

Zuzana Belková, Zora Hudíková

Penetrations into the Poetics of Originality and the Form of Dramatization Work in Radio Plays Based on The Bride of the Mountains by František Švantner

Abstract

František Švantner's *The Bride of the Mountains* is conventionally regarded as the key prose work of the so-called Slovak Naturism. It belongs to the golden pool of classic works of Slovak literature. Its literary context defines the possible ways of adaptation into the genre of a radio play. The balladic nature of the work, the specifics of the author's rich imagery, and the degree and manner of connection to specific concepts – all these are moments that provide the dramatist with clearly marked and at the same time still sufficiently generous contours of the way in which the original can be approached in its transformation into the subject of a radio play. The archive of Czechoslovak Radio in Bratislava and later the archive of Slovak Radio have two radio plays conceived as dramatisations of František Švantner's prose play *The Bride of the Mountains*. The first of them was written in 1967. The second dates from 2022. The challenge for reflecting on their dominances is to answer the question of the degree of

conformity to Švantner's original mode of storytelling, with its emphasis on contrasts and the nature of narration, reflecting various forms of spontaneity or mysteries bordering on the irrational.

Key words

Direction. Dramatization. Imagination. Music. Origin. Perceptual Psychology. Radio Play. Sound Design.

Introduction

According to O. Čepan (1977), naturism is the culminating phase of Slovak lyrical prose. The literary movement got its name from the word “nature”. In the 1930s it emerged along with other movements, movements and initiatives that transformed the social feeling of disillusionment into literary works, and at the same time a new artistic ideal based on vitalism, neo-romanticism and emphasis on natural being and the primitive primordial foundation in man (Garay Kročanová, 2021).

The artistic direction was close to a ballad-like fairy tale, working with irrationality, archaism, mythicism, fairy tale, anthropomorphization and polypsychism of the character. D. Garay Kročanová states that naturism followed the impulses of previous literary developments, especially romanticism and innovated realism. It drew inspiration from folklore (the influence of the folk tale, the ballad, the fantastic tale). It was also inspired by the structure of myth and elements of expressionism and lyrical tendencies under the influence of modern poetry (Garay Kročanová, 2021). The development of Slovak naturism as a literary movement was strongly influenced by translated literature of Romanesque and Nordic provenance – especially authors such as Charles Ramuz, Jean Giono, Knut Hamsun, Selma Lagerlöfová, Trygve Gulbrandsen, Hermann Hesse, and Joseph Conrad. The authors of Slovak

naturism were not organised in a narrower sense, nor were they united by a group manifesto or common activities. In addition to Ľudo Ondrejov, Dobroslav Chrobák, Margita Figuli, and Hana Zelinová, František Švantner also belonged to the narrow circle of authors of Slovak naturism. D. Garay Kročanová characterizes his version of naturism as the writing of an author who brings up the theme of ‘crime and punishment’ – the motifs of guilt, revenge, blood and death. He does not do without the “archetypal” figure of the demon and the genre of myth, which expresses the struggle of good and evil on the axis of man – humanity – the universe (Garay Kročanová, 2021).

The aim of this study is to demonstrate the use of the poetics of Slovak naturism on the example of specific radio plays by the dramatists Ondrej Laciak (1967) and Marek Ťapák (2022). The study also highlights the possibilities of the formal and ideological grasp of the literary template in the dramatization of the culminating work of Slovak naturism, the novella by František Švantner, *Nevesta hôľ* (*The Bride of the Mountains*). It was logical for the authors of the adaptation to reach for a work that is respected in the reflection of literary scholarship and history. The radio dramatizations of Švantner's prose *The Bride of the Mountains* were created fifty-five years apart. They were chosen by the authors of this study because of the attractiveness of the original and the wide range of possibilities

for realization. They show how the current performance context and the contemporary aesthetic canon intervene in the process of dramatizing a literary work. The plays were selected on the basis of the criteria of the poetics of mystery and the involvement of irrational elements. Qualitative methods of research – methods of logical analysis, discourse analysis, comparison and generalization are used in the elaboration of the study, as they best reveal and help to process the studied issue in terms of the authors' intentions. When analyzing and comparing a literary work and its radio dramatizations, we observe the degree of conformity of the dramatizations with the poetics of the original, the register of expressive means, the way in which the dramatizations copy the narrative of the writer František Švantner, as well as the extent to which the radio plays succeeded in replacing realism with the lyricization of the narrative. We also note the role of music, the actor's interpretation, and the overall sound of the works, which depends on the creators and the time of the radio plays' creation.

1 The Literary Context of the Narrative of Good and Evil in the Backdrop of Mythical Anthropomorphized Nature

František Švantner (29 January 1912 – 13 October 1950) was born in Bystrá in the Nízke Tatry. From 1933 he worked as a teacher in Mýto pod Ďumbierom and later in Nová Baňa. As D. Kročanová Roberts recalls,

from 1947 until his death he was a freelance writer – a scholarship holder of the Matica slovenská. As a teacher, he had a musical education and was interested in visual arts and film. He paid attention to issues of culture, politics, philosophy and religion, as evidenced by his diaries (Kročanová Roberts, 2012). In them, F. Švantner comments, for example, on his perception of art and its contribution to himself and to society. Referring to Švantner’s notes, J. Števček described Švantner’s conviction that a work of art can certainly only come into being through the guided interaction of reason and emotion together with intuition, never through pure rationality alone. For people who do not have intuition, according to Švantner, the world of art is closed, inaccessible; they want to understand art as a machine, a hoe or a cigarette, and they open their eyes to the fact that it cannot be used in this way (Števček, 1972). In his notes collected in the *Integral Diary*, F. Švantner compared art, with its positive connotation of relief from worries to morphine, and valued its ability to enable escape from a society full of lies, overburdened and limited, into a free society (Švantner, 2001). Although Švantner’s artistic agenda was to escape or beautify the realities of everyday life, the particular motifs employed were rather dark. He considered the polarity of “life and death” to be important, without explicit catharsis and fulfilment of story lines. F. Švantner argued that the writer must always be aware that the

greatest gift he has been given is poetic vision and poetic revelation (Švantner, 2001).

The Bride of the Mountains is a novel by František Švantner, originally published by the Matica slovenská in 1946. It tells the story of Libor, a gamekeeper who returns to his native village, the fictional Prietržiny, after many years. He meets his childhood love, the wild and mysterious Zuna. To win her, he must not only overcome his rivals, but also penetrate her world. Zuna is linked to the realm of mountain nature, rock walls, animals, vagabonds and damned spirits. Libor returns to his native land after ten years in the city to take up a position as a gamekeeper. He gets around with his horse, Eguš. Zuna, the daughter of a blind miller, is regarded by the villagers as a girl of easy manners. The innkeeper Weinhold wants her as his wife anyway, he is mainly after her fortune. The mysterious and elusive Zuna continues to elude the infatuated Libor. The coal miner Tavo, a former sailor, is also interested in her. He is unnaturally strong and has guarded Zuna since childhood as his future bride. He believes in her purity and innocence. Libor is jealous. Irrational, dreamlike, mythical elements begin to prevail – for example, there comes He, a mysterious rogue, a creature that looks like a man but is not really of the human race. Libor wants to track down and kill the mysterious wolf. Neither Tavo nor Libor will get Zuna. The mysterious rogue finally bites the throat of Zuna. The village barn

burns down, Libor loses his job, and Eguš the horse dies. Finally, Zuna disappears into the mountains.

Similarly, R. Kiss Szemán notes that in the predominantly lyrical-fantastic passages of the prose of *The Bride of the Mountains*, various personified phenomena and phenomena of nature appear instead of plot elements. Nature is embodied, for example, in the character of Zuna. She is a semi-real-semi-fantastic being. Fairytale transformations of people into animals and things often take place, and vice versa, man is at one with nature (Kiss Szemán, 2020). According to O. Čepan (1977), a celebration of anthropomorphized nature can be found in the work of František Švantner. The close connection with the natural being is not denied by J. Goszczyńska either. According to her, Švantner’s works contain several characteristic features of naturism: the depicted world has an archaic, out-of-time character, the hero is a man uncorrupted by civilization, the hero lives outside social and legal norms in harmony with nature and his own nature (Goszczyńska, 2012). The extra-temporal character points to a connection with myth.

Z. Neubauer reminds us that myth is used in literature as an important dynamic element of the epic and lyric structure of a prose text and helps to develop the fantasy components of the work (Neubauer, 1991; see also: Pravdová & Ungerová, 2024).

According to M. Šútovec, in Švantner’s *The Bride of the Mountains*, mythical elements and the laws of mythical structures play an important role in the creation of the characters, the construction of the setting and the construction of the plot. He considers a strange shape-shifting creature which is at one time a rogue and at another time a wolf or werewolf to be a key element. This refers to domestic folklore, but also to totemistic cults, ancient myths, or early Christian religious ideas. The natural setting of the prose is also constructed in a metaphorical way. It has the structure of a Christianly interpreted cosmos (Šútovec, 2005).

J. Goszczyńska acknowledges other than naturalistic backgrounds to Švantner’s prose *The Bride of the Mountains*. She draws attention to the link with Gothicism. She offers a view of František Švantner’s work as a writer in whose works various conceptions of modernity are shown. She points out how important popular and post-Gothic literature was to him; he was interested, for example, in the work of Edgar Allan Poe (Goszczyńska, 2012). J. Števček (1962) acknowledged that the oral folk tale with its themes of horror and mystery is one of the formulas of Švantner’s writing. J. Goszczyńska goes further and puts forward the hypothesis that Švantner’s works can be read as a gothic novel. The mountain space in *The Bride of the Mountains* is a space full of mystery, where idyllic and horror intermingle – the old mill has the

features of a gothic ‘haunted house’ and eventually becomes the ‘tomb’ of a mad miller (Goszczyńska, 2012). M. Szabó also attributes the gothic-novel motif of vampirism to the episodic character of the innkeeper Weinhold, who echoes the racist stereotype of the “Jewish parasite” in the sense of vampirism, and his naturalistic description evokes the caricatures of contemporary anti-Semitic propaganda (Szabó, 2020).

M. Součková (2012), in connection with the prose *The Bride of the Mountains*, noticed the ambivalence of good and evil, as well as the interconnection of the human and the natural, the Christian and the pagan, the physical and the spiritual, the normal and the pathological, the rational and the emotional, the masculine and the feminine. J. Goszczyńska sees the male protagonist of the novella *The Bride of the Mountains* as a type of Poe’s hero, or as a romantic Byronic hero who is torn. He is searching for the meaning of his own existence, trying to define his identity and find his place in a world he no longer understands (Goszczyńska, 2012). The female protagonist, Zuna, is not just split, there is real polysemanticism involved. She takes on multiple forms in the text. Libor, the narrator, has a vision of Zuna in white, which according to M. Součková associates purity and innocence, just like her image of a white lily. The miller’s daughter Zuna transforms into a fish, a star, a nymph, a fairy, the innkeeper’s bride-to-be, the coal miner’s fiancée Tavo, but she is above all *The Bride*

of the Mountains (Součková, 2012). In the spirit of the vampire novel hypothesis, J. Goszczyńska (2012) recalls yet another form of Zuna, as the hero has experienced her vampiric tendencies first-hand. *The Bride of the Mountains* remains a work with many semantic and ontological layers. It is a work that offers multiple ways to approach adaptation into theatre, film or – relevant for the purposes of this article – radio form.

2 Švantner's *The Bride of the Mountains* and the Forms of Its Radio Dramatization

When dramatizing František Švantner’s literary text *The Bride of the Mountains*, it is important, and at the same time most challenging, to take into account the writer’s characteristic narration. The writer handles contrasts in an interesting way (e.g., lyrical – epic, dream – reality, good – evil, crime – punishment, love – hate, possibility – reality, illusion – tangibility, ratio – mystery, myth). Nor is it easy to grasp his attitude to the sujet. R. Kiss Szemán states that in the prose of *The Bride of the Mountains*, it is about the maximum possible weakening of the sujet narrative. Lyrical-fantastic passages predominate over the plot (Kiss Szemán, 2020). The radio play as an art form offers specific possibilities of interpretation of a literary text. T. Crook considers the significant value of the radio play to be that its literary quality allows the creator of the audio/radio drama to “control” the space (Crook, 1999).

According to V. Růt, auditory art is closer to epic and lyric than to drama. Thus, he emphasizes radio's greater proximity to the narrative performance of the storyteller than to the presentation of a story by imitating it (Růt, 1964). *The Bride of the Mountains* responded to the crisis of traditional descriptive realism. According to J. Števček, by emphasizing subjectivity, the lyricism stream approached Romanticism, but they are not identical (Števček, 1973). *The Bride of the Mountains* and its poetics of mystery, as well as its irrational elements, provide the dramatist with distinctive contours. These need to be preserved and interpreted appropriately in auditory form.

In the archive of Slovak Radio there are two adaptations of Švantner's *The Bride of the Mountains* into the form of a radio play:

• ***The Bride of the Mountains from 1967.*** The story editor J. Vdovják presents the radio play as a balladic story set in a Slovak mountain region before the Second World War. A young miner returns from the city to his native village after many years. He meets his childhood sweetheart, Zuna, a girl – an elemental who is considered almost a saint by some, a runaway by others, but longed for by all. Zuna understands nature, is endowed with special abilities, and the Highlander decides he wants her for his wife. Since he is not alone in desiring her, he cannot avoid

confrontation with the other men, especially the fierce Tavo. Ondrej Laciak dramatized the text of Švantner's prequel. The radio play was created with music by Igor Bázlik, design sound by Ada Rehorová and Mária Vrancová, and directed by Elena Bauerová. The cast included: Libor, the young gamekeeper (Michal Dočolomanský), Tavo (Július Pántik), Zuna (Božidara Turzonovová), Weinhold, the innkeeper (Juraj Paška), the councillor (Branislav Koreň), miller (Vladimír Durdík), shepherd (Alojz Kramár), gelding (Jozef Šimonovič), next Jozef Šándor, Ondrej Košút, Ľudovít Ozábal, Ján Kákoní, Štefan Drobný and Gejza Slamen (Vdovják, 1967).

• ***The Bride of the Mountains from 2022.*** The story editor P. Pavlac emphasizes that Švantner's imaginative language, with which he builds the scenic images of his prose, is a fully-fledged companion to the story and the characters. It makes them teeter on the edge between psychology and myth. At times they are concrete, with distinct human motivations, at other times they become principles that reflect a world beyond our senses. The fluid narrative is created through the construction of contrasts, and also atmospheres that reflect the various forms of the elemental nature. The setting plays an integral role, generating mysteries bordering on the irrational ("František Švantner: Nevesta hôľ", 2022).

Marek Ľapák was the author of the screenplay and the director, the sound realization of the radio play was by Stanislav Kaclik, the author of the music was Anton Popovič, the musical dramaturgy was supervised by Ludmila Hodulíková. The cast included: Libor (Přemysl Boublík), Zuna (Zuzana Porubjaková), Tavo (Milan Bahul), Weinhold (Juraj Predmerský), next Vladimír Jedl'ovský, Peter Rúfus, Marián Lipták, Roman Čisár, Laco Konrád, René Jankovič, Dušan Vaňo, Jozef Benedik, Jerguš Horváth, Sáva Ondriáš, René Sorád, Šimon Peter Králik, Lucia Vráblicová, Zuzana Jurigová-Kaprálíková, Erik Koníček and Gréta Luprichová ("František Švantner: Nevesta hôľ", 2022).

The first radio dramatization was in 1967, the second radio dramatization came in 2022 by P. Pavlac, fifty-five years after the first dramatisation, as a response to the need to rework the key prose of Slovak naturism in a new and discursive way. The idea was that the dramatist should approach the text in a way that would legitimise the emergence of a new version. On the one hand, it was necessary to move the text closer to the 21st-century listener, on the other, it was necessary to maintain respect for the source text and at the same time to touch the essence of what is distinctive and specific for Švantner ("Rozhlasové hry - Archív extra", 2022).

Ľapák's radio dramatisation of *The Bride of the Mountains* is faithful

to Švantner's idea of the archaic-mythical overpressure of the world. The latter is less elaborated in Ondrej Lacjak's dramatization. In accordance with the contemporary canon of radio plays, the model of linear narration of the story is more prevalent in Laciak's dramatisation. The balladic, romantic character of Laciak's radio play is mainly given by the addition of Igor Bázlik's incidental music. It is based on folklore, but is lyrically stylized. It is slick and artistic. In Laciak's radio dramatisation, the performances of the protagonists stand out: Libor, performed by the softly lyrical Michal Dočolomanský, and Zuna, interpreted by Božidara Turzonová. In Ľapák's 2022 dramatisation, the role of Libor is played by Přemysl Boublík, considerably more civil in his demeanour than his predecessor Dočolomanský. A stronger emphasis than on the love story is placed here on Libor's inner struggle – the subject's battle with an uncontrollable world. Whereas Turzonova as Zuna in Laciak's dramatisation is a mainly feminine, seductive and unpredictable femme fatale, Zuzana Porubjakova as Zuna in Ľapák's 2022 dramatisation represents, to a greater extent, the contrast between the character's girlish innocence and animalistic predation. The register of her emotions and acting positions is broader, just as the character itself has more layers.

The dramatiser of the radio play Ondrej Laciak almost completely resigned to Švantner's weakened plot narrative. The listener's radio experience is enhanced by the em-

phasis on the central romantic story of the couple Libor and Zuna. The fleshing out of the elemental mythic context is tied only to the character of Tavo. There is less elaboration of Švantner's concept of the so-called natural man. According to J. Kuzmíková (2012a), it also resonates through dreams and altered states of consciousness. J. Kuzmíková, in agreement with O. Čepan, and especially M. Šútovec, recalls the role of psychoanalytic components in *The Bride of the Mountains* and gives specific examples – the horse Eguš as the Ego of Libor, or the motif of the valley representing the unconscious (Kuzmíková, 2012b). All this is absent in Ondrej Laciak's 1967 dramatisation. Ľapák's 2022 dramatization, on the other hand, informed by the context of postmodernity, works very effectively with psychoanalytic elements. It intertwines symbols and motifs, helping itself by alternating tenses and psychic atmospheres, which is strongly illustrated by the use of Anton Popovič's incidental music. He thoughtfully divides the attention between the central story of the protagonist Libor and the line of Zuna in all its complexity, complementing them with the line of Tavo, the wolf and the unknown rogue. Nothing is oversized; the proportionality of individual elements is close to František Švantner's idea applied in the prequel.

According to S. Perkner and J. Hyvňar (1987), the structure of a radio drama work consists of a linguistic, thematic and compositional plan. The linguistic plan of Švantner's

draft is followed quite consistently by both radio dramatizations of *The Bride of the Mountains* (1967 and 2022). This can be seen in the word and sentence register, which adheres strongly to the source text from the very beginning. The poeticization of language is typical of Švantner. It is applied more in the earlier dramatisation of *The Bride of the Mountains* from 1967. Švantner likes to emphasize the sound in the form of playing with euphony or, conversely, cacophony. As we have already noted Švantner also uses the repertoire of the fringe genre of gothic horror novel in *The Bride of the Mountains*. He combines it with a folkloric context. He has created an interesting study of the darker recesses of the human interior. Throughout, the story is an expression of the author's subjective and highly original view of the world. In Ľapák's dramatisation from 2022, one can feel more strongly the dramatizer's dialogue with the original text and the search for the right way to grasp the author's poetics. The horror elements in the incidental music are not just illustrative undertones; they fully reflect Švantner's concept of demonic struggle. It is applied, for example, in painting 14 (Wolf Hunt):

The Gamekeeper: *I decided to kill the inconvenient predator, thinking that by doing so I would remove the main obstacle that stood between Zuna and me. I caught him in the Wolf Pits. He was probably waiting for his companion, that's why he was distracted. I got so close to him . . .*
Sound: *shot and hiss*

The Gamekeeper: *Tonight the geldings at the shepherd's hut in Prietržiny can sleep peacefully! The werewolf from Kotlisko will not come to drive their sheep away. A carrion to the mill.*

Sound: *echo, echo, echo, echo*
Music: *note to the sound master: The carrion has pitted all the dark creatures of the underworld against me. On all sides the earth was cracking. The flames of hell itself whipped from the black abysses.* (unofficial translation of the play, for more: Ľapák, 2022)¹

Even more evident is the horror dimension supported by appropriate music in the finale of Marek Ľapák's radio play:

Gamekeeper: A fire was flickering in a quiet clearing under a thick spruce. And on this soft carpet moved the naked figures of a woman and a man. Every time the man was about to escape she drew him close with her hands, throwing herself violently at him with her whole body. Thus, after short intervals, a struggle accompanied by grunts and unrestrained shrieks arose. They needed no more clothes, for their blood glistened with bronze. Everything convinced me that all my efforts were in vain. Zuna never belonged to me. Not even in my dreams, as I often

thought. She lived somewhere far away from me in a strange world of secrets. Zuna went mad and attacked her lover just when he wanted to be most grateful to her. As soon as she saw that she might lose her prey, her fury reached its peak. Only then did she wake up when I called out to her. (unofficial translation of the play, for more: Ľapák, 2022)²

M. Pukan (2018) points out that there are currently several attempts to typify dramatic transformations of epic prefaces. The authors may grasp the issue affirmatively at one time and controversially at another, but they consider the common starting point of typification to be the author's strategy of linking to the original, which is manifested in the relation of the pretext to the posttext. Referring to L. Hutcheon, she distinguishes three types of this relation: faithful, loose, partial. It is true that all the main features of the pretext are preserved in the dramatization, for example, the motives of the main characters' actions, the direction of the plot, the basic types of settings, situations, conflicts and so on. The looser the approach to dramatization, the more likely it is that the dramatizer will interfere with the minor features of the literary subject matter (Hutcheon, 2006). A. Merenus divides dramatizations according to their relation to the subject matter.

In doing so, he draws on the position of individual dramatizations between the imitative and innovative poles, which often determines whether a dramatization is understood as imitation or as innovation. In imitation, the author is the agent of the original work. In innovation, they are autonomous and self-contained works, which, although open, are linked to a pretext. Innovation is not a faithful reinterpretation of the original text, but a new artistic reinterpretation of it (Merenus, 2012).

Ľaciak's dramatization of Schwantner's *Bride of the Mountains* takes an affirmative approach to the original, being faithful and less inventive in its interference with the original sentences. From the polarity of "imitation – innovation" it leans more strongly towards imitation. For example, in Libor's speech, he quotes F. Švantner's text verbatim in the introduction:

I should begin with an incident when a caring aunt from the lower end, with whom I was temporarily in her care after my mother's death, sent me to a well-known mountaineer near Štiavnica for service, and I had to say goodbye to Prietržiny, ... I shall therefore begin with that blessed day, when I walked excitedly from the gloomy old main post office down the broad street of our town with an oblong green letter in my pocket, telling me that the Forestry Administration at Štiavnička had told me that I was to take up my post as a gamekeeper

at Prietržiny at once. It was an extraordinary day. (unofficial translation of the play, for more: Ľaciak, 1967)³

M. Ľapák's radio dramatisation of *The Bride of the Mountains* from 2022 is also affirmative in relation to the original, but it works more freely and partially with the original and its sentences. There is a greater degree of innovation in it than in the dramatisation by O. Ľaciak, and it is more daring. For example, the introduction refers to a more creative work with the category of time and space:

It was an extraordinary day. Warm winds with great pockets, overflowing with the scents of new walnut leaves, shaggy lime trees, flowering acacia groves, were just heading for the mountains. The air glistened and the sky sang. Honey smelled everywhere, the tinkling of wells could be heard. I stretched out in the grass, among the puffy white bells of the dandelions, and began to talk to my heart. My longings no longer attach themselves to boyish whims, but to a certain red, restless and hot heart. For a man has two hearts: one he wears alone, under his shirt, so that he may bleed at any moment, and the other a woman hides under his white breast, so that love and revenge may bloom side by side beside

the white bells and red nails on the silent wreaths. Under my breath I ascertained whether I really had the miraculous letter in my pocket, and when I was convinced of it my joy was great. My second heart is cherished by that dark girl from the mill. (unofficial translation of the play, for more: Ľapák, 2022)⁴

The perception of time in *The Bride of the Mountains* is mythical. We can only pinpoint that the story takes place in two summer months. Otherwise, the temporal situating of the action is blurred. It refers to the natural time of the elements. Marek Ľapák's dramatisation, unlike Ondrej Ľaciak's, makes more use of the motif of distinguishing between the child and adult versions of the protagonists Libor and Zuna. The listener explicitly hears them as children in several places, performed by E. Koníček and G. Luprichová. This is accentuated by the motif of childlike innocence and especially Zuna's purity. O. Ľaciak notices the characters of Libor and Zuna only as adults. He does not use child actors; the reference to childhood is only indirectly mentioned and is not one of the dramatist's main spheres of interest.

Even the spaces have their connotations – the demonic Kotlisko can be considered the most negative. Both Ľaciak and Ľapák

choose it as the setting for the key scene with the transformation of Zuna, based on Švantner's model. In Ľapák's dramatization, the denouement is much more horrific – also thanks to the fact that the motif of Kotlisko as the setting of the final scene has been mentioned several times before – always as a supernatural frightening premonition⁵:

Music: *boiler room*
The Gamekeeper: *Hah! It's me! Are you at home?*
Echo: *At home, at home.*
The Gamekeeper: *Greetings, hello, hello.*
Echo: *Close, close.*
The Gamekeeper: *And what's near you devil's mouth?*
Echo: *From the sponge, from the sponge.*
The Gamekeeper: *Misfortune awaits me? What? Where? Who will bring it to me? So? Answer! Are you still here?*
Echo: *Zuna, Zuna!*
(unofficial translation of the play, for more: Ľapák, 2022)⁶

Instead of Conclusion – A Radio Dramatization of Švantner's The Bride of the Mountains – through Secrets to the Struggle and Its Result

According to M. Šútovec, Švantner's *Bride of the Mountains* fascinates

¹ Authors' note: The speech occurs in the time frame 46:21-47:43.
² Authors' note: The speech occurs in the time frame 32:28-33:57

³ Authors' note: The speech occurs in the time frame 01:23-02:32.
⁴ Authors' note: The speech occurs in the time frame 01:34-02:58.

⁵ Authors' note: Because of the translation, the specific meaning of the echo motif has been lost, the English translation of which does not have the same semantics as in the original language.
⁶ Authors' note: The speech occurs in the time frame 01:07:00-01:07:42.

the addressee by alternating different meaning perspectives not only in the thematic plan of the characters and the environment, but also in the plan of the plot. All of this is furthermore supported by hallucinatory-delirious moments in the narrator Libor's band. For the forester, the whole process is a gnoseological "hell" and a hard-to-answer riddle not only about the world, but also about himself (Šútovec, 2005). The moment of riddle and mystery was also noticed by O. Čepan (1977) in connection with *The Bride of the Moutains* when he stated that the beginning of the conflicts, shrouded in mystery, is transferred to the whole text through the multiplication of inexplicable circumstances of the plot. We have repeatedly noted the weakening of the plot in Švantner's *The Bride of the Mountains*. Logically, then, the initial situation often foreshadows the final or later situation. This procedure is more evident in Marek Ťapák's dramatization from 2022. The uneven prioritisation of individual points of the outline makes Marek Ťapák's dramatisation a very contemporary work. Both Ondrej Laciak's and Marek Ťapák's radio dramatizations are poetic. Ondrej Laciak's radio dramatisation from 1967 is an old-world folklorised ballad. Marek Ťapák's radio dramatization from 2022 corresponds more closely to the literary subject. It contains folkloric stylization and adopts the lyricism and poetic moments typical of Švantner. However, unlike O. Laciak's dramatization, it fits with the characteristics of naturism or the gothic novel, which negate the romanticizing view. One can feel the power of mythically grasped and

anthropomorphized nature. Nature interacts with deep, archaic psychic layers. M. Šútovec evaluates them as proof that the struggle of the forester Libor is not just a struggle through an archaic-mythically grasped world. Libor is also wrestling with himself (Šútovec, 2005). The motif of the duel is thematised by Marek Ťapák's directorial realisation of 2022 with an appropriately chosen musical and sound component. The music is authentic, works with cacophony, and uses folklore in its unadorned archaic version. It exploits the contemporary potential of digital sound editing. The liberation from realistic narration – still present in the 1967 dramatisation – allows Marek Ťapák's 2022 dramatisation to effectively support the Švantner' vision of the mythical world. Ťapák's dramatisation is – like Švantner's draft – filled with ambiguous characters and multiple meanings. While Igor BÁzlik's 1967 incidental music only ornamentally completes the expression of the work, Anton Popovič's music from 2022 acts as the true meaning-making factor of the work. The inferior dynamics of the characters and narrative structure in the earlier dramatisation quite naturally adapted to the possibilities of contemporary auditory interpretation. Nevertheless, it has provided the listener with a worthy treatment of an emblematic work of Slovak naturism. Marek Ťapák's newer dramatisation from 2022 more effectively captured the multi-layered poetics of Švantner's original. The way of working with silence, composition and, in some cases, more plastic and civil performances of the actors played an important role in it.

The reflected adaptations of *The Bride of the Mountains* into radio form demonstrate different approaches to the transformation of a literary work. Both prove that the radio play offers unique possibilities of conveying a literary text to the listener. The capabilities of the auditory arts allow the interpretation of the writer's poetics and the philosophical subtexts of the work in an original way.

Acknowledgement

The paper was elaborated thanks to support and funding provided by the Scientific Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic and the Slovak Academy of Sciences, specifically thanks to financial resources available within the grant project VEGA No. 1/0489/23 entitled "Innovative Model of Monetization of Digital Games in the Sphere of Creative Industries".

References

Čepan, O. (1977). *Kontúry naturizmu*. Slovenský spisovateľ.
Crook, T. (1999). *Theory and practice*. Routledge.
František Švantner: *Nevesta hôľ*. (2022, June 7). <https://devin.stvr.sk/clanky/rozhlasova-tvorba/293482/frantisek-svantner-nevesta-hol>
Garay Kročanová, D. (2021). *Prolegomena k dejinám slovenskej literatúry prvej polovice 20. storočia: I. próza*. Stimul.
Goszczyńska, J. (2012). František Švantner voči naturizmu a goticizmu. *Slovenská literatúra*, 59(5), 381-392.
Hutcheon, L. (2006). *A theory of adaptation*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203957721>

109
Kiss Szemán, R. (2020). *Slovenská literatúra v prvej polovici 20. storočia: Slovenská moderna a medzivojnová literatúra. Pomocný materiál pre magisterské štúdium slovenského jazyka a literatúry*. ELTE Eötvös Kiad.
Kročanová Roberts, D. (2012). Božia hra a ľudské hry. Interpretácia súboru noviel Františka Švantnera Dáma. In J. Pekarovičová, & M. Vojtech (Eds.), *Studia Academica Slovaca 41* (pp. 147-164). Comenius University Bratislava.
Kuzmíková, J. (2012a). Dielo Františka Švantnera dnes. In J. Kuzmíková (Ed.), *František Švantner. Život a dielo* (pp. 7-11). Ústav slovenskej literatúry SAV.
Kuzmíková, J. (2012b). K problematike vedomia v tvorbe Františka Švantnera. In J. Kuzmíková (Ed.), *František Švantner. Život a dielo* (pp. 23-41). Ústav slovenskej literatúry SAV.
Laciak, O. (Screenwriter). (1967). *Nevesta hôľ* [Radio play]. Československý rozhlas.
Merenus, A. (2012). *Nárys teorie dramatizací literárních děl* [Dissertation thesis]. Masaryk University.
Neubauer, Z. (1991). Mythus. *Prostor*, (15), 39-55.
Pravdová, H., & Ungerová, M. (2024). Discourse of expression of image representations in contemporary audiovisual culture. *European Journal of Media, Art & Photography*, 12(1), 112-121. <https://doi.org/10.34135/ejmap-24-01-07>
Pukan, M. (2018). Genologické metamorfózy v adaptačných (po)prístupoch niektorých tvorcov na súčasnej slovenskej profesionálnej divadelnej scéne. In S. Kopčáková, & A. Kvokačka (Eds.), *Súradnice estetiky, umenia a kultúry III: Európske estetické myslenie a umelecká tvorba: pramene, metamorfózy a ich relevancia* (pp. 207-221). University of Presov.

European Journal of Media, Art & Photography, 2025, Vol. 13, No. 1
Rozhlasové hry – Archív extra. (2022, June 7). <https://www.stvr.sk/radio/archiv/1365/1818319>.
Rût, V. (1964). *Divadlo a rozhlas: problémy rozhlasové hry* [Dissertation thesis]. Československý rozhlas.
Perkner, S., & Hyvnar, J. (1987). *Řeč dramatu. I. Divadlo a rozhlas. Umění vnímat umění*. Horizont, nakladatelství Socialistické akademie ČSSR.
Součková, M. (2012). K ambivalencii dobra a zla v tvorbe Františka Švantnera. In J. Kuzmíková (Ed.), *František Švantner. Život a dielo* (pp. 12-22). Ústav slovenskej literatúry SAV.
Števček, J. (1962). *Baladická próza Františka Švantnera*. Slovenský spisovateľ.
Števček, J. (1972). Zmysel Švantnerovho diela. In J. Števček, & L. Bartko (Eds.), *František Švantner: Život a dielo 1912-1950* (pp. 13-30). Osveta.
Števček, J. (1973). *Lyrizovaná próza*. Tatran.
Šútovec, M. (2005). *Mýtus a dejiny v próze naturizmu*. Slovenské literárne centrum.
Švantner, F. (2001). *Integrálny denník*. Formát.
Szabó, M. (2020). Innkeeper, vampire, parasite. The transformations of the image of a Jew in the 1940s works of František Švantner. *Slovenská literatúra*, 67(4), 331-344. <https://doi.org/10.31577/slovlit.2020.67.4.3>
Ťapák, M. (Director). (2022). *Nevesta hôľ* [Radio play]. Radio Devín.
Vdovják, J. (1967). *František Švantner / Ondrej Laciak: Nevesta hôľ* [Anotation of Radio play]. Digital archive of Slovak Radio.

Authors

Mgr. Zuzana Belková
zuzana.belkova@stvr.sk
ORCID-ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2014-1906>

Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Zora Hudíková, PhD.
zora.hudikova@ucm.sk
ORCID-ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8288-7439>
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Faculty of Mass Media Communication
Nám. J. Herdu 2
Trnava, 917 01, Slovak Republic

Profile of the Authors

Zuzana Belková studied at the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University in Bratislava, majoring in Slovak language and literature – aesthetics. She is an external doctoral student at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the UCM in Trnava. She is an employee of Slovak Television and Radio in Bratislava, since 1998 she has worked as a dramaturg and an editor. Currently she is the intendant of Radio Devín.

Zora Hudíková is a university professor at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication, UCM in Trnava, Head of the Department of Artistic Communication. She specializes in the fields of journalistic and artistic production, and media psychology. Her research and teaching activities include topics such as media psychology, cognitive perception of media content, creativity in media and artistic production, the effects of media production, management of creative teams.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34135/ejmap-25-01-06>