

The Pragmatics of Paratextual Apparatus of Contemporary Latvian and American Travelogues

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Abstract. The present research aims at investigating the pragmatic features of paratext and their functions in contemporary American and Latvian travelogues. The presence of numerous paratextual elements in travel writing often helps to differentiate the genre among other literary genres. This, together with the fact that Latvian travelogues are not frequently studied, adds novelty to the present research. In addition, paratextual apparatus plays an essential role in constructing the modality of a travel narrative; moreover, certain paratextual elements (photographs, illustrations, archival documents, etc.) serve as a witness for the veracity and authenticity of narration as well as create a communicative bond with a potential reader. Paratextual apparatus can be viewed from various perspectives due to the fact that its elements bear various functions from informative (preface, postscript, genre specification, etc.) to performative (dedication, epigraph, etc.). The research focuses on such paratextual elements as extended titles, genre specification, dedications, epigraphs, illustrative and archival materials used in several Latvian and American travelogues of 1962–2015. The research methodology was based on the analytical and cultural historical methods, which contributed to the deeper insight into the concept of paratextuality. The pragmatics of paratext in travel writing was investigated by means of synthesising the structural-semiotic method and the method of comparative analysis in the critical perception of travelogues under consideration.

Keywords: travel writing; travelogue; pragmatics; paratext; peritextual and epitextual elements.

Introduction

Travel writing has existed for millennia, remaining one of the most socially important genres until nowadays. Despite its longevity, its typological diversity has not become less heterogeneous. Earlier travelogues were commonly associated with non-fiction rather than fiction; over time, however, they acquired the literary traits of a fictional narrative. The boundaries of a travelogue gradually merge with other prose genres; a travel text may take a form of a travel essay, a travel novel or travel memoirs. Such a genre defining

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feature, as the chronological order of events, links a travelogue with an epistolary novel or a diary. Over time, balancing between fact and fiction, the travelogue turns into a hybrid of autobiography, fiction and non-fiction. Due to its hybrid nature, the genre combines various forms and stylistic elements, which can be synthesised even in a separate text.

Another specific feature of travel writing, which often helps to differentiate travelogues from other works of fiction and non-fiction, is its artistic form. Travel texts often contain illustrative and documentary elements that carry out both informative and performative functions. Verbal and visual material that broadens and, thus, semantically and structurally enriches any text, and constructs its modality, is an integral part of the majority of contemporary travelogues. Moreover, the artistic form of a narrative establishes a certain interconnection between a written text and a published book version that reaches its reader. In the frames of contemporary literary studies, such supplementary elements that pervade a narrative and perform various functions within it, are referred to paratext.

The present article aims at investigating the pragmatics of paratext in American and Latvian travelogues of the turn of 20th–21st centuries. The selection of particular texts for illustrating partextuality and for denoting the primary functions of such paratextual elements as extended titles, genre specification, dedication, epigraph, photographs and archival material has been based on the current popularity of these texts as well as on the presence of common and specific paratextual elements in them.

The methodology selected for the present research has been based on the analytical and culture-historical methods, which will contribute to the deeper insight into the concept of paratextuality and unveil general functions of various paratextual elements. The pragmatics of paratext in travelogues will be investigated by means of synthesising the structural-semiotic method and the method of comparative analysis in the critical perception of travelogues under consideration.

1. The essence of paratextuality

The concept of paratextuality was elaborated by Gérard Genette, a French literary theorist and narratologist, in the second half of the 20th century. In his book “*Palimpsests. Literature in the Second Degree*”, Genette examines the intertextual relationships of a literary work and identifies five types of transtextual relations, one of which is paratextuality. The researcher expresses an idea that paratextuality gives any text, which he defines as “a more or less long sequence of verbal statements that are more or less endowed with significance” (Genette, 1997a, p. 1), the integrity of a literary work, as it encompasses a set of elements that perform multiple informative functions, establish a communicative connection with a potential reader, as well as assign pragmatics to the final version of any text. The following paratextual elements have been singled out by the scholar in the course of his research: titles and subtitles, prefaces and postscripts, epigraphs, dedications, footnotes and endnotes, illustrations, drawings on the title page, publishing house advertisements, etc. In other words, under paratextuality, Genette meant that particular component of fiction or non-fiction that connects the author’s text with

its published version or a book, thus mediating it to the potential reader. “Paratexts are those liminal devices and conventions, both within and outside the book, that form part of the complex mediation between book, author, publisher, and reader: titles, forewords, epigraphs, and publishers’ jacket copy are part of a book’s private and public history” (Genette, 1997b). Genette classifies paratextual elements into two basic groups: the peritext, which constitutes a range of elements inserted into a literary text (its title, epigraph, dedication, etc.); and the epitext – a series of distant elements, among which are interviews, the author’s private communication or oral comments that are commonly located outside the text. Each element of the peritext has to be related to the plot; moreover, each possesses several pragmatic functions. Assuming that the peritext and the epitext share the spatial field of paratext, Genette (1997b, p. 5) illustrates such a relationship by the following formula: paratext = peritext + epitext. Besides, in his book, which reveals the relationship between the world of narration and the world of a publishing house, the scholar denominates paratext as a threshold, an “undefined zone” between the inside and the outside (Genette, 1997b, p. 2), which controls one’s whole reading of the text. The Latvian literary scholar, Professor Sandra Meshkova (Meškova, 2016, p. 115) claims that being a “threshold” of a text, paratext is often overlooked; however, that is exactly what transforms a narration into a book and serves as the first communicative bond between the text and its reader.

2. Paratextuality as a distinguishing feature of travelogue

Latvian and American editions of travelogues, including the recent ones, contain numerous paratextual elements that perform multiple functions within fiction and non-fiction travel texts, thereby enriching their semantics and pragmatics. These are titles and subtitles, epigraphs, dedications, introductions or prefaces, postscripts or afterwords, notes, as well as illustrative material – photographs, pictures, fragments of geographical maps, etc., and documentary material – copies of archival documents, copies of media publications, records, letters and other.

Foregrounding the specifics of paratextuality in travel writing, it should be noted that the elements used in both the peritext and the epitext often complement and visualise the content of travelogues. Documentary and autobiographical material, for example, serves as evidence for the authenticity of the events described. The visual design, in turn, has a certain artistic effect on the reader, whose subjective perception of a literary work is often initiated by paratext. The diverse functions of paratextual elements enrich the semantics and pragmatics of travelogues. The specificity of the pragmatics of paratext is determined by the fact that pragmatics, being referred to “the study of aspects of language that *required* reference to the users of the language” (Levinson, 1983, p. 3), is related to the context and its communicative potential, which is also the function of paratext. Thus, the present research aims at analysing paratextuality of travel writing, commenting on the specificity of the paratextual apparatus using typologically diverse Latvian and American travelogues. Besides, the pragmatic functions of paratextual elements will be determined

in the selected travelogues; the role of paratext in reflecting the main themes and motifs as well as in depicting places and people, will be specified; moreover, the impact of paratext on the reader's perception of these texts will be considered.

Analysing the paratextual apparatus of several contemporary Latvian and American travelogues, the following paratextual elements have been singled out: extended titles and subtitles, genre specification, epigraphs, dedications, as well as documentary and illustrative material collected during the travels, which constitutes an integral part of paratext in travelogues. The empirical research will illustrate the specificity of each particular case.

3. Extended titles and subtitles in travelogues

The title of a literary work, and correspondingly of a book, is what the reader's acquaintance with a particular text begins. In travelogues, this paratextual element often differs from that of literary texts of other genres. Besides, it should be stated that in most cases, the titles of travelogues are mixed, which means that they contain both *thematic* and *rhematic* elements. Such a division of elements has also been proposed by Genette. The researcher suggests using the concept *thematic titles* in the cases, when this title "bares on the *subject matter* of the text" (Genette, 1997b, p. 81); the concept *rhematic titles*, in turn, can be applied to those titles which aim at genre designation or at "displaying a sort of genre innovation" (Genette, 1997b, p. 86).

The extended titles indicate one more specific feature of travel writing: this *thematic* element provides information concerning the subject matter of a travelogue, or unveils its main theme. It often focuses on the places visited (e.g. Peter Jenkins' national travelogue "A Walk across America", 1979) or the cultures described (Mary Lee Settle's "Turkish Reflections", 1991); it can also indicate the purpose of the trip (e.g. a travel diary *Latviešus Sibīrijā meklējot (In Search of Latvians in Siberia)*¹) (2016) by Ingvars Leitis and Uldis Briedis). The motif of search quite frequently appears in contemporary travelogues, being highlighted in titles or subtitles. An American writer John Steinbeck, for example, added a subtitle *In Search of America* to his well-known novel "Travels with Charley" (1962), while Jason Webster embarks on a journey to Spain in search of flamenco ("Duende: In Search of Flamenco", 2003). The motif of search is particularly popular in American travel writing: some travellers search for their ancestors in other countries or try to identify themselves in native America; some are in search of the self by means of adventures and travel experience.

The titles of travelogues may be particularly expanded, giving readers additional information concerning the specifics of a trip or itinerary. The technique is typical of a prominent American novelist and travel writer Paul Theroux. Among his travel non-fiction, the following titles appear: "The Happy Isles of Oceania: Paddling the

¹ Here and further in the text the translation from Latvian is mine, in case the English translation is not available. – D. O.

Pacific”, 1992; “Dark Star Safari: Overland from Cairo to Cape Town”, 2002; or “Deep South: Four Seasons on Back Roads”, 2015. This is how the author reveals temporal and spatial images of his travelogues, often adding emotional colouring. However, one of the founders of modern titology Leo H. Hoek assumes that a title, as we perceive it today, is actually an artificial object; it is “an artefact of reception or of commentary, that readers, the public, critics, booksellers, bibliographers, ... and titologists [...] have arbitrarily separated out from the graphic and possibly iconographic mass of the “title page” or a cover”². Thus, Theroux’s extended titles, or titles with a subtitle, may have just acquired additional information or meaning in the perception of readers rather than imposed by the author or the publisher.

The *rhetic* elements of a title, according to Genette (1997b), constitute the information that either indicates the genre or distinguishes the typology of a narrative within this genre. Thus, the titles of travelogues typically determine their typological affiliation, often emphasizing a text form, as, for example, Mary Morris’s “Nothing to Declare: Memoirs of a Woman Traveling Alone” (1987), or Mary McCornack Thompson’s travel diaries entitled as “The Mary McCornack Thompson Diaries”, (1887–1962). The genre indication as a component of a title is often essential for travelogues, though not mandatory. It is one of those typical genre features which can also appear as an autonomous paratextual element, for example, on the cover of a book, following the title, or in the preface with the aim of announcing the status of the genre. The title of Andra Manfelde’s travelogue *Ceļojums uz mēnesi (A Trip for a Month)* (2011) is followed by the genre designation, namely “documentary prose and poetry”. Another Latvian, Inga Ābele, labels her collection *Austrumos no saules un ziemeļos no zemes (East of the Sun and North of the Earth)* (2005) as “diaries and travelogues”.

In his research, Genette also suggests that some extended titles can be relatively simple in their status; on the other hand, the much shorter wording often creates a more complex connotation. In addition, some of travelogue titles can be symbolic or metaphorical, as well as stylistically and emotionally coloured. Thus, the title of Kira Salak’s novel “The White Mary” is a metaphor. Just in the process of reading the novel it can be revealed that *Mary* is not a woman’s name (i.e. a proper name); in one of the tribal languages in Papua New Guinea the word means “a white woman” (Salak, 2009, p. 9).

All the examples considered above not just represent the subject matter of travel writing, i.e. places or cultures depicted; they often reflect the synthesis of poetic and documentary elements in travelogues, thus indicating the specificity of the genre.

4. The role of epigraphs in travelogues

Among other paratextual elements, an epigraph is not mandatory, as it is hardly crucial in the context of travel writing. However, being added to the text by its author, epigraphs

² Cited from the interpretation of L. Hoek’s idea suggested by G. Genette in: Genette, G. *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997b, p. 55–56.

can often contribute to the reader's interpretation of the narration, as they are often meant to reveal a certain idea. Epigraphs can be directly related to the plot of a travelogue; in this case, they lead to the proper perception of its themes or motifs. The usual place for an epigraph is generally the first right-hand page after the dedication but before the preface. It is most often a quotation from some authoritative work of some writer who is not the author of the present text. Genette (1997b) claims: "The epigraph is most often allographic, that is, according to our conventions, attributed to an author who is not the author of the work [...]" (Genette, 1997b, p. 151). The historical development of epigraphs can be traced in European literature from the 17th century when they appeared in the works of such French moralists as Franois de La Rochefoucauld or Jean de Labriere. In the 18th century, the literary figures of Enlightenment and Classicism resorted to using Latin epigraphs in their texts. The tendency to accompany a work of fiction or non-fiction with an epigraph gained particular popularity during the epoch of Romanticism in the first half of the 19th century (P. Merimee, V. Scott, etc.). Numerous contemporary travel writers follow the tradition of unveiling their narration with an epigraph. The purposes of each particular epigraph can vary from informing a potential reader of a travel destination or a type of trip to actualising through epigraph a certain theme or motif represented in the text.

Epigraphs are usually selected by the author, so they are generally directed at the potential reader or any target audience. Genette believes that the main function of this paratextual element is "elucidating and thereby justifying not the text but the title" (Genette, 1997b, p. 156). An epigraph is often a comment that addresses the genre, the theme, or the motif of a literary work. Thus, the epigraph for the third part of I. Ābele's travelogue entitled *Dagdā (In Dagda)* suggests going in search of a miraculous palace, as its sentences are borrowed from the folk tale of the same title – *Austrumos no saules un ziemeļos no zemes (East of the Sun and North of the Earth)*, thus emphasising the motifs of mobility and search:

Viņš soļoja pār kalniem un lejām, cauri daudzām karaļvalstīm. Un visur viņš prasīja ceļu uz skaisto pili, kas atrodas austrumos no saules un ziemeļos no zemes. Taču neviens nebija dzirdējis par tādu pili un vēl mazāk zināja, kur tāda pils atrodas.

*no pasakas
Austrumos no saules
un ziemeļos no zemes³*

Another travel diary by Ābele, entitled *Vienas vasaras laiks (One Summer Time)*, starts with the words that are excerpted from Džeimss Krogzemis' travelogue *Klaidonis (The Wanderer)*. It is a fragment from Diana's diary, in which the author, foremost, informs the

³ *He was walking over hills and downs, through many kingdoms. And everywhere he asked for the way to the beautiful palace that is east of the sun and north of the earth. But no one had heard of such a palace, and even less knew where such a palace was located.*

*from the folk tale
East from the Sun
and North from the Earth*

reader of the form of her text (a diary), as well as partly demonstrates the central motif of her travelogue, which is the representation of spiritual searches and hesitations through the inner self of the main character. Hence, some central paradigms of Ābele's diaries and travelogues are reflected by means of the abovementioned epigraphs.

Theroux, in turn, chose to quote an American modernist poet Wallace Stevens in the epigraph to his "Dark Star Safari":

Large-leaved and many-footed shadowing
What god rules over Africa, what shape,
What avuncular cloud-man beamier than spears?

– Wallace Stevens,
"The Greenest Continent"

The three lines selected from Stevens' poem "The Greenest Continent" (1936) to function as an epigraph for "Dark Star Safari" indicate, first of all, the geographical aspect of Theroux's travelogue as well as emphasize the narrator's particular attitude to the African continent. Africa obviously attracts the traveller with its landscape, mysterious history and exotic traditions. At the beginning of his narrative, Theroux claims that it is the greenest continent on the earth, where he enjoyed real happiness a time ago. "There I had lived and worked, happily, almost forty years ago, in the heart of the greenest continent." (Theroux, 2004, p. 1.) Travelling to Africa gave freedom to his soul, which was almost impossible to achieve in the traveller's native country.

Moreover, Theroux's selected epigraph, and the title of his travelogue, reveal one of the canonical motifs associated with the African continent in world literature: the motif of darkness. In Joseph Conrad's novel "Heart of Darkness" (1899), the theme of darkness was undoubtedly brought to life most vividly, with "nightmare visions of primaevial darkness, unfathomable mystery, and dreadful savagery" (Hulme, Youngs, 2002, p. 157.). Theroux, in turn, borrows this motif from the literary heritage and represents it in the context of the 21st century travelogue. But what did he really mean by "African darkness"? Dark-skinned people or perhaps their traditional dark clothes? Having studied the previous literary experience of Conrad, Theroux concluded that for his predecessor, it meant blankness – something not clear, not discovered, a sort of white space on a map. And such darkness could suggest whatever – banditry, anarchy, cannibalism, rebellion, starvation, violence, disease, etc. Theroux stresses that it was that imposed pessimism that made Africa seem the Other, which raised additional interest in its culture and made it appealing, worth visiting and researching with the aim of either confirming the established clichés or refuting them. Thus, while travelling, Theroux preserved this image of Africa – the image of crepuscular darkness, which, in turn, became synonymous for him to *terra incognita*. In his 2003 interview, after the book was published, Theroux attempted to explain the title of his travelogue by saying: "It seemed to me that a dark star embodied all the ambiguity of glitter, beauty, light, and yet still with a lot of shadow in it because there are so many wonderful things in Africa that I saw that I experienced that I know exist, and so many

difficulties, so many problems”⁴. The selected epigraph, accordingly, contributes to the idea of discovering African mystery and unveiling its real modern image.

In her interview, an American traveller and writer K. Salak refers to her quite a controversial travelogue, “The White Mary”, as a spiritual book⁵. Being the first book after the death of her beloved brother Marc, the novel appears as being filled with mysticism. In addition, Salak’s loss is partially reflected in the paratextual apparatus of her travelogue, where at least three paratextual elements can be traced, one being the following epigraph:

He who is near me is near the fire.
– Jesus, Gnostic gospels

The selected epigraph reveals the suffering and instability of the writer’s soul; besides, it bears a religious accent for the emphasis of the fine line between life and death. Moreover, for Jesus, who this way addresses his disciples, fire probably means not just sorrow and suffering, or the danger of risk to those around him; fire is also a symbol of the God’s kingdom. Similarly, for the protagonist of the novel, Marica Vecera, who is believed to be Salak’s prototype, fire is rather a symbol of life, a goal and a desire to start a hazardous journey in search of Lewis; it is a motivating sign in her soul.

5. The functions of dedication in travel writing

Dedications, being entirely meant for a certain addressee, go back to the classical literary genres, such as hymns, odes, epistles and elegies. The appearance of a dedication in contemporary writing is rather factual unless the dedicatee becomes a character of a literary work. There is a certain contrast between classical forms of dedications, which mainly aimed at expressing the author’s respectful tribute to some dedicatee (often a father, a colleague or a mentor), and the modern form of a simple mention of the dedicatee. Genette classifies dedicatees into public and private: those, who are well-known and may have some intellectual, political or artistic relations with the author, and those, who have personal (love, friendship) relations with the dedicator (Genette, 1997b, p. 131). Although dedications are not commonly put into print without prior agreement by the dedicatee, there could occur exceptions, such as the dedication in memoriam. The dedication is usually placed in the beginning of a text; besides, each has a certain semantic or pragmatic function.

From time to time travel writers resort to including dedications, both private and public, into their narratives. The abovementioned American traveller, a famous journalist of National Geographic and the author of “The White Mary” K. Salak indicates in her private dedication placed in the beginning of the book that her novel was written after the death of her bother: “In loving memory of Marc Salak (remember to wait for me)”

⁴ From the transcript of the interview with P. Theroux (May 18, 2003). Available at: <http://www.booknotes.org/Watch/176128-1/Paul+Theroux.aspx> [Accessed: 7 November 2022].

⁵ The printed version of the interview with K. Salak can be found in the 2009 book edition of Picador. (Salak, K. 2009. *The White Mary*. Picador; First Edition).

(Salak, 2009). The fact of such a loss explains the main themes of the novel: the searches and sufferings of its main character, her different expressions of spirituality that can be traced throughout the novel, might possibly reflect Salak's own emotional experiences of that time. In one of her interviews, Salak admits that her brother's death was a heavy loss for her, so writing the novel became a distraction together with an obsession during this difficult time in her life.

Theroux also opens his travelogue "Dark Star Safari" with a very "family" dedication:

*For my mother, Anne Ditammi Theroux,
on her ninety-second birthday*

The writer's faithful reader should be aware of the fact that his mother died at the age of 104, four days before her birthday, so it's not the dedication in memoriam. It is more likely to be perceived as the author's desire to demonstrate a special person in his life. In one of his interviews, Theroux mentions that his mother was a literary person who initially made him a reader⁶ and probably contributed to his literary career afterwards. It may seem surprising, but among Theroux's 30 fiction works and 17 travelogues, there is not a single autobiography or memoir. The writer explains this fact by confessing that "he doesn't want to give critics a chance to review his life"⁷; thus such dedication is rather an exception than a tendency.

Travelogues often contain dedications in a form of acknowledgement, since one of its functions is to express gratitude to potential supporters for their help in the process of writing or publishing a book. It can be related either to the financial aspect, to the motivational aspect, or to some ethical or ideological aspect. In this connection, Genette points out that "these [dedications] might include information about the sources and creation of the work, or comments on the work's form or meaning – messages by which the function of the dedication clearly encroaches on that of the preface" (Genette, 1997b, pp. 123–124). Such a type of a dedication, entitled as *Pateicības šī brauciena sekmētājiem*⁸ (Leitis, Briedis, 2016, p. 5), appears at the very beginning of the Latvian travel diary *Latviešus Sibīrijā meklējot* (*In Search of Latvians in Siberia*). Further, the present dedication contains a fairly extensive list of supporters, to whom the authors express their gratitude for various forms of support: for cooperation during the trip, for the friendly attitude and hospitality in the countries visited, for the financial support in Latvia, as well as for the motivation to share the impressions and discoveries gained from their trip in the later published book.

The dedication-acknowledgement can be also placed at the end of a book, being both formal or private. The Latvian traveller Laine Pērse includes such words of gratitude

⁶ From the transcript of the interview with P. Theroux (18 May, 2003). [online] Available at: <http://www.booknotes.org/Watch/176128-1/Paul+Theroux.aspx> [Accessed: 7 November 2022].

⁷ Quoted from the review of one of his novels by Seminara, D. 2017. Talking, Not Listening: Paul Theroux Focuses On Family in "Mother Land". Available at: <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/talking-not-listening-paul-theroux-focuses-on-family-in-mother-land/> [Accessed: 21 November 2022].

⁸ *Thanks to the facilitators of this journey*

into her travelogue *Ar stopiem apkārt pasaulei (Hitchhiking Around the World)* (2017), adding her personal interpretation of the concept “thank you”: “*Paldies*” ir spēcīgs vārds, ja teikts no sirds. Tas apliecina visdziļāko pateicību par palīdzību. Par atbalstu. Par emocijām. Par mirkļiem. “*Paldies*” sevī ietver prieku. Tas ietver patiesību. Ir tik patīkami sniegt. Un tik patīkami saņemt.⁹ (Pērse, 2017, p. 235). Such a philosophical digression emphasises Pērse’s sincerity, as well as the importance of her dedication to special people. Later in the text, the traveller expresses sincere gratitude to her relatives and friends for “virtually and mentally traveling with us” (*ka viņi virtuāli un domās ceļoja ar mums*) (Pērse, 2017, p. 235); to those who helped and gave advice; to those who supported their journey financially; as well as to other “strangers for their positive wishes and helpful recommendations” (*nepazīstamiem cilvēkiem par pozitīvajiem vēlējumiem un lietderīgajiem ieteikumiem!*) (Pērse, 2017, p. 235). Thus, such dedications generally function for creating a communicative bond with special people.

6. Visual images and documentary material as a proof witness in travelogues

The illustrative material gained or selected by travellers and added to their travelogues reveals the specifics of the genre. In most cases, it is related to the content of a text, illustrating the places and cultures depicted in it. Across technologies, the idea that illustrations could provide certain visual guarantees was kept for a long time in relation to travel writing. Initially, the functions of the illustrative apparatus were performed with the help of various types of drawings and sketches; photographic material, in turn, first appeared in travelogues around the middle of the 19th century. Today visual images that commonly accompany travel texts are diverse in their typology. Illustrations, photographs, fragments of geographical maps, archival materials, etc., are paratextual elements being widely used in contemporary travel writing. An American researcher in art history, Stephanie Leitch, believes that being important elements in the visual apparatus of books, “images in travel literature embellish stories and entice buyers” (Leitch, 2019, p. 456). However, these images bear not just aesthetic and informative functions but also play an essential role in constructing the modality of a travelogue, revealing the authenticity of its plot. Leitch specifies: “Depictions of peoples and prospects in these accounts inflect readers’ sense of place, establish authors’ reputation for truth-telling, and create fervour for travel, both real and imagined” (Leitch, 2019, p. 456).

P. Theroux is one of those writers who prefers illustrating his travels with real itineraries and topographical objects with fragments of geographical maps. Researchers and critics of travel writing are more frequently debating the status of geographic maps and their ambiguous role in travel writing. Geographical maps, which became an essential component of a personal letter or political pamphlet, prose or poetry, are used both as

⁹ ‘Thank you’ is a powerful word if it is said from the heart. It expresses one’s deepest gratitude for someone’s help. For support. For emotions. For moments. ‘Thank you’ includes joy. It includes the truth. It is a pleasure to thank. And it is a pleasure to receive thanks.

a narrative technique and an important paratextual element. They can be used either to complement a literary text or even to replace some of its parts. Over time, to create the effect of authenticity, travel writers use geographical maps and manuals to describe places, indicated geographic coordinates in their descriptions, combined a literary form with map fragments, placed maps in appendixes, etc. In any case, the use of cartographic elements in fiction or non-fiction affects its form, content or even genre in the process of literary adaptation. On the one hand, map fragments have a kind of guide function, illustrating the trip itself; moreover, it is also a form of representing a process of travelling, which can influence either the readers' perception or their awareness of the objects portrayed in narratives. As for Theroux, the traveller is very precise in marking the visited geographical places, describing the historical and cultural landscape, and referring to real people's names. This is one of the peculiarities of Theroux's style of writing, which can be traced both in the illustrative material of his books and throughout his textual descriptions. The similar precision in depicting geographical objects, as well as the systematic illustration of trips with fragments of geographical maps, can be observed in the Latvian travelogue *Ar stopiem apkārt pasaulei. Ziemeļamerikas kokteilis (Hitchhiking Around the World. North American Cocktail)* (2017) by L. Pērse. The potential reader or just a tourist can get acquainted with maps of several itineraries, find useful information concerning special places (it may be used as a guide both in terms of facts and advice), as well as enjoy 58 colourful photos. This paratextual apparatus adds not just brightness to the book, but also authenticity to what is being depicted. The fragments of geographical maps reveal the exact route and the travellers' stopping places. The photographs, in turn, illustrate some unique or even exotic objects that the travellers have been admiring during their trip. Besides, as the researchers of travelogue have claimed, "photography could perhaps best advocate for the veracity of the subject without the intervention of the observer." (Das, Youngs, 2019, p. 471). The objects of nature and cultural landscape captured in these photos illustrate the specificity of each place; the photographs of Laine and Arturs together with the locals confirm the veracity of the entire narration; separate images of souvenirs, talismans or food reflect the local colouring. In addition, paratext makes Pērse's travelogue visually appealing for any travel enthusiast.

Very extensive illustrative and documentary material can be detected in the travel diary *Latviešus Sibīrijā meklējot (In Search of Latvians in Siberia)* (2016) by I. Leitis and U. Briedis. It is worth mentioning that each of its authors was responsible for his part: thus, Leitis is the author of the written text, while Briedis, a well-known photojournalist from Liepāja¹⁰, is the author of the illustrative part. Briedis's main mission was to get unique shots and collect them in a portfolio, which would not just illustrate the adventures of the two young men, but also reflect the typical Siberian landscape, reveal the influence of historical political processes on the locals, outline the diverse human images, as well as illustrate the lifestyle and the preserved features of the Latvian diaspora identity. Almost

¹⁰ The Latvian city in Kurzeme region.

every settlement, even the smallest, which the travellers pass through and which is in any way connected with the Latvian diaspora, received special attention through detailed descriptions and illustrations. In addition, the role of historical facts and documents in the present travel diary cannot be underestimated. The authors constantly confirm the stories of the locals with photos of archival documents, such as fragments from letters and telegrams, newspaper articles and sources from the KGB¹¹ archives; the names of historical figures and their photographs also appear. All this can also be viewed as an instrument of objectification that not just adds historical context and gives the narrative the status of a document but also assures of the veracity of the descriptions and the authenticity of the whole trip.

Conclusion

Paratextual elements play a significant role in American and Latvian travelogues of the turn of 20th–21st century. They indicate the diverse subject matter of travel texts, emphasising the thematic aspects implied by its authors; they often form a bond between a journey as a process, the places described and their historical context; owing to paratext, the specificity of the genre can be traced, which indicates the typological diversity of travelogues and the hybridity of textual forms. Besides, paratextual elements often bear the authenticity of a narrative, and create a communicative bond with the reader. The peritext, being centred around the text, directly related and functionally subordinate to it, often complements and visualises the content and the plot of a narrative; it also draws the reader's attention to the topical themes and motifs represented in travelogues. Some paratextual elements, such as a preface or genre designation, provide comments essential to a narrative, which partially reveal the author's interpretation, thus, further affecting the reader's perception of the text. In turn, the epitext, which includes all the other elements distanced from the text, such as the author's interviews, excerpts from letters or diaries, the feedback of readers and reviewers, the remarks of literary critics, etc., adds additional information, both objective and subjective, which allows considering the same text from different perspectives.

It is also worth noting that the most important property of paratext is its functionality. Genette highlights its multiple functions by labelling such functionality as heterogeneous. Regardless of what aesthetic purpose might arise, for example, by including illustrations in the text, the main task of paratext is not to "look nice" around the text but to facilitate the further interpretation of its main ideas, themes and motifs by potential readers. In addition, paratextual elements that appear in travelogues often reveal the writer's specific and unique style, distinguishing each one from many other travelogue writers.

¹¹ The KGB (Russian, Romanised: Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti, English: Committee for State Security) is a foreign intelligence and domestic security agency of the Soviet Union. Pringle, R. W. *KGB agency, Soviet Union*. Cited from: *Britannica*. [online] Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/KGB> [Accessed 14 November 2022].

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