

Intercultural Bewilderment: Translating Hallerstein's Letters from China

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Abstract

The article presents a translation of Jesuit missionary Hallerstein's letters from Slovenian into English. The discussion touches on domestication and foreignization translation strategies, before focusing on some intercultural and historical challenges of translating place names and names of people. Using examples from practice, the paper draws attention to the impact of the use of sources, the cross-linguistic differences in orthography, Romanization standards of Chinese names, the contemporary guidelines on the translation of place names and names of people, and translators' consistency in their use.

Keywords: domestication, foreignization, Hallerstein, intercultural mediation, names of people, place names, translation strategies

1. Introduction: Domestication and foreignization translation strategies in practice

Translators often write of choosing between “domestication” and “foreignization” strategies—that is, between making, for example, an American reader immediately aware that a text comes from Slovenia and pretending that the film *Kekec* could just as easily take place in the Rocky Mountains as the Alps. It would, however, perhaps be more prudent to say that *translation theorists* often write of choosing between domestication and foreignization strategies. In both our experience and the experience of many translators, one does not actively and consciously theorize when getting down to work.

In *Exploring Translation Theories*, Pym claims that too much theorizing can in fact slow down the work process:

All translators theorize, not just the ones who can express their theories in technical terms. In fact, untrained translators may work faster and more efficiently because they know *less* about complex [translation] theories—they have fewer doubts and do not waste time reflecting on the obvious. (2014: 4)

Given the formidable time constraints under which even literary translators often work, the impetus not to “waste time” before a tight deadline is crucial. Like Pym, Landers, in his *Literary Translation*, emphasizes productivity and

the importance of the final product. In a section under the sub-heading “Decisions at the outset,” he explains,

I... have yet to meet a working translator who places theory above experience, flexibility, a sense of style, and an appreciation for nuance.

There is no inherent problem with theory *per se*, but when it interferes with translational output, either by reducing productivity or [*sic*] negatively impacting the final result, we are on shakier ground... [W]ho other than scholars would want to read prose that bears the heavy imprint of foreign grammar, idiom, or syntax? Examples of this literalistic approach might be “a seven-headed beast” (Portuguese for a daunting or difficult task) or “from the same field a berry” (Russian for six of one, a half dozen of the other). Well, it might work in theory... (2001: 49–50)

As Landers’s tortured but colorful examples show, his book has an anti-theory bias. However, what *Literary Translation* lacks in reverence for theory it makes up for in common sense. Landers is keenly aware of how the publishing industry works and of the necessity of appreciating industry needs. As Bassnett writes, translators who “know about markets... know what readers want and... know that most readers want a readable, accessible book that reads easily and fluently” rather than tomes “that are difficult to read, full of strange words and difficult phrases” (2011: 17). Thus, a translator might decide to avoid the theoretically preferred option in favor of one that is more readable.

Of course, pitting “domestication” against “foreignization” is a false dichotomy. In practice, any translator will (even if unconsciously) swing between the two strategies. To provide a concrete example of *making something “at home”* vs. *making something strange* for the reader, we can most probably agree that *potica* should be left in Slovenian.¹ However, in actual translations, a number of options are available to the translator. *Potica cake* can be used to make it clear that the author was not referring to a type of sausage, or a footnote can be added to explain the word—e.g., “a

¹ As a reviewer of this article points out, *potica* can sometimes be found in English texts without any additional explanation, which raises the theoretically important question of whether the word should be analyzed as a borrowing (like the Merriam-approved *sauerkraut* and *pizza*). Considering frequency data and the (related) lexicographic treatment of these words, the translation dilemma described above remains relevant. For example, a search of the *New York Times* archives reveals that *potica* has appeared nine times since 1851; only once with no explanation. As well, of course, where the word appears matters—a strong historical Slovenian presence reduces the need for glossing.

traditional Slovenian pastry.” Alternatively—depending on the type of translation—the word *potica* can even be substituted with a hypernym such as “cake.” In other words, we translate according to need and the situation; the word we choose depends on why we are translating, how much time we have at our disposal, who we are translating for, and our abilities.

Often the purpose of a translation is overlooked—in spite of the fact that for decades there has been a much-needed focus on the functional properties of source/target texts. For instance, in Vermeer’s Skopos theory (1978), “the target text’s functionality or adequacy... sets the standard for translation evaluation” (Nord 2010: 122). A good translation product thus considers the purpose of the text and should enable the “text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function” (Nord’s translation of Vermeer’s Skopos rule, Nord 2007: 29).

We usually do not expect the above considerations to apply to proper names as names are, especially today, generally considered untranslatable. Newmark comments that in non-literary texts translators are faced with the dilemma of “what if any additional explanatory or classificatory information has to be supplied for the TL readership” (1993: 15)—this implies that the names themselves remain unchanged, while the translator merely considers the information that should accompany them—e.g., *the port of Koper* or *the Georgian poet Rustaveli*. Nevertheless, we would like to illustrate how some of the principles described above can also apply to proper names in the translation of a non-literary text that spans time, place, languages and cultures.

Similar concerns and guidelines are discussed by Klinar (1994: 7–11) regarding the inclusion of foreign (i.e., Slovenian) place names in target (i.e., English) texts. He sees them as especially challenging when they are not frequent in the target language, and he advocates an approach that keeps their original form unchanged as much as possible, while also taking into account the systemic characteristics of the target language. Nevertheless, Klinar (1994: 10) also states that no matter how systematic we strive to be, and no matter what system we follow, we have to come to terms with the fact that some of our solutions are bound to be non- or half-systemic. Newmark (2003: 216) also stresses the importance of being “up to date in your rendering” of geographical terms and of “respect[ing] a country’s wish to determine its own choice of names for its own geographical features.”

Regarding personal names, Newmark states that they “are transferred, thus preserving [people’s] nationality...” (2003: 214). Some exceptions include the names of saints, monarchs, popes, and prominent figures of classical Greece. In some languages, for example in French, the first names of prominent figures are also translated if they are transparent. Štavbar (2013: 37–38) confirms this and adds that the names that are most

typically translated are those that come from languages that have been in intercultural or historical contact. Similar principles are also discussed in Grah (2002: 23–24), who explains that names can be domesticated or even translated, which occurs especially in border areas or when entering some other language culture. Grah adds that translation is especially common in case of birth names and that the same principles apply to names of historical figures of international significance and persons popular outside the borders of their homeland. Other names maintain the original form, which is also the guiding principle in *Slovenski pravopis* (Toporišič et al. 2014: 23–27).

The aim of this paper is not to rehash theories of domestication and foreignization. Rather, we wish to take the reader through a translation journey—namely, to explore some of the intercultural difficulties we encountered when translating the letters of an eighteenth-century Jesuit priest who travelled to and lived in China. After a brief overview of the nature and format of the translation, most of the paper focuses on concerns related to translating proper names and the principles guiding our translation decisions with the purpose of developing some general principles for handling translation problems connected with proper names. These principles can be applied to other texts.

2. Ferdinand Augustin Haller von Hallerstein and his letters from China

Ferdinand Augustin Haller von Hallerstein, *Augusto* or *August* or *Auguste*, *Allerstein*, or *Liu Songling* (depending on the source), was an eighteenth-century Jesuit missionary who spent over three decades in China. He was born in Ljubljana in 1703 and reached Peking in 1739. Hallerstein is best remembered as a scientist and cultural mediator who interpreted between East and West—sometimes quite literally in the “role of counsellor and intermediary during the Portuguese diplomatic mission to Beijing in 1752” (Saje 2015: 25).

To provide some minimal background: The Jesuits or “Society of Jesus,” established in 1534, were soon found all over the world—often travelling to where the Portuguese, a leading explorer nation, had colonies (Brazil, Goa in present-day India, and Macau).² The Jesuits adapted well to foreign places, learning local languages in the service of selling their mission. The Chinese were most interested in their science, mathematics, and astronomy. Hallerstein was a great map-maker and carried out the first census of China, which already in the eighteenth century had a population of 200

² Many Jesuits set sail from Lisbon on their way to Asia—most notably Francis Xavier (1506–52) and Matteo Ricci (1552–1610). For a brief overview of the intertwining politics, economics, “voyages of discovery” and how the “Jesuits spearheaded Catholic expansion in Asia,” see McGrath (2013: 145–47).

million. Most importantly for this paper, the Jesuits were avid letter-writers. They were forever writing reports back home. The Jesuits were not universally adored, even within Catholicism (indeed, Pope Francis is the first Jesuit pope). Pope Clement XIV suppressed the order in 1773. One nineteenth-century writer opined that in 1774, when this news made it to China, “Father Hallerstein... and two other fathers died of grief” (Neave 1879: 259).

Hallerstein's letters were acts of collaboration—a counter-intuitive fact given that we often think of a personal letter as being as close to the source as we can get. His letters would have been edited, even abbreviated and censored, and translated in a hurry already around the time they were being sent. Many were also meant for publication. They were to be anthologized and sold as part of the German-language missionary periodical *Der Neue Welt-Bott*. This *New World Messenger* provided a comfortable and steady source of income for the Society of Jesus.

A translation project such as the one we engaged in is a recipe for interlingual confusion: some of Hallerstein's letters were originally written in German, then published in Latin, then translated into Slovenian (by Aleš Maver, see Maver 2003), and finally into English. All of the letters are formal (even when addressed to family members) and all are of a standardized form, determined by the Jesuit order. The contents included descriptions of journeys, unusual occurrences and sights of interest, reports on the Jesuit order in China, and acknowledgements of benefactors. The rigid form and content can be seen in this representative introduction to one of the letters and its contents below:

Pismo prečastitega očeta Avguščina Hallersteina, misjonarja Družbe Jezusove iz avstrijske province, prečastitemu gospodu Vajkardu Hallersteinu,³ udu iste družbe in province, v tem času spovedniku presvetlega kneza Karl Lotringškega. Napisano v Pekingu na Kitajskem 4. novembra 1739.

A letter by the Most Reverend Father August von Hallerstein, a missionary of the Society of Jesus from the Austrian province, to the Most Reverend Weichard Hallerstein, a member of the same Society and province, at that time Confessor of the Most Illustrious Prince Karl of Lorraine. Written in Peking, China, November 4, 1739.

³ We opted for “Weichard” in the translation; we followed the Slovenian translation in not writing “von Hallerstein” for August's brother. See below for more on names.

VSEBINA.

I. Oče Avguštin opiše svojo pot iz Lizbone do Mozambika. II. Njegova bolezen in ljubezen portugalskih jezuitov. III. Nadaljevanje poti do Goe. IV. Celotno okolico Goe je deloma osvojil, deloma ustrašoval neki poganski imenitnik. V. Razni redovniki so v teh okoliščinah prijeli za orožje. VI. Nenavadni dogodki, povezani s truplom sv. Frančiška Ksaverija. VII. Pot iz Goe do Malake. VIII. Oče Avguštin zapusti svoje popotne tovariše in ostane v Malaki. IX. Njegova tamkajšnja apostolska dejavnost. X. Zanimivosti istega kraja. XI. Nadaljevanje poti do Macaa. XII. Njegov odhod na Kitajsko. XIII. V Pekingu ga obdaruje cesar. XIV. Število jezuitov in njihove službe v Pekingu. XV. Neki redovnik je bil zaradi svoje vere izgnan iz dežele. XVI. Pohvala gospoda Frančiška barona Gallenfelsa, nemškega častnika.

CONTENTS.

I. Father von Hallerstein describes the journey from Lisbon to Mozambique. II. His illness and the love of the Portuguese Jesuits. III. The continuation of the journey to Goa. IV. An infidel nobleman conquered part of, and terrorized part of, the entire surroundings of Goa. V. Several priests took up arms in these circumstances. VI. Unusual occurrences with the body of Saint Francis Xavier. VII. The journey from Goa to Malacca. VIII. Father August leaves his fellow travellers and remains in Malacca. IX. His apostolic work there. X. Sights of interest in that place. XI. The continuation of the journey to Macao. XII. His departure for China. XIII. In Peking the Emperor presents him with gifts. XIV. The number of Jesuits and their services in Peking. XV. A priest was banished from the country because of his faith. XVI. He praises Baron Franc Gallenfels,⁴ a German officer.

Obviously, a translation project such as this one requires more than straightforward translation from Slovenian to English. The background information described above had to be learnt in the course of the translation process, which can be time-consuming and challenging. The process consisted of the following: a rough, almost word-for-word translation; an initial check of the Slovenian-English accuracy (to catch gaffes such as *na*

⁴ For the sake of clarity, we added the first name here—though “Franc.” as an abbreviation for “Franciscus” (Küchelbecker 1730: 667) should have been rendered as “Franz.” This was an oversight.

Laškem, which of course has nothing to do with the Slovenian beer-town but means “in Italy” or “in Italian lands”); verification for accuracy by a colleague with degrees in Sinology and English Studies; further cooperation with a sinologist and historian, which resulted in the addition of footnotes and parenthetical comments; and a final check of changes. As to the footnotes, only five appeared in the end: one mentions the translator from Latin, another the use of *pinyin*, the current standard for the Romanization of Chinese, and the others explain units of distance, a current name of a place, and the English meaning of a Latin saying.

3. Proper Names

The most difficult and time-consuming part of the project pertained to translating proper names. The Slovenian orthography rules in *Slovenski pravopis* (Toporišič et al. 2014: 24–26) stipulate that foreign names should remain unchanged in writing (with the exception of receiving appropriate case endings—e.g., *Oxford* in the nominative and *Oxforda* in the genitive case). The exceptions to these rules include domesticated place names (e.g., *Anglija* for England), Slovenian place names that substitute for non-Slovenian names (e.g., *Dunaj* for Vienna), and translated names (e.g., *Nizozemska* for the Netherlands).

In his monograph on place names, Kladnik (2007: 76–78) states that single-word place names usually remain in their original form, while multi-word ones are mostly translated (he provides the examples *departma Vaocluse* and *kanton Schwyz*). According to his study, more than half of the place names in the dictionary section of *Slovenski pravopis* (Toporišič et al. 2014) are Slovenianized, and almost as many are in their citation form, meaning that their written form remains unchanged.

Naturally, these principles guided the translation of Hallerstein's letters into our Slovenian source text, and presented additional challenges for translating into English. In this section we present some telling examples from the text and discuss the reasoning behind the translation decisions. Though we were not entirely rigid in our orthographic or translation decisions (a fact we saw in retrospect, with the staircase wit or post-translation regrets any translator has suffered), we did strive for readability and recognizability of place names. In other words, wherever possible, we tried to make it possible for readers to easily find a given place on a modern map. Because, as Simon Winder writes in *Danubia*, “[t]he naming of towns has always been a key weapon for establishing dominance over a region” (2013: 12), this solution is not ideal. However, it does have the advantage of promoting expediency and fluidity, including keeping footnotes to a minimum.

The difficulty with personal names, meanwhile, was mainly in tracking down the original name rather than the translated one (e.g., not *Janez*

Walter or a Latin version but *Johannes Walter*⁵). We based our decisions on the last name—if the last name was Germanic, we opted for the German version of the first name in the interest of consistency.⁶

3.1 Place Names

The place names *Jindrichov Hradec* and *Peking* proved to be intriguing and contrasting examples. *Neuhaus*, a town in what is now the Czech Republic, which is mentioned in the Slovenian version of the letters, has been retained in the English translation, along with its contemporary name *Jindřichův Hradec* in parentheses.⁷ This German-to-Czech change reflects current translation conventions:

Prišla so pisma, med njimi tisto, ki sem ga pričakoval od očeta Foureauja, v njem pa pismo vaše prevzvišenosti, naslovljeno name iz Neuhausa na Češkem (dan. Jindrichov Hradec).

The letters have arrived, among them the one I have been expecting from Father Foureau, Enclosed is also the letter from your Eminence, addressed to me from Neuhaus in the Czech lands (today, Jindrichov [*sic*] Hradec).

And with regard to *Beijing* (the *pinyin* transcription of the Chinese capital), the two sinologists involved in the project opted for *Peking* despite its current *pinyin* Romanization, the reasoning being that *Peking* was the transliteration for the city in Hallerstein's time, and, conveniently, it was also the form used throughout Hallerstein's letters. We found the old-fashioned Romanization appropriate for the text, especially as the city is easily recognized by our target audience.

Then there was the place name *Shangchuan*. In the Slovenian translation of Hallerstein's letters, *Shangchuan* Island on the southern coast

⁵ For frequently-occurring names, such as Mark or John, translating into English is easiest on the ear. However, for a name like Ignaz, for English eyes it may be less grating to read the Latin form Ignatius. That is perhaps why Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik opted for "Ignatius Kögler" to designate the Bavarian Jesuit who was with Hallerstein in China (in Vampelj Suhadolnik 2015). It should also be noted here that people are not always widely known by their original names; the frequency of use will also play a role in the translator's decision-making process.

⁶ One of the reviewers points out some (more recent) counter-examples such as Vinko Möderndorfer—of course, our proposed principle is applicable to names that are less frequent and/or not supported by clear sources or a reliable encyclopedic entry.

⁷ "In the Czech lands" (rather than Bohemia) is hastily derived from the Slovenian translation. More unfortunately, we neglected to verify the spelling of "Jindřichův Hradec."

of China was referred to as the island of *Sancian* (without any intervention adding the contemporary name: “Ker smo jih imela za otok Sancien, smo obrnili ladijski kljun proti severu...”). The name is one of many used for this former Portuguese base in China and was reportedly first mentioned by sixteenth-century Jesuit Matteo Ricci. The Portuguese named the island after Saint John (Gupta 2010: 219), because its Chinese name sounded, to their ears at least, much like São João. The transliteration opted for in the English translation was *Shangchuan* as it reflects the current designation of the territory and follows the official Chinese transliteration guidelines. This is the preferred option for sinologists when no domesticated variant of the proper name exists in the target language.⁸ It should be noted, however, that an interesting problem would arise if we wanted to similarly modernize the Slovenian translation: the choice would not only be between *Sancian* and *Shangchuan*, but it would also include the transliteration *Šangčuan* suggested by the rules of Slovenian orthography (Toporišič et al. 2014: 193–94)—*Sancian* is not well known among general readers. The following is the relevant fragment from the published English translation:

Ker smo jih imela za otok Sancian, smo obrnili ladijski kljun proti vzhodu, v želji, da bi vozili naravnost proti Macau. Zjutraj naslednjega dne pa smo ugotovili, da smo pustili Macao trideset milj zahodno za seboj in smo se morali vrniti teh trideset milj nazaj. (Keller 1755: 79–83, letter no. 587)

Since we had taken them to be the Island of Shangchuan, we turned... east in hopes that we would steer directly for Macao. However, the morning of the next day we realized that we had left Macao thirty miles behind us to the west and we therefore had to turn back thirty miles. (Maver 2003: 234–46)

⁸ Further complicating the decision-making process is this: because Saint Francis Xavier made the island immortal for Westerners by dying there, its non-transcribed (i.e., non-“Chinese”) name occurs frequently in reliable sources. A search for “Sancian” + “Xavier” yields far more hits than “Shangchuan” + “Xavier.” Nevertheless, we opted for the official Chinese transliteration guidelines. Recent books on Xavier tend to provide both (see Cunningham 2014: 33: “Nevertheless, Xavier persisted, and by November 1552 he was living on the beach of Sancian (Shangchuan) Island.”)

3.2 Names of People

Our greatest problem had to do with the personal names of the Jesuits (consider the litany of names for Hallerstein: Auguste, Augusto, etc.).⁹ Searching for names is important for the translation process precisely because it is so time-consuming and a working translator will have to budget dozens of hours for a project like ours. And it is surprising that there is so little secondary literature on translating proper names¹⁰—especially when we consider the frequent “renaming of places, the return, if you like, to more local nomenclature and away from names that had become internationalized through decades of colonial commerce” (Bassnett 2011: 148). A further complicating factor is that the European Jesuits also had Chinese names—e.g., *Tai-Tsin-hien* for Ignazius Kögler. These were taken care of by the sinologists who aided us in the translation process.

At one point we also came across the multicultural name *Johann Castiglione* for the painter and Jesuit Brother Giuseppe Castiglione. This finding was fortunate because it alerted us to the need to double-check “biblical” names, but it was unfortunate because checking all the names is tedious and exhausting. Most of the individuals mentioned in Hallerstein’s letters were of marginal historical importance. The only figure in the Hallerstein letters who was of worldwide significance was Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus or Jesuits. However, because Ignatius has asserted itself as a name, there were no difficulties—it would be indeed estranging to use the Basque *Ignazio Loiolakoa* or the Spanish *Ignacio de Loyola* in an English-language text.

We were greatly helped in one sense: Hallerstein’s letters constantly emphasize the language background of the people he is writing about. He informs readers of most fathers’ provenance. In the case of Italian or German it is rather straightforward,¹¹ but even there... *Rainer Cognosciuti? Raneiro Cognosciuti...* And Portuguese? *Polikarpa de Souza* (Policarpo de Souza). Is the name *Bauer* French? German? In short, we were cast into a linguistic

⁹ In his compendium of names, Keber (2008: 122) lists fifteen variants of the name Augustin in German, English, Italian, French and Croatian/Serbian. Generally, Christian names became the norm after the Tridentine Council in the middle of the sixteenth century (Keber 2008: 43).

¹⁰ A rare exception is Nahashon A. Nyangeri and Rachel Wangari’s 2019 “Proper Names in Translation: Should They Be Translated or Not?” However, their article deals with contemporary works and with countering the belief that names cannot and therefore should not be translated. Our difficulties lay in *un-translating* previously translated names.

¹¹ Despite this general principle, some exceptions apply (as was also pointed out by one of the reviewers): Janez Lenassi and Jani Möderdorfer have Italian and German surnames but are Slovenians.

maelstrom that included Latin, Portuguese, French, Italian, Slovenian, and a few other European languages, not to mention Chinese.

This list of the local Jesuits in China reads like a roster for a moneyed soccer club composed of imported stars from all over the world:

Oče Andrej Pereira, rektor; oče Karel Rosende, pridigar; oče Feliks Rocha, rektor cerkve, vsi trije Portugalci; oče Ignacij Kögler, predstojnik astronomskega dvornega urada; oče Anton Gogeisl, prokurator, oba iz zgornjenemške province; oče Janez Walter, učitelj glasbe, Čeh, in brat Jožef Costa, v padarstvu in zdravilstvu zelo izkušen Neapeljčan.

V rezidenci svetega Kristusovega rednika biva trenutno samo pet Evropejcev: prečastiti oče Dominik Pinheiro, viceprovincial in superior, Portugalec; oče Florijan Bahr in jaz, on iz češke, jaz iz avstrijske province; brat Jožef Castiglione, slikarski mojster, Milančan, in brat Andrej Moggi, Florentinec in odličen stavbenik.

Father André Pereira, the rector; Father Carlos de Rosende, the preacher; Father Felix de Rocha, the rector of the church, all of whom are Portuguese; Father Ignaz Kögler, the president of the court astronomy tribunal, and Father Anton Gogeisl, Procurator, both from the Upper German province; Father Johannes Walter, a music teacher and a Czech, and Brother Giuseppe Costa, a Neapolitan very experienced in healing and medicine.

At the moment only five Europeans live in the Residence of the Holy Order of Christ: the Most Reverend Father Domingos Pinheiro, the Vice-Provincial and Superior, a Portuguese; Father Florian Bahr and I, he from the Czech province, and I from the Austrian province; Brother Giuseppe Castiglione, a Milanese master painter, and Brother Ferdinando Moggi,¹² a Florentine and exquisite builder.

Though the Slovenian was clear and consistent, the difficulty of translating *Andrej* was obvious: *Andrew Pereira* is unsightly and unlikely. Tracking down the “original” names reminded us once again that translators are often required to become amateur historians, in our case, to scour primarily Google Books for eighteenth-century writings that were mostly in German and in French. We then cross-referenced the names with more recent scholarship. (As mentioned above, given the speed of translation and the many languages involved, a lot of mistakes were made back then. Over time, some names

¹² We silently changed “Andrej” into Ferdinando because our research revealed that “Andrej” was a mistake.

have become standard, especially when it comes to relatively prominent individuals who appear in many sources.) A few examples:

Karel Rosende – Charles de Rezende – Carlos de Rosende
 Janez Walter – Jean Walter – Johann (?) – Johannes Walter
 Andrej Pereira – Pereira/Pereyra/Ferreyra (?) – André Pereira
 Ignacij Kögler – Ignatius Kögler/Ignaz Koegler – Ignaz Kögler
Francoz Benoit – Michel Benoist/Benoit/Benoît – (Michel) Benoît

3.3 The principles observed in the translation

It soon became evident that there were no easy solutions for cutting down on research time. Thus, we are unable to offer definitive tips for translators who may find themselves in a similar intercultural and historically tainted situation.

We were, however, able to create some practical guidelines for dealing with complicating factors such as the following:

- 1) The date of the secondary sources consulted.

When the secondary source was written proved crucial. For example, the well-known Jesuit *Mattheus Riccius Maceratensis* is commonly referred to in modern sources as *Matteo Ricci*. This, however, was not always the case: in nineteenth-century books, a *Google books* advanced search for “Matthew Ricci” yielded 3,600+ hits (“Matteo Ricci,” on the other hand, produced less than 2,000 hits, perhaps evincing a preference for English names in this period).¹³

- 2) The language of the back-up source.

In some languages, there is a tendency to translate not only first names but also to transliterate family names. For example, French sources had a tendency to write *Allerstein* instead of *Hallerstein*.

- 3) The popularity or frequency of the name.

In keeping with guidelines reasonably proposed by Newmark (1993, 2003, 2010), we opted not to change names of individuals “since a translation would imply that the person had changed their name and

¹³ This change in orthography is interesting for at least two reasons: first, the change from “Matthew” to “Matteo” reflects a preference for authenticity (though it does appear alongside “Matthew” already in some nineteenth-century books); second, the name “Matthew Ricci” is a good indicator of non-reliability in modern sources. To put it bluntly: if a twenty-first-century author refers to “Matthew Ricci,” one can assume s/he is using old sources or is simply bluffing. The name “Matteo Ricci” has asserted itself.

nationality” (the names of popes or saints were exceptions here) (2010: 177). This is also the guiding principle in various other sources (Grah 2002, Štavbar 2013, Toporišič 2014).

It should be noted, however, that in translation names must often be changed; in cases where multiple forms of a name exist, the translation will depend on the name established in the target language. A strategy that may prove helpful in some text-types (for example, in academic texts) is the inclusion of parenthetical doublets such as “Johann Baptist Ranger (a.k.a. Ivan Krstitelj, Janez Krstnik),” since one name form may be more familiar in one scholarly discipline than another.

4) Phonetic and orthographic concerns.

Phonetic difficulties became headaches; these were results of changes in orthographic conventions between languages, especially dropping of diacritics (e.g., Kögler-Koegler; Benoît/Benoit), changing conventions within languages (e.g., Benoît/Benoist), transcriptions (e.g., Pereira/Pereyra/Ferreyra). Most infuriatingly, many problems were caused by spelling mistakes in the early translations of Jesuit letters. Though a certain joy of discovery could be felt at finding others’ mistakes, this joy was often preceded by much time wasted in search of, for example, *de Rezende*, instead of *de Rosende*.

5) Need for consistency (one has to refer to the same person by the same name).

Within individual letters, there were, with occasional exceptions, few difficulties. If a name appeared again and again (e.g., Ricci, Ignatius, Augustin), we were obviously able to spot divergences in a hurry. But some names appeared infrequently and, since our Slovenian sources had been translated by different people, some spelling variances occurred and were difficult to spot. Vigilance was crucial here, including a time-consuming list of all names for cross-referencing at the proofreading stage.

4. Conclusion

As we all know, when translating, it is the strikingly different and the obviously difficult that we are watching for. If we encounter a word we do not know, we *know* we do not know it. But when it comes to proper names, this gut feeling often fails us. Most of the intercultural confusion had to do with basic matter of finding out whether *Janez* from the source text should really be *John* or *Giovanni* or *Johann* or *Johannes* and so on. Does it matter? Yes. Translating names is important and that there is a political or broader

cultural component to consider. Today, no tourist guide should render Ivan Cankar and Ljubljana as John Cankar and Laibach, respectively. Similarly, we could ask if *Hugo Wolf*, a nineteenth-century composer of Slovenian origin known primarily for his German-language art songs, should really be *Hugo Vouk* in an English text? In terms of domestication or foreignization, the “foreign” name now sounds more at home in English.

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POVZETEK

MEDKULTURNE PASTI: PREVOD HALLERSTEINOVIH PISEM S KITAJSKE

Prispevek predstavi prevod pisem jezuitskega misijonarja Hallersteina iz slovenščine v angleščino. Razprava se najprej dotakne domačitvenih in potujitvenih prevajalskih strategij, nato pa se osredini na nekatere medkulturne in zgodovinske izzive prevajanja zemljepisnih in osebnih imen. S primeri iz prakse prispevek opozori na vpliv uporabljenih virov, medjezikovnih pravopisnih razlik, standardov prepisovanja kitajskih imen, sodobnih smernic za prevajanje zemljepisnih in osebnih imen, in doslednosti pri njihovem navajanju.