:

- “Then must you speak
Of one that loved not wisely, but too well.
Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought,
Perplex’d in the extreme; of one whose hand,
Lake the base Indian, threw a pearl away
Richer than all his tribe...”
- „Pak vám bude mluvit
O někom milujícím, moudře ne,
Leč příliš vroucně: o někom, kdo snadno
Žárlivý nebyl, ale jednou lapen
Neviděl, neslyše; kdo, jak ten divoch,
Zahodil vlastní rukou perlu dražší
Než celý jeho kmen...”

As has been stated in the definition of allusion, it is assumed that the writer and the reader share certain knowledge and the allusion is therefore understood. I believe, however, that if I used Saudek's translation, a Czech reader would most probably be confused. Thus, my choice of transferring the meaning was simply „Přivádělo mě to k šílenství.“

5 Conclusion

The aim of the thesis was to demonstrate the issues one may deal with while translating from the Czech language to the English language. Two chapters from the book *12 Years a Slave* were used for this purpose as the text contains many interesting linguistic features.

In the practical part, I chose to employ the advice given by some specialists in the field of translation, primarily Knittlová and Levý. One of the aims was to maintain the tone of the original. To do so, I read the chosen chapters several times mainly in order to understand the text properly and perceive the relationships between the characters. I also aimed to retain the dated style of the original, namely in the part of the narration.

I divided the theoretical part according to some of the linguistic aspects. Every aspect was focused on the features I found problematic while translating. The feature was first described theoretically and was then followed by practical examples from the text. The chapter Syntactic aspect was concerned with the presence of the passive voice, participles and long sentences since these are the features that may cause some troubles to every beginning translator. As has been stated, while translating to Czech, I oftentimes decided to retain the passive voice and participles. I was aware of the fact that one should be careful not to overuse them; nevertheless, the aim was to maintain the language style of the original text. Louisiana's dialect used in the book is described in the chapter Pragmatic aspect which aimed for the reader to understand the way the direct speech is translated. There are some sentences in the direct speech where there are no dialectal features shown. Even in these cases, however, I chose to retain the language register used by the slave owners without a change as it would be otherwise confusing. In the following chapter, my intention was to introduce the reader to some lexical aspects and the useful rules that may be helpful while translating. I focused for example on the names of places, characters or measures. Some parts of the book also needed to be translated loosely or reformulated as the choice of vocabulary would be otherwise rather misleading for the reader. The next chapter of the theoretical part dealt with morphological issues where the reader could find some problematic areas, namely the use of pronouns in Czech and English together with some information concerning tenses. I focused mainly on the problematic area of possessive pronouns since they are not used as frequently in Czech as they are in English. I also paid special attention to the translation of tenses, especially in case of reported speech or the auxiliary verb "would".

I was aware of the difficulty of the text from the very beginning. As it had not been easy for me to read the book, I knew it was going to be even more challenging to translate some parts of it due to its complicated syntax and also for the sporadic presence of the Louisiana dialect. However, I truly hope I have managed to create a reasonably faithful and organic Czech rendition of the original.

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