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THE CITY ON THE MOLDAU AS A LIMINAL SPACE: PRAGUE IN ANTHONY TROLLOPE'S NINA BALATKA

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Abstract

The article discusses Anthony Trollope's representation of the city of Prague in his 1867 novel *Nina Balatka*, which first appeared anonymously in the *Blackwood's Magazine*. The novel tells the story of the eponymous protagonist, a Christian woman, who falls in love with a Jewish man. Trollope's choice of Prague as the backdrop for the story of two lovers separated by the great gulf between Christians and Jews seems particularly fitting, because the spatial division of the city by the river Moldau which separates the Christian and the Jewish parts of town reinforces the sense that the two protagonists come from different worlds. Trollope's characters exist in the realistically represented city; yet, iconic Prague locations, described in picturesque detail, are imbued with symbolic significance which underscores the liminal position of the protagonist, who is torn between her Christian faith, and her love of a Jewish man.

Key words

Prague; Anthony Trollope; Victorian novel; realism; symbolism; liminality

Introduction

The aim of the following article is to discuss Anthony Trollope's representation of the city of Prague in *Nina Balatka* in order to demonstrate the ways in which the urban space shapes the narrative. The choice of Prague as a setting is highly unusual for the Victorian novelist: with the exception of *La Vendée*, Trollope's third novel, set in France during the Revolution, the action of all his previous works took place in England and Ireland; yet, as he points out in *An Autobiography*, there was no "English life" in *Nina Balatka*. In contrast to customary settings of Trollope's well-known novels, *Nina Balatka* is set in the capital of the Habsburg province of Bohemia. John Blackwood, Trollope's publisher, was of the opinion that Trollope had "thrown a perfectly foreign Prague atmosphere about all his characters so perfectly un-English that there is the sort of air of hardness about the story that one feels in reading a translation" (quoted in Hall 1991: 286). Trollope's interest in Prague, and his resulting trip there may have been motivated by what Iulius Hondrila calls a "British 'rediscovery' of Eastern Europe,

particularly after the revolutions of 1848, Britain's involvement in the Crimean War (1853-56), and the struggles for national emancipation throughout Eastern Europe in the second half of the century" (2008: 238). Anthony Trollope was not the only Victorian writer to travel to Prague and depict it in his work: George Eliot and her partner G.H. Lewes visited the city twice (in 1858 and in 1870), and the echoes of their stays there can be found in George Eliot's *The Lifted Veil* and *Daniel Deronda* as well as in Lewes's letters and articles.¹ Trollope was a personal friend of both George Eliot and G.H. Lewes and, as his biographer James Pope Hennessy claims, both novelists probably found inspiration in each other's portrayals of the city (1972: 191-92). Trollope went to Prague in the mid-1860s. As he explains in his *Autobiography*, *Nina Balatka* (and his second short novel published anonymously, *Linda Tressel*) "both were written immediately after visits to the towns in which the scenes are laid, – Prague, mainly, and Nuremberg" (1883: 277). According to Ellen Moody, "Trollope had read an article by G.H. Lewes in which Lewes described Prague and challenged novelists to depict such foreign places so as to attempt to 'penetrate to the deeper relation between character and its social environment'" (1999: 92) and wanted to respond to his friend's challenge by writing *Nina Balatka*.

Nina Balatka is arguably Trollope's least-known, nevertheless noteworthy, novel. It is his fifteenth work, created after twenty years of successful novel-writing, and the first of a number of short books which he deliberately published anonymously. It was serialized from July 1866 to January 1867 in the *Blackwood's Magazine*. In his *Autobiography*, Trollope gave the following reasons for his decision not to publish the novel under his own name:

From the commencement of my success as a writer [...] I had always felt an injustice in literary affairs which had never afflicted me or even suggested itself to me while I was unsuccessful. It seemed to me that a name once earned carried with it too much favour [...]. The injustice which struck me did not consist in that which was withheld from me, but in that which was given to me. I felt that aspirants coming up below me might do work as good as mine, and probably much better work, and yet fail to have it appreciated. In order to test this, I determined to be such an aspirant myself, and to begin a course of novels anonymously in order that I might see whether I could succeed in obtaining a second identity, – whether as I had made one mark by such literary ability as I possessed, I might succeed in doing so again. (1883: 274)

In order to further disguise his authorship of *Nina Balatka*, Trollope was trying to change "not only my manner of language, but my manner of story-telling also" (1883: 277). In his previous novels, Trollope often included his own, quite lengthy, editorial comments on a variety of topics, but no such passages can be found in *Nina Balatka*. The reader does not hear the voice of Anthony Trollope: the novel is written in a kind of almost stilted English that creates an impression that the text may have been written by a foreigner. For example, the heroine is introduced in the following way: "Nina Balatka was the daughter of one Joseph

Balatka, an old merchant of Prague, who was living at the time of this story; but Nina's mother was dead" (Trollope 2008: 7). This style is a function of the novel's untypical-for-Trollope setting. Yet, despite all the endeavors to hide his identity as the creator of *Nina Balatka*, the novelist never found out whether it was his name or their literary merit that sold his books, because Richard Holt Hutton, an eminent literary critic writing for *The Spectator*, recognized Anthony Trollope as the author of *Nina Balatka*, a claim Trollope did not dispute.

In his *Autobiography*, Trollope further commented on the differences between *Nina Balatka* and his other works: "[t]here was more of romance proper than is usual with me. And I made an attempt at local colouring, at descriptions of scenes and places, which has not been usual with me. In all this I am confident that I was in a measure successful. [...] Prague is Prague," he writes in his *Autobiography* (1883: 277). He believed that thanks to his attention to "local colouring" he managed to create a realistic image of the city. Somewhat paradoxically, Trollope's remark brings to the fore the hybridity of *Nina Balatka*, a text which combines realistic description of specific foreign locations with an almost fairytale-like manner of narration.²

The novel begins with a significant line anticipating the major concern of the story: "Nina Balatka was a maiden of Prague, born of Christian parents, and herself a Christian – but she loved a Jew; and this is her story" (Trollope 2008: 7). It would not be impossible for "a maiden of Prague" to meet a Jew, as in the second half of the nineteenth century the Jewish population of Prague was steadily growing, and, according to Gary B. Cohen, "in 1857 the Jewish residents in the five historic sections of the inner city numbered 7.706" (1977: 32). The eponymous heroine of Trollope's novel, who is the daughter of an ailing and bankrupt merchant, Joseph Balatka, has fallen in love and is engaged to marry Anton Trendellsohn, son of Joseph's former business partner, who is a Jew. Anton owns the house where the Balatkas live, but the deeds to the house are in the possession of Nina's uncle, Karil Zamenoy. Nina's and Anton's families disapprove of the match on religious grounds; also, Nina's rich cousin, Ziska Zamenoy, hopes to marry her. In order to prevent Nina's marriage to Anton, her relatives set a trap by which it will appear that she has been dishonest to him. When Anton asks for the deeds to the house, Nina's uncle tells him that Nina holds them, and bribes one of the servants to plant the document in her desk. When asked by Anton, Nina denies that she has the deeds and to prove it, she tells him to search her desk, where he finds the planted papers. Mortified that Anton would think her dishonest, Nina, in a fit of despair, attempts suicide in the river Moldau, but is saved by Rebecca Loth, a Jewish girl, who is her rival for Anton's affection. The servant admits to his role in the family plot to disgrace Nina in Anton's eyes, the lovers are reconciled, the marriage takes place, and the couple leave Prague for "one of the great cities of the west," (Trollope 2008: 168) where they hope to be accepted.

Realism and symbolism in Trollope's images of Prague

The early characterization of Nina Balatka as “a maiden of Prague” highlights the significance of the setting in the narrative. Trollope used urban setting for a reason; as Richard Sennett has famously observed, a city is “a human settlement in which strangers are likely to meet” (1977: 39), which makes the encounter between the Christian woman and the Jewish man a likely occurrence in the city of Prague. Trollope's choice of Prague as the backdrop for the story of two lovers separated by the great gulf between Christians and Jews seems particularly fitting, because the spatial division of the city by the river Moldau which separates the Christian and the Jewish parts of town reinforces the sense that the two protagonists come from different worlds. Trollope's main source of information about Prague was a popular travel guide – John Murray's *Handbook for Travellers in Southern Germany*. The 1858 edition was used by the novelist during his travels to Eastern Europe in 1865 (Glendinning 1993: 334). The guidebook contains a section devoted to Prague which depicts the city's central and best-known landmarks: the Kleinseite, the Hradschin, the Charles Bridge, and the Jewish quarter with its renowned synagogue. The *Handbook* uses German place names rather than the Czech ones, and Trollope follows the same pattern in the novel, with the exception of the Old Town and the New Town, which are consistently referred to in English. Monica Cohen has observed that “[i]n fact, *Nina Balatka* uses so much of the language and tone of a travel guide, it almost seems to illustrate the novelization of a handbook” (2014: 389). Nina's story is set against the background of the iconic Prague locations described in the *Handbook*, and Cohen has noted that in some cases the language of the novel appears to mirror the language used in Murray's travel guide. For example, the Jewish quarter where the Trendellsohns live is made of “the narrow crooked streets” (Trollope 2008: 11) – a description that appears to echo the *Handbook*'s description of the place as “a labyrinth of narrow dirty streets” (Murray 1858: 455). The old synagogue in Trollope's novel has the walls “which had once certainly been white” but now “were black with the dirt of ages” (2008: 77). In the *Handbook*, the synagogue is marked by “[t]he dust of ages” and “remarkable for its antiquity (though it is not, as the Jews assert, 900 years old)” (Murray 1858: 456) Trollope refers to the synagogue in a similar way as “the old Jewish synagogue – the oldest place of worship belonging to the Jews in Europe, as they delight to tell you” (2008: 11). The *Handbook* puts into question the Jewish claim about the true antiquity of the synagogue and Trollope casts a similar doubt, by using a condescending comment “as they delight to tell you” (Cohen 2014: 389).

To give the readers a sense of place and to familiarize them with the city's topography, Trollope creates a verbal map of Prague in the first chapter of the novel. Describing the house where Nina lives, he writes:

It was in the Kleinseite, that narrow portion of the town, which lies on the other side of the river Moldau the further side, that is, from the so called Old and New Town, on the western side of the river, immediately under the great hill of the Hradschin. The Old Town and the New Town are thus

on one side of the river, and the Kleinseite and the Hradschin on the other. (2008: 8)

The narrator comments on the differences between the New Town with its straight streets and “comfortable modern” houses and “old Prague, which may not be so comfortable, but which, of all cities on the earth, is surely the most picturesque” (Trollope 2008: 8). Balatka’s house is located in the Kleinseite, whose streets are “wonderful in their picturesque architecture, wonderful in their lights and shades” (Trollope 2008: 8). In a manner befitting a tour guide, the narrator gives precise directions concerning the location of the house:

Balatka’s house stood in a small courtyard near to the river, but altogether hidden from it, somewhat to the right of the main street of the Kleinseite as you pass over the bridge. A lane [. . .] turning from the main street between the side walls of what were once two palaces, comes suddenly into a small square, and from a corner of this square there is an open stone archway leading into a court. In this court is the door, or doors, as I may say, of the house in which Balatka lived with his daughter Nina. Opposite to these two doors was the blind wall of another residence [...]. Immediately over the little square stood the palace of the Hradschin [...]. So immediately did the imperial hill tower over the spot on which Balatka lived, that it would seem [...] that the colonnades of the palace were the upper storeys of some enormous edifice, of which the broken merchant’s small courtyard formed a lower portion. (Trollope 2008: 8–9)

The passage provides so much detailed information that the members of the Trollope society, who held a conference focusing on *Nina Balatka* which took place in Prague in 2018, were able to locate a house that closely matches the description of Nina’s residence.³

Trollope’s attempts at “local colouring” include extensive descriptions of “the palace of the Hradschin, the wide-spreading residence of the old kings of Bohemia” (2008: 8) and the Charles Bridge, with its “long row of huge statues that adorn” it (2008: 18). The reader learns that the “Grosser Ring,” or the Old Town Square, “is an open space [...] in the oldest part of the town, and in it stand the Town Hall and the Theinkirche, which may be regarded as the most special church in Prague, as there for many years were taught the doctrines of Huss [sic], the great reformer of Bohemia” (Trollope 2008: 100). Jan Hus is not the only historical figure whose name found its way into Trollope’s novel: Nina’s cousin is named Ziska – an allusion to the military commander and national hero of Bohemia, Jan Žižka. Monica Cohen suggests that Trollope’s choice of the name was another instance of inspirations provided by Murray’s *Handbook for Travellers in Southern Germany* which discusses “the fifteenth-century Czech revolutionary leader John Ziska” and gives a “topographical description of Ziska’s Hills” (2014: 389). In his introduction to *Nina Balatka*, Robert Tracy points out that Trollope stayed in Prague at the time when Austrian rule had imposed German as the only legal language and had prohibited the use of Czech in schools and newspapers,

which created a strained political climate and increased linguistic and ethnic tensions bringing them close to breaking point (1991: xi). Trollope seemed to have been aware of those tensions and outraged by the Austrian occupancy of the city. The following description of “the streets of the Kleinseite [...] wonderful in their strange mixture of shops and palaces and now, alas! also of Austrian barracks” (Trollope 2008: 8) reveals Trollope’s feelings about the presence of the Austrian army stationed in Prague and ready to suppress any movement towards Czech independence from the Austrian Empire.⁴

Despite Trollope’s realistic descriptions of actual locations, *Nina Balatka* possesses an unreal, romantic nature – as Trollope himself admitted in his *Autobiography*. Trollope’s Prague, as Joan Mandel Cohen has pointed out, “is a mysterious place. It seems dark and empty of people. Though Nina travels continually between the Jewish quarter and her Christian home she seldom meets or even sees anyone. The streets are frequently described as deserted [...] and many scenes take place outdoors at night. The landscape itself is threatening” (1976: 84). Trollope represents Jewish and Christian city spaces as worlds apart. As a Christian woman in love with a Jew, Nina Balatka is a transgressor in both religious and cultural realms, and her transgression is represented in spatial terms through her movements between the Christian and the Jewish areas of town. Despite her father’s prohibition, she finds a way to meet with Anton in the Jewish part of the city. As Murray Baumgarten points out, in order to visit her Jewish lover “she must pass from Cathedral to Synagogue, and thereby chart the physical space of the psychic geography of the tale” (1996: 55). In addition to spatial movement, Nina has to undertake a psychological journey between two communities symbolized by two places of worship. In the process, she has to face the hostility of her Christian relatives, and she has to strive for acceptance by Anton’s Jewish family. Having to negotiate between contradictory familial and religious pressures, Nina becomes a liminal character, a person suspended between different cultures and different social structures. She tries to convince her Christian family of the virtues of Judaism, and she attempts to demonstrate the values of true Christianity to the Jewish family of her beloved. Specific locations described in the novel acquire special significance and become inextricably connected with the protagonist’s mental and emotional states. The Charles Bridge, spanning two banks of the river Moldau which separates the Christian part of Prague from the Jewish district, itself a liminal space which gives access to both Jewish and Christian quarters for the members of different social groups, becomes the all-important location in the novel.

Trollope’s depiction of the bridge constitutes another example of the writer’s following closely in the footsteps of John Murray’s *Handbook for Travellers*. The *Handbook* provides a detailed description of the rows of statues decorating the bridge, paying particular attention to the statue of Saint John Nepomuk, and recounting the martyrdom of saint. According to the guide book, King Wencelaus had Nepomuk drown in the river “because he refused to betray the secrets confided to him by the queen in the holy rite of confession” (Murray 1858: 452). Trollope uses the same information and very similar phrasing in the passage concerning the bridge: “There, having a place in the long row of huge statues which adorn the bridge is

the figure of the martyr St John Nepomucene, who at this spot was thrown into the river because he would not betray the secrets of queen's confession, and was drowned" (2008: 18). The narrator calls St John Nepomucene "the favourite saint of Prague – and of bridges" and mentions "a small plate" commemorating the saint which "good Catholics [...] put their hands upon, and then kiss their fingers. So shall they be saved from drowning [...]" (Trollope 2008: 18).

Both the Charles bridge, which Nina has to cross whenever she wants to meet with her beloved, and the statue, where she often stops to think about her predicament, achieve symbolic dimensions in Trollope's novel. According to Mircea Eliade, in mythological thinking, crossing of bridges is symbolic of traversing "difficult passages" leading to the other world (1964: 482). The Charles bridge over the Moldau functions as such a symbol, for it represents Nina's emotionally fraught movement between the Christian and the Jewish worlds. St John Nepomucene's statue may be perceived as a symbol of Nina's sense of martyrdom resulting from her apparently irreconcilable conflicting loyalties. Trollope's heroine is torn between her Christian faith and her Catholic family on the one hand, and her love of a Jewish man on the other hand. She begins to question the Christian ritual which she has always followed, touching the stone plate and her lips, whenever she crossed the bridge. She feels that as a Christian woman who intends to marry a Jew, she is on the verge of abandoning her right to "ask for the assistance of a Christian saint" (Trollope 2008: 18). Standing on the bridge – a liminal space on the boundary between two locations and two different worlds – she becomes aware of her own liminality. Victor Turner, British anthropologist, thanks to whom the idea of liminality has gained wide currency, has pointed out that "[l]iminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial" (1981: 95). Turner's phrase "betwixt and between" may be used to describe Nina's state: she is suspended between two phases in her life, and she perceives herself as "an outcast from all religions," for she "could not become a Jewess" (Trollope 2008: 19), and she would be rejected by her own religious community when she married a Jewish man. She is constantly being confronted with the conflicting expectations and prejudices of the Christian and the Jewish community, and she has to engage in the process of internal negotiation that would allow her to find a way to conceptualize a new identity. Nina's inner turmoil is represented through her impatient crossing and re-crossing of the bridge. Waiting for Anton, whom she is supposed to meet at the bridge, she thinks that there "could be no reason [...] why she should not walk across it to the other side and then retrace her steps [...]. But she would walk very quickly and watch very closely" (Trollope 2008: 84). She looks at the figures of saints adorning the bridge, and she experiences "strong doubts as to the validity of her own Christianity". Yet, she chooses to say "a silent little prayer to St Nicholas that he would allow her to marry the Jew without taking offence at her" (Trollope 2008: 85).

What makes the Charles bridge a particularly important location is the fact that Trollope chooses it as a place for Nina's attempted suicide which is a climactic incident in the novel. As a result of her family's scheming, Anton has a reason to doubt her honesty, and she feels mortified and wracked with guilt, so

she resolves to end her life by throwing herself into the Moldau. Trollope follows a well-established pattern for the artistic representation of woman's taking her own life, because female suicide by drowning is a common motif in Victorian literature and visual arts, and, according to L.J. Nicoletti, "the fictional suicides of [...] women would so often be staged from [...] bridges" (2004: online). The setting of Nina's intended act is described in detail.

The bridge over the Moldau is remarkable in many ways, but it is especially remarkable for the largeness of its proportions. It is very long, taking its spring form the shore a long way before the actual margin of the river; it is of a fine breath: the side-walks to it are high and massive; and the groups of statues with which it is ornamented [...] have a dignity by means of their immense size which they lend to the causeway, making the whole thing noble, grand, and impressive.

And below, the Moldau runs with a fine, silent, dark volume of water. (Trollope 2008: 159)

The repetition of the word "remarkable" and the choice of other adjectives, such as "immense", "noble", "grand", or "impressive" together with the reference to the "silent" and "dark" waters of the Moldau in the above passage strengthen the sense that the bridge is a special place where a momentous event is about to take place.

To end her life, Nina selects a special spot on the parapet of the bridge, next to the statue of St John Nepomucene. She knows that her suicide would be a mortal sin and prays to St John of the Bridges. The description of the monument provides a symbolic commentary on Nina's predicament:

The statue of St John Nepomucene is a single figure, standing in melancholy weeping posture on the balustrade of the bridge, without any of that ponderous strength of wide-spread stone which belongs to the other groups. This St John is always pictured to us as a thin, melancholy, half-starved saint, who has had all the life washed out of him by his long immersion. [...] He is a mild, meek saint, teaching one rather by his attitude how to bear with the malice of the waters, than offering any protection against their violence. (Trollope 2008: 161)

Like St John, Nina is a melancholy and solitary figure, abandoned by her lover and on the verge of being rejected by her family. Looking up "into the saint's wan face", she "fancied that no eyes were ever so piteous, no brow ever so laden with the deep suffering of compassion" (Trollope 2008: 161). She hopes that St John would deliver her from suicide; however, what saves her is not a Christian saint but an intervention of a Jewish woman. It is Rebecca Loth who sees Nina crouching on the balustrade:

Rebecca leaped forward and put a grasp of her hand tight upon the skirt of Nina's dress [...], and, pressing forward with her body against the par-

apet, she got a hold also of Nina's foot. She perceived instantly what was the girl's purpose, but by God's blessing on her efforts, there should be no cold form found in the river that night; or if one, then there should be two. Nina kept her hold against the figure, appalled, dumbfounded, awe-stricken, but still with some inner consciousness of salvation that comforted her. Whether her life was due to the saint or to the Jewess she knew not, but she acknowledged to herself silently that death was beyond her reach, and she was grateful. (Trollope 2008: 164)

The scene can be interpreted in terms of Bakhtinian threshold chronotope. In his seminal essay "Forms of time and of the chronotope in the novel: Notes toward a historical poetics", Bakhtin claims that the threshold chronotope represents a tightly circumscribed space, literally or metaphorically a transitional space between two worlds. Temporally, it refers to a suspended moment of change or crisis, detached from the ordinary flow of biographical and historical time (1981: 248). At the heart of this chronotopic structure is the will of the subject to process new information and to take new decisions, which is in conflict with "the indecisiveness that fails to change a life, the fear to step over the threshold" (Bakhtin 1981: 248). In *Nina Balatka* the Charles bridge is represented as such a transitional space between the Christian and the Jewish worlds. In the passage quoted above, Nina is literally suspended between the figure of the Christian saint and the hand of the Jewish woman, who is grasping her skirt and foot in an effort to prevent her from throwing herself into the river, and the repetition of the word "hold" strengthens the effect. In the critical moment, Nina experiences a sudden sense of salvation which gives her a renewed will to live. The bridge, which has functioned as a liminal space in Nina's life, becomes for a moment a kind of utopian site for a meeting of two religions, represented by the figure of St John Nepomucene and by Rebecca, the Jewish woman which become metaphorically linked by Nina's body.

Conclusion

Bridges as liminal spaces have multiple meanings. They suggest separation and difference, but they may also function as symbols of circulation and access, or transition that may create new links between separate entities which allow unity to emerge. Trollope's novel ends with an image of unity, for Nina and Anton become eventually united in marriage. As Trollope puts it, "Early in the following year, while the ground was yet bound with frost, and the great plains of Bohemia were still covered with snow, a Jew and his wife took their leave of Prague, and started for one of the great cities of the west [...]. It need hardly be said that Anton Trendellsohn was the man, and that Nina Balatka was his wife" (2008: 168). Their decision to leave the city is not surprising in the light of Anton's reflections on the position of Jews in large cities of Europe, presented earlier in the novel. He knew of "Jews in Vienna, in Paris, and in London, who were as true to their religion as any Jew of Prague, but who did not live immured in a Jews' quarter"

(Trollope 2008: 64). Although bridges may be emblems of circulation and access, as Nicoletti points out, “passing from one bank to the other frequently involved a hardship (city bridges often required a toll to pass)” (2004: online). Nina and Anton have been paying emotional toll for their desire to bridge the largely insurmountable gap between Christians and Jews in Prague, and they hope to find a place for themselves in “other countries” where “Christians stay with Jews in their houses, and Jews with Christians, eating with them, and drinking with them” (Trollope 2008: 108).

Nina and Anton’s dream of inclusion cannot be fulfilled in Prague, which is represented by Trollope as a city whose spatial organization foregrounds division rather than unity. That is why the city divided by the river, yet joined by the all-important Charles bridge, becomes a perfect setting for the story of two lovers from different religious and cultural worlds, who are brought together in the urban space. Trollope’s representation of Prague in *Nina Balatka* demonstrates that the city is much more than a mere backdrop for the protagonists’ lives – Prague has a strong impact on their mode of existence, because the city is a territory where people coming from different religious, cultural and social milieus can meet one another, experience otherness and be exposed to the polyphony of voices. Thus, the social space of Prague makes possible the meeting between Nina and Anton, who come from different environments. However, “[i]n Prague a Jew was still a Pariah” (Trollope 2008: 65); thus, the city that makes their meeting possible does not provide a welcoming space where Nina and Anton’s union can be accepted. Trollope’s characters exist in the realistically represented city; yet, iconic Prague locations, described in picturesque detail, are imbued with symbolic significance which underscores the liminal position of the protagonist. Anthony Trollope’s representation of Prague is also characterized by liminality, “betwixt and between” realism and symbolism.

Notes

- ¹ To find more about George Eliot’s and G.H. Lewes’s visits in Prague, see Zdeněk Beran. (2016) ‘An unspeakable journey’: Czech and Slovak reception of George Eliot. In: Shaffer, Elinor and Brown, Catherine (eds.) *The Reception of George Eliot in Europe*.
- ² On Trollope’s use of fairy-tale motifs and structures in *Nina Balatka*, see Joan Mandel Cohen. (1976) *Form and Realism in Six Novels of Anthony Trollope*.
- ³ The photograph of the house can be seen on The Trollope Society Facebook page. Michael Williamson, who has identified the house, describes his search for the building in his article Tracing Trollope in Prague, published in *Trollopiana* 112. Winter 2018/19.
- ⁴ For more information on Trollope’s knowledge of and support for Czech struggles for independence, see Iulius Hondrilla, (2008) Prague in Victorian Fiction: an imagological approach. In: Bemong, Nele, Truwant, Mirjam, Vermeulen, Pieter (eds.) *Re-thinking Europe: Literature and (Trans)national Identity*.

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