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lic. BENJAMIN BOSSAERT

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Benjamin Bossaert

**NO NATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION: HEROES GOING
PLACES.**

***A COMPARATIVE RESEARCH OF FLEMISH AND SLOVAK HEROES IN
LITERATURE***

*Literary and historical representations of two national rebels: Jan De Lichte (Flanders)
versus Juraj Jánošík (Slovakia)*

Disertační práce

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INTRODUCTION

Can history be seen as a matter of individuals fighting for a cause beyond their own interests? If you answer yes, you will be looking for a certain type of hero that fits into a certain tradition. The starting point of this thesis is therefore a definition of the concept of national hero. This hero must have a certain dedication towards the nation. A particular charismatic authority is needed, which must be accepted by a group of people. Historical heroes have had a life that was worth following or where certain character traits are worth enhancing. After some mythologization processes that changed over time, some heroes became dominant, others disappeared from the pantheon of their national heroes. These non-accepted heroes may evolve into harmful heroes. Imagery of literary and historical heroes could be discourse-dependent and a meandering, changing concept. The guiding principle of this research is to examine the dynamics of attracting and rejecting the hero model of the so-called **rural outlaw**, the Robin Hood archetype.

On the Flemish side there is the robber hero Jan de Lichte, on the Slovak side the robber hero Juraj Jánošík is the key figure, two individuals who have historically been classified as criminals and have been sentenced to death. In this research, using a literary-historical typology, I want to sketch the dynamics around the concept of rural outlaws as heroes (Bossart 2016: 179-183). The main thesis proposed is: which factors can be considered significant that a hero like Jánošík has successfully entered a Slovak pantheon of heroes and is widely accepted as one of the typical Slovak heroes, while the figure of Jan de Lichte, which nevertheless corresponds in many ways historically, mythologically, narratologically and even visually to the Slovak primitive rebel, remained to a large extent a regional phenomenon. Nevertheless, certainly in a later period of the twentieth century, in the case of Jan de Lichte various examples of imagery continue to exist in the form of various literary adaptations (plays, radio plays, and comics), narratives, lieux-de-mémoire and commemorations, or other forms of adaptation. We look at and compare these two heroes from the frame of reference that starts with the primitive rebels - the image of Eric Hobsbawm. This model is refined by Carsten Küther and synthesized by Adam Votruba. This will then be compared to the criticism and typology of Joep Leerssen and John Neubauer. Both Juraj Jánošík and Jan de Lichte can be regarded as primitive hybrid heroes, with both good and bad characteristics. I will use three important methodological tools to describe both types of heroes: imagology, the phenomenon of written folklore in the definition of Aleida Assmann and it will be connected together with the help of *histoire croisée* by Bénédicte

Zimmermann and Michael Werner. To sketch literary images around the characters Juraj Jánošík and Jan de Lichte, I start from a discursive concept based on the French literary scholar Jérôme Meizoz, namely *posture*. *Posture* is a concept to connect representation of writers, both how they present themselves and how they are described by others, with the literary context in which these writers find themselves. Moreover, Laurens Ham refines the concept by stating that the characters they use can also reinforce their own image in a dynamic way or, on the contrary, be turned away from it. This research can also be framed as an attempt at a broader interpretation of the concept of heroes and protagonists in a national context¹.

This leads to the structure of the thesis. In the first chapter, an introduction to the general theory of Robin Hood figures will be presented. In addition, a *status questionis* will be presented in connection with the research into image formation around this historical and literary hero type. Jan de Lichte will be introduced as a historical figure and as a literary hero. Here, however, it is also necessary to briefly elaborate on some other robber heroes in the Flemish-Dutch literary tradition, in which Baekelandt and the Bokkenrijders are mentioned. Then an overview of Juraj Jánošík is elaborated, also placed in a broader context as a historical figure, his place within the Slovak national movement and as a literary hero. Jánošík is also considered in a broader context in the sense of geographical space, in which he is characterized as a Carpathian brigand.

The basic hypotheses of the thesis are based around the observation that Jan de Lichte has not become a rural outlaw known throughout Flanders in literary imagery, but has rather remained a regionally known phenomenon, while Jánošík is genuinely regarded as a Slovakian national figure (and in some cases a hero) in literary imagery.

In the second chapter, I will elaborate on the basic methodological concepts. The concept of written folklore is presented, the theory of imagology and stereotypes is discussed and applied to heroes, the concept of *histoire croisée* is explained and the typologies of Hobsbawm-Küther, Leerssen and Neubauer and Votruba are contrasted.

Then, in the two cases, I work out the typology in comparative aspect on a literary-sociological level. In chapter three is dealt with the literary dynamics around the character of Jan de Lichte and the authors who wrote about him. Using the concepts of *posture* and *authority*, which are defined, there will be an outline of how the authors positioned

¹ The initial starting point that sparked the interest for this research project was a workshop within the framework of the project NISE - National Movements and Intermediary Structures in Europe. NISE is an initiative of the Flemish archive institution ADVN and aims to create a database, a heuristic guide and archival tool to stimulate international comparative research on national movements in Europe.

themselves in the Flemish-Dutch literary landscape with the help of the character Jan de Lichte. In chapter four we do the same with the much longer tradition of Juraj Jánošík. I investigate how a selection of authors positioned themselves historically-contextually and biographically in relation to their character Jánošík.

PRIMITIVE REBELS AS HEROES

Every Nation its Own Robin Hood: Jan De Lichte (Flanders) versus Juraj Jánošík (Slovakia) as Literary and Historical Representations of Two Nations

Rural societies were often disturbed by peasant revolts and marked by social rebellion. Archetypical in this context was the famous Robin Hood, the man who stole from the rich and gave to the poor in a medieval time setting. Robin Hood first appeared in a text in the opening quote of Langland's *Piers Plowman* (c. 1377). He is known as a red haired leader of a gang, called the *Merry Men*, operating somewhere around the 13th century near the Sherwood Forest (Nottinghamshire) and Barnsdale (Yorkshire). Historians did try to trace him back as a real existing figure, and although Nottingham archives do mention a certain *Robin Hood fugitivus* in 1230, there is no real evidence of the existence of Robin Hood but his legacy consists more in a shared pool of folk tales. In the fifteenth and sixteenth century, he is already a popular figure and during popular summer festivities he is the central figure about whom people used to sing ballads and develop a special dance in the theme of Robin Hood and his Maid Marion. The work *The Downfall of Robert, Earle of Huntington* (1601) of Anthony Munday marked the appearance of Robin Hood in elite culture. Munday depicted Robin Hood not as a common robber but a nobleman, however based his story on the various folk ballads and oral legends. (Stapper, Altena and Uytven 1994: 196-198, Chandler 2006: online)

Eric Hobsbawm stated in *Bandits* (1981: 19) that Britain, being the country that provided the world with the archetypical international social bandit paradigm, actually has no record of actual bandits other than Robin Hood fitting this stereotype after the sixteenth century, although the public opinion continued to substitute the noble robber by idealizing certain highwaymen. Crucial to his definition is that the robbers are not regarded as common criminals by public opinion. The bandit proves right what has been done wrong to the people and it is a restoration of just and fair relations between the rich and the poor in traditional peasant societies. (Hobsbawm 1981: 26-27)

Various texts and performances appeared already in the early modern period, the nineteenth century however featured a serious increase in the popularity of Robin Hood. Authors such as Joseph Ritson (1795), Sir Walter Scott with *Ivanhoe* and Thomas Love Peacock (both 1820),

and Pierce Egan (1838) all featured Robin Hood in their works, either momentarily (as in Scott), or as a main character of their stories. (Chandler 2006: online)

Robin Hood, his figure and legacy led to a huge amount of legends and tales about his heroism and social struggle and was therefore inspiring to other examples in other rural societies in Europe². 2012 was in Flanders a year of commemoration of the Flemish writer Louis Paul Boon, who wrote a novel *De bende van Jan de Lichte* (The Gang of Jan De Lichte). It gave again some attention to the representation in Flanders of an 18th century social rebel, revolting, yet proud of his descent. In the nineteenth century, a lot of legends arose in Slovakia about a mythical, but historical real rebel who operated also in the 18th century from the Polish-Hungarian borderland, Juraj Jánošík. His inspiring character led to several representations in literature and films or other visual depiction (cartoons, comics, paintings), even today in modern Slovak society.

In this dissertation I would like to focus on three issues. At the hand of Eric Hobsbawm's *Social Rebels* and the imagological studies of Joep Leerssen and John Neubauer, a short definition of the Social Bandit will be given, why this rebellious type is considered to be a trait of heroism and suitable to represent as a national figure or a national hero. This bandit type received also some criticism, thus, it will be necessary to develop the concept of this bandit type into a broader one of the rural outlaw. Secondly, I would like to give a short summary of the representations of the Flemish figure of Jan de Lichte and his Slovak counterpart Juraj Jánošík. Who were they, how did they develop from historical figures into mythical figures and how did the respective national movements of Flanders and Slovakia integrate them as symbols of their nation? This chapter will be ended by a provisory conclusion and by an attempt to answer to the question, whether a social rebel may figure as a good representation of a national hero in literature as well as in society. Further research questions, plans and case-studies are reflected in the end. Does the rural outlaw reflect the nation's self- image? Do they qualify as 'great men' of their society and if so, then why? The third and the fourth chapter will focus on each rural outlaw separately in the field of literary sociology. The main focuses will lie on the authors of the literary representations and the authority with which they represented 'their' rebels. Given the fact that the second part of the dissertation will focus more on literary depiction of Jan de Lichte and Juraj Jánošík by several

² A scientific record of the vast amount of Robin Hood sources in the shape of a wikipedia-style-encyclopaedia, bibliography and a review of criticism is to be found online as the *International Robin Hood Bibliography* on <https://www.irhb.org/wiki/index.php/Criticism>

authors, the outlines of the rural outlaws in a historical and folklore context need to be sketched, as there are signs of written folklore that consequently adapted the historical figures into mythical representations. For this reason it is suitable to define a hero-typology in the second chapter based on the state of the art comparative research about rebels, outlaws and Robin Hood-figures in the Low Countries and Central Europe.

1.1 Primitive Rebels and imagological representations.

The primitive rebels discussed in the Flemish and Slovak cases appeared in gangs who were actively robbing in the eighteenth century, long before the Flemish and Slovak national movements started to reach political conscience or before Flemish and Slovak people began to have feelings as a society. Primitive rebellion should be seen therefore in the first place as an endemic protest against poverty. Eric Hobsbawm (1959) discussed two types of outlaws in his research: one is a more classical blood-vengeance outlaw, who were to be found more in Southern countries of Europe, the kind of a brigand who was not fighting rich to help the poor, but more focused on protecting his kinsmen. The other type represents a peasant rebelling against his landlords, usurpers and other rich men. They may consider themselves as enemies of the rich people, sometimes belonging to another nation which exploits them (Hobsbawm 1959: 3-4).

In imagological studies, a primitive representation is often considered to be opposed to a civilized society on colonial topics; it refers to a simple society with almost no rules and little social stratification. Banditry will be defined as a form of primitive social protest. It appears in a period of wars, unstable times and famine. The bandits are idealized and in the end turned into myths and heroes in the society (Hobsbawm, 1959: 13). In order to match the concept of a primitive rebel with a hero, imagological concepts of a hero must be taken into account. A hero is always closely aligned with myths, history, memory and oral tradition (Calzoni in Beller 2007: 332). They originate in oral culture and come from a nation's collective memory; they are famous for their strength and abilities. In the nineteenth century, these oral traditions were used to form a more modern stereotype of a hero, given broad attention to all the common people by spreading these images through popular literature. Consequently, the case study primitive rebels Jan de Lichte and Jánošík started to fit in a scheme of the archetypical bandit, who was struggling for his own people in an alien-occupied nation. The mass started to perceive them as *good villains*. In both cases,

remarkable mythological-religious features of these heroes could be observed. Both were given outstanding, sometimes even magical powers and strange pacts with the devils (Goszczyńska 2003: 28-30, Boon 1957: 76)

In literature, it is remarkable that these figures are also settling in a regional space which evokes the paradigm of a centre versus periphery. Other oppositions can be found in the themes of tales where Jan de Lichte as well as Jánošík appears: rich versus poor/high class versus low-class, the city versus the countryside. It provides us with strong auto- versus hetero-images in national aspects, since the events always happened in an alien-occupied territory (French/Austrian vs. local – Jan de Lichte, Hungarian nobility versus Slovaks – Jánošík).

1.2 Criticism on Hobsbawm – further conceptualisation of the hero-type

As a reaction on critics on his work, Hobsbawm in his work *Bandits* (1981: 139-164) acknowledged his views on social bandits were rather unreliable, because he over-emphasised some things (Leerssen, Neubauer, e.a. 2010: 411-12). He focused mainly on the social conflicts of banditry, with a rather small amount of historical figures corresponding to the archetypical social bandit, while he underestimated the fact that the new patriotic elites created and cultivated them for their self-protection and empowerment. Higher elites helped to create also these rural outlaw heroes to one of several ‘national myths’. Hobsbawm also did not have the knowledge to read examples of rural outlaws in the respective vernaculars. Consequently, his reach of archetypical outlaws was, especially in Eastern and Central Europe, quite limited.

In this research, the term *Rural outlaws* is considered as a more accurate definition of this hero-type, because it differentiates their historical character with their deeds from their oral, literary, visual and artistic afterlife. They serve different purposes. I would like to follow the model of Joep Leerssen and John Neubauer (2010: 412). They suggest “that outlaws inhabit four distinct spheres: (1) historical documents (2) orality (3) literature and (4) the media. In the majority of cases, the listed domains constitute a historical consequence: historical outlaws enter folklore; professional writers elaborate on the oral tradition, and the media transpose the stories and themes into visual and musical art forms.”

Historian Luc Boeva pledges in *Rien de Plus international* (2009: 9, 38) for a fruitful interdisciplinary approach in researching national thinking and nationalism. He thinks frameworks and theoretical models need to be expanded and more importantly, to be applied to several national cases to see if they match their profiles. In order to achieve this goal, the Antwerp Archief en Documentatiecentrum voor het Vlaams-nationalisme (Archive and Documentation Centre for Flemish Nationalism) has developed the NISE-network, National and Intermediary Structures in Europe, connecting research about nationalism and processes and institutions of national thinking all over Europe. This research hopes to be a part of this endeavour.

I would like to link these models and conceptualisations to show in the case of Juraj Jánošík a successful meandering concept of theorisation, through various narratives. In the first part of the thesis, this will be more on a cultural-historical basis. In the second part of the thesis, the meandering concept will be seen through the writers engaged with their heroes, using the hero-image for their own representations. Jan de Lichte also has known lots of similarities and according to remembrance, literary tradition and mythicization, has appeared also several times as another (alternative) hero-image. Nowadays, however, one could hardly argue him to be a successful hero in the Flemish national movement and one may ask why this rural outlaw failed to serve as an all-national hero-type. His visual image however is still a regional phenomenon and in cultural Flemish memory Jan de Lichte still stays a popular hero-figure.

1.3 Hypotheses

Context and conceptualisation of the above mentioned rural hero-stereotypes leads to two hypotheses, which will be researched further on in this dissertation. I assume the figure of Juraj Jánošík was more successful as a national hero, because of his multi-ethnic affiliation, being born in a border region. Hetero-image of Polish, Czech and Slovak sources led to a broader depiction and a more multi-faced stereotype, suitable for national heroes. The concept of hetero-image means that the image another nation has about the nation justifies and makes their own images stronger. A hybrid identity concept is explored further in (post-) modernist times, in visual and literary adaptations. Presumably, demythicization also may lead to a paradoxically stronger concept of a hero. My second hypothesis is that the role of (popular) literature, mass media and visualisation in the case of Jánošík led to a faster (and earlier)

spread of the image than the literary hero concept. Jan de Lichte was not depicted by any famous writer in highbrow literature until the 20th century, as it was the case for Jánošík. In the next chapters, the historical and literary context of Jan de Lichte and Juraj Jánošík will be briefly described, and a short survey will be given of some (post)modernist and visual adaptations and lieux-de-mémoire. The second part of this dissertation will focus more on the writers around Jan de Lichte and Jánošík. Here will be discussed whether the writers, who represent themselves or are represented as more rebellious, identified Jan de Lichte and Juraj Jánošík more or less with the rural outlaw hero-type and for what reasons. In literary theory and discourse studies, the French concept of *posture* proves a very useful instrument to research this. Through interaction, the image of the author and his or her authority, with other writers reacting to that image, leads to a meandering, rather constantly changing identity and imagery of the rural outlaw stereotype. He cannot be considered as exclusively positive or negative.

1.4 The case of Jan de Lichte: historical outline

Jan de Lichte was a historical figure who left a very much lasting impression on his contemporaries, in such extent that later on he appeared into lots of legends, more or less situated in the region of the river Dender, around the cities of Aalst and Zottegem, where his gang was mostly operating and where also the worst crimes took place. I will present some biographical information as well as forms of depiction as a fictional rebel hero. Most research of Jan de Lichte as a historical figure was done by Danny Lamarcq, a historian from Velzeke, the same village as Jan de Lichte, at present a part of Zottegem County. The literary figure of Jan de Lichte became probably best known by its depiction in Louis Paul Boon's novel *De Bende van Jan de Lichte* (The Gang of Jan de Lichte) and its sequel *De Zoon van Jan de Lichte*. (The son of Jan de Lichte) Boon was an Aalst-born writer who wrote several other social-moving historical novels. He used to document himself very well in old folklore legends and archives before he conceived his novels.

Jan De Lichte was born in 1723 in the little village of Velzeke in the region of the city Aalst, nowadays the province of East Flanders. His parents belonged to the lowest societal class and lived often even at the margins of social life. The family members of his mother and his father were known as thieves and robbers in the neighbourhood, and they frequented to the so-called *Tafels van de H. Geest* (Tables of the Holy Spirit), an organisation which

provided them food support and was designed only for the very poorest people with no revenues.

The whole region consisted at this time of a no man's land, as the Southern Low Countries (roughly present Belgium) were suffering from several wars, fought out by the Austrian Habsburg Empire, who obtained the territory in 1713 after the War of the Spanish Succession, the United Provinces in the North and the French armies of Louis XV. Armies of all three countries were constantly invading the region and pillaged it for food and supplies, leaving the countryside devastated and even poorer than it used to be.

In 1740 the War of the Austrian Succession started, which meant a second period of eight years of invading armies that caused a rise in banditry of the common people, since there was no real law and order. Armies frequently looted villages they were invading, so it is no surprise that a region with a population of 125,000 people that barely recovered of the former five years of war had a very hard time when the French army settled half of its capacity (54,000 soldiers) in the region of Aalst. Moreover, the harvest of grain was very weak in 1740. That situation probably forced Jan de Lichte to robbery, burglary and starting to organise a gang. His gang was active during the years 1740-1748. Before his active banditry life, however, he joined in as a soldier, first for the Austrian, then for the Dutch army. He deserted twice, but inevitably his former military service provided him with the necessary weapon wielding skills needed for banditry. The army also provided for poor people sure access to food, clothing and a small amount of money.

The gang of Jan de Lichte was no well-organised structure, which confirms the theory being discussed here about a very primitive form of rebellion. It consisted of roughly three groups, divided on its action range. There was a group around the sharpers of Pieter van de Putte, operating in the region Courtrai-Tielt-Oudenaarde. There was the group De Schepper/Vekeman, operating near Ghent, Sint-Niklaas and Antwerp. The third part consisted of a group around Jan de Lichte himself committing the heaviest crimes in the region around Geraardsbergen and its surroundings. He formed a group with vagrants, beggars, gypsies and they appear on the foreground in the Louis Paul Boon novel as well. The gypsies were called by the local inhabitants 'Egyptians', strange people with a very bad reputation.

The gang members took nicknames and spoke a language known as *Bargoens*, a form of Dutch slang for the lower class at the margins of society with influences from *Romani*, the gypsy language. The main characters in the gang were: Francies Geents 'Tincke', Anthone

Van Der Gucht, Jan Savoye 'Little John', Pieter De Moor, Jan Van Wetteren, Francies Van Den Haute 'Abeel', Pieter Van Ronse, Lieven Faveel, Gabriel Van der Cruyssen, Jan De Lichte, Francies Meulenaere, Pieter Van Cauwenberge 'Wannelapper', Jan Cottenier 'the Madman from Wortegem', Pieter Van Der Linden 'Buttonmaker', Adriaan Vagenende, Gillis Van Der Elst 'from Pamel', Pieter De Wilde, Jean and Jacques Le Couvreur, Simon Ysebaert, Jan and François De Vrieze. They were active since the year 1743, but mainly operated during the years 1747 and 1748. There were also women involved in the gang, who held (loose) relationships with the male criminals as paramours, sometimes had children with them but were not married. They were later arrested as concubines. They held however a ritual that bonded them together with the gang with a kind of a contract, confirmed by the 'mother-in-law' of Jan de Lichte.

Several folk tales depicted Jan de Lichte and his gang as if they were feared by everyone and stole lots of money from the rich to give it to the poor. In reality, that was quite exaggerated as there was in the land around Aalst nothing much to steal in bare money. In reality, the loot most of the time consisted of food and textile or clothing that was sold. The severity of the crimes was highly fictionalised as well, as most of the time the gang just stole the goods and ran away, sometimes even being afraid of ordinary people chasing them and throwing stones. By the years 1747-1748 however, their crimes started to be more violent: more and more crimes were noticed with fighting, burglaries with shootings and looting with murdering.

According to the documents of the trials of these criminals in Aalst, which took place between October and December 1748, Jan de Lichte was sentenced to be broken on the wheel together with six other murderers. Nineteen others were hung; lots of others were sent to row on the royal galleys or sent in exile, where they lived in the same poor conditions as at home. These sentences were considered to be very harsh and severe and were obviously meant to shock the public in order to prevent others from banditry (Lamarcq, online; Lamarcq, 1978: 11-35; Roggeman, 2007: 5-6).

It was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that the legend of Jan de Lichte became more well-known to a broader public. In 1873, the amateur-historic from Wetteren Ernest Ternest wrote a semi-historical novel about the gang leader, partially based on facts, but he used several themes of the folk tales and the oral tradition people used to tell each other about the ferocious deeds of Jan de Lichte around Aalst. A second novel of an anonymous author was published in 1888, *De Groote bende van Jan de Lichte, Bewerkt naar*

de oorspronkelijke processtukken, en de meest herhaalde en meest verspreide overleveringen (The large gang of Jan de Lichte, adapted according to the original trial documents and the most told traditions). The third, popular novel of Hans van Hoorenbeek (pseudonym of Abraham Hans), published in 1908, *Jan de Lichte en zijn zwarte rooversbende* (*Jan de Lichte and his black bandit gang*) was completely fictional. He used the original plot of earlier versions of the stories to focus on a romantic tale about robbing and love. He introduced an intrigue between an archetypical, French-speaking villain, the castellan³ Johan De Creil, who wants to marry off his daughter for good money against her will. She is only saved from this fate by the gang after a robbery of a diligence. Certainly, it was this novel that inspired Louis Paul Boon to write his version of the story of Jan de Lichte. The folk tales and the popular novels often depicted our hero as a rebel who took the money from the rich, seeking mercy with the common people and even organised a kind of a resistance against the ruling class, as what is now known an aberration as there was no real control at that time in the war-stricken county of Aalst. There are also (untrue, not historical) religious motives involved, as some tales reported he confessed his real beliefs to a priest before he was sentenced to death (Humbeek, 2007: 392-4).

Boon's views on literature and the position and the purpose of his work as a writer explain a lot about his depiction of Jan de Lichte. Muires (1999: 37-45) finds that Boon introduces in the poetics of the novel *Zomer te ter-Muren* (1953), the earliest mentioning of the outlaw Jan de Lichte in Boon's works, his new views on writing. Boon says a writer has to describe real life as it is, finding problems in literary chronology, as things are happening at the same time independent of each other and as the writer, Boon is not being able to describe it precisely. Secondly Boon wants his literature to serve a social purpose. Following the examples of Céline, Dostoevsky, Dos Passos and Multatuli and even philosophers such as Marx, Boon wanted his works to show social engagement, influencing society, using modernist narrative techniques such as streams of consciousness. He did not want it, however, to serve an ideology, but used literature as a mean to accuse social injustice and to derive later an authentic image out of his works. Boon depicted in his works mostly lower-class people, chasing a dream or pursuing happiness they cannot find.

Boon wanted to write about Jan de Lichte as well, but saw a different perspective in the figure of the gang leader. According to him, the folk tales and popular novels were by far too

³ A castellan (Flemish *kastelein*) was the royal administrator of a *kasselrij*, a district of a county without an own central town. They mostly were no nobles themselves but were mere local officers of noblemen.

romantic and depicted Jan de Lichte too much as a law-abiding person. He perceived Jan de Lichte as a figure who purposely placed himself out of society, because of his poor living conditions. Boon did not blame his behaviour only on the poor conditions of the country caused by the wars, but he stated that Jan de Lichte acted out of a structural, long-lasting backwardness of the Flemish countryside. He saw Jan de Lichte as an early revolutionary, wanting to challenge and change the exploitation of the country, which already started since the Eighty Years' War with the Spanish. The book does not end optimistic as our hero Jan de Lichte is executed with his death sentence at the end. Boon believed the lower class is always doomed to fail in an attempt to obtain enduring changes in society (Humbecck 2007: 394,396-7).

Boon's novel was very well received by the Dutch speaking public and his novel was published by the left-wing Dutch editor De Arbeiderspers in Amsterdam in the ARBO series, aiming at a larger public as a cheap edition. Later on, some other representations of Jan de Lichte were given in drama plays, a novel of Jack Verstappen (1984, 1987), versions of the Boon novel in broadcasting and even a spin-off in the shape of a comic book in five stories (Boon, 1985; www2). Roel D'Haese made a statue of Jan de Lichte, which was supposed to be at the main square in Aalst, but the city council refused this proposal with the argument that they did not want to commemorate a criminal at such a prominent place. The same argument was used by the citizens of Velzeke, after which the statue moved to Antwerp in front of the Court House. After the eighties, Jan de Lichte was once more commemorated in 2012, when the 200th birthday of the writer Louis Paul Boon was remembered. The historian Danny Lamarq wrote a play about Jan de Lichte which was performed at the castle of Zottegem and the trial of the gang leader was re-enacted in Aalst. In 2007, the Velzeke-born journalist Danny Cantaert wrote a modern version of the novel of Jan de Lichte (Cantaert 2007, online). In this dissertation, some attention will be given to these adaptations of the rural outlaw figure, because they had probably some influence on the meandering concept of the hero. De Meyer (2005: 8-10) states in an article about popular culture and folk culture that often a dual connection can be observed between authenticity on folk culture and folklorisation phenomena. Sometimes historical concepts are used out of their context for commercial purposes, such as city marketing or selling commercial products. This leads to several forms of adaptation and it influences the image of national heroes. It often leads also to caricaturizing and stereotypes of the national heroes.

In connection to the above described closer look at Jan de Lichte in the books, he may be characterised with the following adjectives: fellow gang member Tincke describes him as a creep and an impostor, the guy from Brussels creates an image in the novel of Boon of the greatest and mostly feared thief of the region. He must have a contract with the devil, as Jan de Lichte uses a lot of disguises: a nobleman, farmer, gypsy, flax-salesman (Boon 1957: 76). At the end of the novel, however, the protagonist Jan de Lichte realises he is too soft and warns other fellow-members for laziness and the fact that is he is too roguish with his members. He can show mercy and feels a need to change this. The image of Jan de Lichte is indeed not only a severe, by everyone feared leader of the gang, but knows how to make jokes, to please women, to show mercy and to be just as the loot always has to be divided by all the gang members (Boon 1957: 192, 225, 230). The originally dual, more hybrid character of Jan de Lichte evolves in the Boon novel into a dreaded, severe leader. He especially shows no mercy in his fight against his former friend and fellow gang member Tincke, who in the end betrays him. The story has no happy ending, as Jan de Lichte ends on the wheel as a broken man, but before dying he manages to shout out *voor geen chanterik peu*, which is the *Bargoens* (Cant) equivalent of: not afraid of the executioner.

It will be further discussed whether the same features are valid for the other primitive rebel, in the Slovak case. As a matter of fact, Jan de Lichte himself is not a unique case of a banditry gang leader in the Flanders country: the Western regions of Flanders knew the notorious Bakelandt and the Eastern regions (Limburg) were threatened by the so-called *Bokkenrijders* (Billy-goatriders). It seems that there is a strong regional tendency in these rebel figures to remark. Ample examples of similar rural outlaws in several regions of Flanders could have hampered the nationalisation of one particular figure and blocked the providing of one clear rebel, an example to be accepted into an all-national pantheon of national heroes by a remarkable Flemish romantic author or academic scholars. In the third chapter, the role of mythicization and de-mythicization processes in modernist literature and adaptations will be more thoroughly analyzed, so as to show that the Flemish archetypical Jan de Lichte is based on relatively small source material, together with the other rural outlaws in Flanders.

1.5 The case of Juraj Jánošík

The Slovak hero Juraj Jánošík, the second protagonist in this comparison of national Robin Hood-like figures, was born in 1688 in the rural area around the village of Terchová in the former Upper-Hungary (nowadays Slovakia), at the Polish borders. The regions he operated are Orava, Liptov, some sources mention Gemer and Spiš, all in the North, Centre of Slovakia, sometimes in the region of Silezia, now also known as Těšínsko (a Czech-polish border region). Some Polish researchers claimed Jánošík also in the pantheon of Polish national heroes, but there are several more myths and stories to be found in the Slovak literary and folkloristic tradition. His turnover into a myth from a bandit into a hero who *took from the rich and gave it to the poor* has known a long tradition starting from the 19th century, where the founding fathers of the Slovak national movement adopted Jánošík from folklore tales and songs as a heroic figure in their literary works, further evolving as a romantic hero, merged into popular literature. He has maintained this position into the twentieth century, where Jánošík has been the leading figure in several films.

Little is known about his childhood but it is almost sure he came from a peasant family. He was also in an early age involved in war as he joined the revolting *Kuruc*-fighters of the Hungarian nobleman Ferenc Rákoczi, rebelling against the Habsburg Empire from 1703-1711. At the battle of Trenčín, however, Jánošík is caught and decided to join the Imperial army instead. He served as an imperial guard in a prison where he had a crucial encounter in 1710 with the famous bandit Tomáš Uhorčík, who was the leader of a gang in the countryside at that time. Uhorčík convinces Jánošík to become the next leader of the gang, who is operating under his leadership from 1711 until 1713.

There are documents to be found about a few crimes he committed, however there was no attempt of committing murder, stealing only small amounts of money, clothing and food, looting wine and pillaging priests and lower nobility. The period of time when Jánošík was operating took only two years. Later on, he was arrested at the house of Tomáš 'Mravec' Uhorčík (who had taken a false name), found guilty of banditry and was sentenced to hanging in the city of Liptovský Mikuláš (Stručný životopis online, Pravda: online, Laurenčíková 2009:8-12).

The Polish academic Joanna Goszczyńska (2003) as well as the Slovak scholar Hana Hlôšková (2013) discovered several myths about Jánošík in folklore and oral tradition and found some explanations for the popularity of Jánošík in the Slovak national consciousness.

But from the beginning, his depiction was not only positive or negative. Some writers and thinkers depicted him as a man who fought for and protected the poor against the Hungarian upper-class; others condemned his outlaw behaviour and his lack of order. His figure as a hero, however, was found useful by Ľudovít Štúr, politician, journalist, teacher and codifier of the Slovak standard language. He decided to merge Jánošík in a pantheon of Slovak heroes and launched a specific range of poetics young Slovak writers should use to create a new literary tradition in the Slovak language. This phenomenon can be counted as a clear example of a top-down process in the creation of a literary (hero-) tradition in the vernacular.

Before the codification of the Slovak standard language, we can find depictions of the Jánošík figures in literary works of Bohuslav Tablíc (1809), who used sources from year market songs and in the *Slovanské starožitnosti* (1837, 1865, Slavic History) of Pavol Jozef Šafárik, an ardent supporter of Slavonic cooperation and exchanging cultural inheritance. Both of them mixed folk elements and characteristics as courage, strength and even magical powers. Šafárik goes even further as he depicts Jánošík shortly as a Christ figure, who was betrayed, had suffered, and has been tortured for his own, Slavonic people. Ján Kollár, a Slovak reverend, a writer who was an ardent supporter of Czecho-Slovak mutual relations, had on the other hand no positive note for Jánošík: he placed in his masterpiece *Slávy dcéra* (1824, the Daughter of Slava) our rebel in an allegorical hell, as, according to Kollár, looting was nothing but mischief and a sin (Goszczyńska 2007: 60; Rassloff 2010: 445). Goszczyńska (2007: 76-77) states that the crucial authors who elevated Jánošík into a loved, popular, Slovak national hero were Štefan M. Daxner, Samo Chalupka and Janko Kráľ. Kráľ himself was known as a revolutionary poet, so it was no wonder that he took an example of the heroic, romantic death of Juraj Jánošík. For them, the idea that the bandit leader had his freedom, where his looting becomes a symbol of struggling for the Slovak nation, became the main characteristic of Jánošík. Kráľ studied also the documents of trial of Jánošík and wanted to write a more significant work than his poems, but unfortunately died young.

In contrast to his reputation in and outside Greece, the English lord Byron did not enjoy such a reputation as a hero in the Czech and Slovak cases. The reception of Byron in the Czech lands and also of the Slovak intellectuals, especially in its first stage (1823-1848) has developed different from other European countries. There were no attempts to develop Byron's poetry into local forms of national romantic poetry since there was still an ongoing development of poetry in the local vernacular and even the use of the standard vernacular was not set yet (Cardwell 2004: 284). The authors of this generation followed the romantic poetics

of the movement of Ľudovít Štúr, who stated that the first goal of literature in Slovak was to start up a literary tradition. He despised the idea of a Byronic hero in a novel, since this was an artistic hero too much individualist. After the revolution in the Habsburg Empire in 1848, however, this literary concept was changing, as a lot of Slovak intelligentsia was unsatisfied with the outcome of the revolution. The reasons and an outline of the revolutionary years will be sketched in the following paragraphs.

Kirschbaum states that the course of events of the revolution of 1848-1849 determined the opportunities for Slovak leaders to make political headway. He writes:

The appointment in March of a Croat army officer, Colonel Josip Jellacic, an enthusiastic 'Illyrian' and anti-Magyar, as Ban (governor) of Croatia, had not necessarily been unwelcome news to the Slovaks. It did, however, create serious frictions between Hungary and Croatia, with Vienna caught in the middle (Kirschbaum 1995: 118)

This shows that the leaders of the Slovak national movement, mostly belonging to the Lutheran intellectual side, evolved from an academic, struggle for their own language rights, to form the idea of a Slovak statehood, a clear defined nation. The members of the Slovak national movement tried to find ties with other Slavonic nations. There was an opportunity for this when Ľudovít Štúr attended the first Pan-Slavic congress in Prague in June 1848. Before, due to the fall of the Metternich regime, where Clemens von Metternich resigned as a prime minister, political conditions started to change. This event caused the Hungarian leader Lajos Kossuth to launch a series of liberal measures such as the proposal of the abolition of serfdom, as well as loosening the Austro-Hungarian ties, where they would be only connected through the emperor. Kossuth, chosen as a leader of the Hungarian nobility, did not allow any laws providing minority rights for nations other than Hungarians. In March 1848, when the abolition and the formation of this Hungarian government had been declared, the rebel poet Janko Kráľ together with Ján Rotarides led a peasant uprising in the Hont region. They were arrested and kept in prison for one year. An important event was also the draft of the *Žiadosti slovenského národa* (demands of the Slovak people) by the lawyers Jan Francisci and Štefan Marko Daxner, fourteen points officially presented by Jozef Miloslav Hurban to outline the Slovak nation and propositions to change the Hungarian transformation into a state of equal nations, each represented with an own parliament. The Hungarian revolutionary government reacted with warrants to Štúr, Hurban and Hodža. (Kirschbaum 1995: 116-118; Podolan and Viršinská 201: 160-168)

Ban Jelacić was authorized by the Vienna government in September 1848 to march against the Hungarian government, but his troops were defeated by the Hungarian armies. In a reaction, the Slovaks led by Štúr, Hurban and Hodža created in September a Slovak national council as well as an army of volunteers led by two Czech officers. When Jelacić passed through West-Slovakia, this army gathered more volunteers. They were victorious against the Hungarians in a battle near Brezová, but not very well equipped. Meanwhile in October the Austrian emperor Ferdinand declared the Hungarian uprising to be crushed, causing further uprising in Vienna, when the court had to decide to flee to Olomouc, Moravia. The Slovak volunteers hoped for the support of the Austrian emperor but instead, he condemned the uprising and the Slovak national council. This short existence of an independent Slovak national council ended in the defeat of the volunteer army by Hungarian forces and a big disappointment of the Slovak leaders in the imperial court. In December, Ferdinand abdicated and Franz Josef became the new Emperor. The imperial forces reacted to march together with Jelacić into Hungary. The young emperor made vague promises to the leaders of the Slovak national council about the Slovak identity demands, minister of interior Stadion was inclined to take them seriously. Vienna was willing to put pressure on the Hungarian rebellion to grant more rights to smaller nationalities to gather support and end the resistance. All this changed again in April 1849, when Hungary declared officially their independence placing Lajos Kossuth as the provisionary head of state. With the help of Russian imperial troops, the Hungarian forces were defeated in August 1849 at the battle of Vilagos. A conference was called in September to discuss the position of Hungary within the empire. The Slovak leaders took one last opportunity to launch their demands, but they were ignored by the imperial government. (Kirschbaum 1995: 118-120).

Although the use of Slovak after 1848 was not completely forbidden (it was allowed in primary schools and county offices, some Slovaks received appointments in the Vienna administration or Ján Kollár got a professorship in Vienna), the outcome of the revolution came as a big disappointment for the Slovak national movement aspiring more political independence. The pressure of Magyarization becomes also much stronger in the second half of the nineteenth century. This also influenced literary paradigms, to start with, the hero-imagery.

Jan Botto creates in his *Smrť Jánošíkova* (the Death of Jánošík) a work which is still today in a classic novel of Slovak literature. He inspired himself on folklore elements, but created a rift in the Štúr-poetics and creates a messianistic hero, fighting and struggling for

his freedom, against alien oppression. The idea of a mythical hero remained attractive in the sixties of the nineteenth century (for example in the lesser known work *Matora* of M.M. Hodža) and formed the basic motive for all further romantic and popular literature later on. (Goszczyńska 2007: 112-115) It must also be remarked that the translation of the famous work of Friedrich Schiller, *Die Räuber*, also played a role in the depiction of Jánošík as a heroic character in Slovak stories. At the end of the nineteenth century, even in the American immigration, stories about Jánošík are published in Slovak, the most iconic by Gustav Maršall-Petrovský (1862–1916). More will be written about the roles of the authors and their authority in chapter four. The tradition of the popular hero continued until the twentieth century, but now with depictions in five films. Jánošík also has a statue in his home place Terchová, standing on a prominent place on a hill near the centre of the village.

Four legends or depictions are proven wrong by history are the following: Jánošík was not really revolting against the establishment. Indeed, he was a member of the revolting troops of Férénc Rákoczi, but decided to change sides and to fight for the Emperor, which confirms his obedience to the royal establishment. Secondly, he did not rob for a long time so it was very unlikely he was known as a Czech-Slovak national hero at that time, but his range was way more regional. Third point: historical sources do not confirm he stole to give it away to the poor. Last, there is a myth he studied theology or even met students of theology and after this encounter started to loot. Nothing is to be found about it in historical documents, but only in folk tales. (Hlôšková 2013:102-3)

1.6 Comparison of two primitive rebels: are the heroes changing places?

At first sight a lot of similarities can be discerned between these primitive rebels, not only when observing the historical facts, but even in the imagological representations of both Jan de Lichte and Jánošík. Firstly, from a historical point of view, both bandits in early modern history can be situated in rural areas. Both were serving in the army before deserting and choosing a life of looting, becoming the head of a gang. They were active for a relatively short amount of time, although Jan de Lichte due to the Succession wars profited a bit longer of his situation as an outlaw. Legends appeared as if they stole only from the rich and gave it to the poor, but in fact the lower nobility, priests, merchants and even fellow-lower-class people were victims of their crimes. Both of them were severely sentenced to death. Jan de Lichte confessed the murder of three men, the crimes of Jánošík consisted merely out of

looting and burglary. Both bandits became known first in their home regions but gained later on a country-wide respect and notorious reputation through folklore and legends in the whole country, mostly together with tales of other famous robbers.

Looking at the literary tradition, both heroes have known an evolution in their representation. There exists a more romantic view of these heroes, even with love elements, religious motives, supernatural powers, special attributes such as the axe of Jánošík, or contracts with the devil. Goszczyńska (2007: 19) states three possible explanations for the popularity of the Slovak hero: he died at a young age, he did not commit very harsh, cruel crimes and he gained even during his lifetime sympathy of the common people. The same could go for Jan de Lichte, as his network was also widespread in the countryside of Aalst, Geraardsbergen, Zottegem and surroundings. I tend to see the social struggle as a myth formed already in nineteenth century serving national purposes, situating the story in romantic – epic tradition, culminating in the fifties with the novel of Louis Paul Boon, who stresses the social revolutionist aspects of the rebel. In the case of Jánošík, Andrej Melicherčík (1952) gives in a socialist historical tradition a point of view about the life of Jánošík. Later historians failed to demythicize the figure of Jánošík as they kept seeing a struggle of the lower class in his story and focused too much on this topic. It is my assumption that the association people make of Jan de Lichte and Jánošík as two underdog outlaws in their own society, opposing the other, the strange, the unknown is one of the keys to the successful spreading of their fame in both national traditions. By lending their names for other things than stories and statues, both Jánošík and Jan de Lichte have their places in the collective memory of people. There is a cheese brand of Jánošík, a famous Czechoslovak tank was named after him, both Jan de Lichte and Jánošík have a hiking trail, a comic, theatre plays, a pub and a beer brand named after them (Hlôšková 2013: 99-100).

1.7 The nation's self-image

A big contribution of placing these rebels in a pantheon of heroes of the national movements was made in the nineteenth century by intellectuals: In the case of Flanders, however, it was not by the most famous literary scholars, but by the modest schoolteacher Ternest. As will be mentioned in chapter three, however, Ternest belonged to a local group of catholic intelligentsia striving for an own Flemish literary tradition and thus collecting historical memories and popular stories about local heroes belonged to their points of interest. Both

movements therefore included in their making of the image of a good Robin Hood-like hero a lot of elements of folklore and oral tradition.

Both figures were fairly well integrated into society and a lot of people still nowadays know Jan de Lichte and Jánošík, although it can be argued that Jánošík has a more national function in Slovakia whereas Jan de Lichte is more known regionally still today in South East Flanders. I suppose this has also to do with the fact the crimes that lay upon Jánošík were far less cruel than Jan de Lichte's. After all, Jan de Lichte did confess and committed three murders, whereas Jánošík, although there were some false accusations of the murder of a priest, was mainly sentenced to set an example in the much robber-gang stricken regions of Orava and Liptov. This will be later discussed in chapter two, where a historic-folklorist definition of rural outlaws will be presented towards the literary context of the two heroes. A lot of similarities can be discerned, in the literary representation of these primitive rebels as well as their cultural memory commemoration.

In the case of Jan de Lichte, this robber hero shares an important trait that could qualify in Belgian-Flemish society as a good example. Tom Verschaffel (2007: 108-9) noticed feelings of inferiority, a low self-esteem as a characteristic of the Belgian nation. They mistrust authority and Flemings or Belgians do not identify themselves with the state and share little civic spirit. These are exactly characteristics Jan de Lichte is also boasting, creating an anti-authority, plotting the gang against the establishment. On the other hand, he shares the traits of a fixer, flexible and likely to enjoy everyday life, has also a joyous side. Again this tends to reflect the Belgian Flemish nations image.

Slovak society likes to identify as well with a primitive rebel who opposed himself against the image of a law-abiding citizen, showing the authorities and his compatriots another way of living. These are similar traits Jánošík shares with the Jan de Lichte figure. I will elaborate these images and representations in chapter two.

THEORETICAL CONCEPTS APPLIED ON RURAL OUTLAW-TYPOLOGIES

2.1 Introduction

After the introduction of the historical depiction of heroes Juraj Jánošík and Jan de Lichte, including the hypotheses of the research, a methodological overview of concepts is presented in this chapter. This will grasp a better understanding of the research about rural outlaws. The starting point of this research will be imagology, a discipline at the intersection of literature and history. The theory of imaging and stereotypes needs to be defined and elaborated first in order to come to a better understanding of a hero. Later on, the third and fourth chapter will focus on literary depictions and the authors about the rebel figures. Also in order to better represent the more complex image of the Flemish national movement and the Slovak national movement, some standard stereotypes in the Belgian (Flemish) and Slovak contexts respectively, will be explained briefly. An archetypal literary hero in the Belgio-Flemish pantheon will be discussed: Thyl Ulenspiegel. In addition, the dichotomy of a rural outlaw versus a common robber and in which contexts this pair of concepts can be used will be a part of this chapter.

A general sketch of this concept-typology by the British historian Eric J. Hobsbawm forms the starting point, taking into account the elaborations that the Prague historian Adam Votruba (2010) brought to the model. Thereafter the concept of *Schriftliche Folklore* (Written Folklore), developed by Aleida Assmann (1983) will be presented. The term is needed in our research in order to make a synthesis between folkore and (literary) history, something that one frequently has to deal with in research into rural outlaws, because according to Joep Leerssen and John Neubauer (2010: 412) the outlaws clearly occur in historical documents and in a historical context, in which they enter folkore in oral tradition. Later, however, they end up in a literary twilight zone, which shall be included with this concept. Concepts from folkore studies and history must be borrowed in order to better understand the links between the literary depictions of the respective Jan de Lichte and Juraj Jánošík rural outlaws. A historical-imagological point of view will be the starting point.

Votruba remarks (2010: 227-230) in his critical comments on previous historians who published studies on rural outlaws and common robbers that in many cases their research field was too narrowly defined, as a result of which they concentrated a little too much on a strict division between the so-called rural outlaws and the common robbers, and this mainly

on the basis of two criteria, namely their motivation to rob (do they long for money, for profit, or did they have a rebellious element and a higher goal, some higher achievements in life?) and their social origin (higher versus lower, marginal, on the fringes of society). He therefore claims that:

A typology of robbery, likely to be suitable at both scopes (motivation and social origin) cannot simply consist out of a mere two categories (Votruba 2010: 230, transl. BB)⁴

After all, it happens all too often that in both typologies character traits merge into one another or that certain character traits of the rural outlaw also occur with the common robber and vice versa. This actually shows that it is better to use a theory in describing both types in its totality, which also goes beyond the national frameworks. The concept of *histoire croisée* (later on explained, mostly translated as “entangled history”) is particularly well suited for this purpose. *Histoire Croisée* allows researchers to develop a conceptual framework throughout the different historical periods that encompasses both hero-types and is useful in both the long nineteenth century and the twentieth century. Such a model is also suggested by Graham Seal (2009). In this chapter, theoretical concepts in the cases of Jan de Lichte and Juraj Jánošík respectively will be set out with some final remarks at the end of this chapter.

2.2 Imagology – picturing stereotypes of nations and national heroes

In the early nineteenth century, Herderian thought and the birth of traditional philological sciences began to consider the nation as the basic category for studying language and literature. The idea of nationality and national character formed the bedrock of an ontologically undeniable category, a kind of *Volksgeist*, an ontological kind of ‘Folk Spirit’, certainly in the entire nineteenth century and therefore formed at the earliest stage of imagining what one would call ‘*Stoffgeschichte*’, histories of literary motives and objects (Beller and Leerssen 2007: 20). Literary studies, for example, reviewed the image of the Frenchman at Shakespeare or the Germans in Russian literature. Leerssen calls such studies proto-imagological studies (2007: 20) and regards them at best as a purely bibliographical enumeration of a thematic detection of these patterns. He mentions concrete images such as the *noble wild*, *incest*, *vengeance motives*, *the dandy*, *Reynaert de Vos* (Reynart the Fox, a

⁴ Typologie loupežnictva, která by chtěla s oběma těmito rovinami (motivace a sociálního původu) pracovat, nemůže patrně vystačit s pouhými dvěma kategoriemi loupežníků.

medieval Dutch tale) as case studies that were researched in these proto-imagological studies. The best *Stoffgeschichte* were able to present a shift in fashion, manners, customs, poetics, literary flavour and cultural values through the guiding principle of a long lasting theme over the centuries. Nevertheless, these studies still imply that these nationalities exist as a category *as a conditio sine qua non*. They do not consider nation and national thought as a constructed reality, therefore the quality of these studies is highly variable, because they tended to be misused for propaganda purposes or the praise of their authors' nations (Beller and Leerssen 2007: 21).

A key assumption in using imagology in literary research is that literature, including more recent poetical and fictional-narrative media such as cinema and comics, has the advantage of being a privileged genre for spreading stereotypes more widely, because the principle of *suspension of disbelief* leaves room for audience credibility. We are able to use imagology most effectively for subjects that need to be studied in the long term and it can be applied to express the spread and origin of mentalities and attitudes. Beller and Leerssen (2007: 26-27) outline a few important methodological remarks that should certainly be taken into account in this research on *rural outlaws*.

The first challenge is to see the given representation, which in the case here will be the *social bandit*, as a literary trope. Is there a well-known or older tradition of the trope? Could there be a tradition of appreciation and depreciation, and in what way do these two attitudes function historically towards each other? Secondly, this literary trope needs to be contextualized and investigated to which extent it occurs frequently in the studied texts. So the text material is also important. What kind of text is it? Which genre conventions are working here: narrative, descriptive, humorous, propagandist, fictional, poetic? What are the status, importance and function of the national trope in relation to these parameters? In order to investigate a given perception in a balanced way, several techniques from literary science are needed in order to investigate the given concepts in their historical context (Beller and Leerssen 2007: 28).

The most important images that will be of use for the research are overviews of stereotypes about Belgium and the Belgians, respectively the Flemish people in literature, their heroic image and also comparable aspects about Slovak depiction. Furthermore, an imagological definition of the so-called *rural outlaw* versus *common robber* stereotyping is the cornerstone of this chapter, based on the Hobsbawm-Küther typology, elaborated by Votruba in (2010: 11-16, 32 - 44). Admitting that Jan de Lichte and Juraj Jánošík were not the

only heroes and noble robbers in their respective national movements, it is necessary to sketch a broader context in what follows.

Literature and hero worshipping processes play an important role in nation building. Jensen (2006:207) quotes in her description of the pantheon of nineteenth century Dutch hero-types fellow literary and cultural scholar Marita Mathijsen, who discusses the "*travesty capacity*" of literature. Mathijsen (2004) explains this as the literatures' ability to express basic conflicts and manifestations and the obsessions of a society. The glorification of a past is therefore part of a context in which a collective fear of the decline of a small nation can be thwarted. Both Belgium/Flanders and Slovakia were and are small nations that needed a strengthening of their self-image. Both nations and their heroic pantheon are a central topic in the next paragraph.

2.2.1 Belgium, Belgians and its heroes

Belgians on an imagological scale

The portrayal of Belgium, imagologically speaking, must be situated within the framework of the Low Countries historiography. The Eighty Years' War and the religious wars are considered an important turning point in the Low Countries' history, as they result in a different historical development in these areas. Both Tom Verschaffel (2007: 108) and Ellen Krol (2007: 142) mention the Eighty-Year War as the time when the national character of the North begins to separate from the South: 'Cultural differences between the Northern and the Southern Netherlands deepened around the same time as well' (Krol 2007: 142). Dutch self-images maintain a strong affinity with resistance to authority because the existence of the nation was considered an act of disobedience towards the Spanish king. According to Krol, some researchers point to the absence of heroism and great egalitarianism in their depictions.⁵

According to the basic myth, since the Dutch installed their republic and enjoyed social and political autonomy during the successful uprising against the Spaniards, the Belgians continued to live under foreign regimes (Verschaffel 2007: 108). It is in this perspective that

⁵ There is, however at the same time a fair amount of publications, for example Jensen (2008) and Leerssen (2006), which do take a nineteenth-century hero worshipping and cultivation into account in the Dutch case, however taking place according to different principles than in the rest of Western Europe. This depiction should be seen as a reappraisal of the so-called Golden Age. Beyen (2002) also drew attention to the special status of the hero William of Orange within a Dutch national thought

images of the distrust of authority, little trust in the state and little sense of citizenship can be found in Belgian imagology. To add even more negativity to the image, Verschaffel adds that it is often said that Belgians cultivate a self-image of the eternal underdog and an inferiority complex. On the other hand, of course, it is known that, because of their distrust, Belgians are also rather down-to-earth, pragmatic and do not that much believe in great principles. It was a logical consequence of the course of history that in national historiography, after Belgian independence, by focusing on the occupation by foreign states, a different kind of heroes was promoted:

The preponderance of painters and scientists in the pantheon of national pride, as well as the absence of literary authors and speculative thinkers, made perfect sense in this representational pattern: Belgians are considered to be more of a visual and practical nature, rather than of a verbal and philosophical one. (Verschaffel 2007: 109)

The increasing socio-political influence of France after the independence of Belgium in 1830 also led to the need to differentiate the image of the Belgian nation, which led more and more in the image formation to emphasize the differences with France and to highlight the unique heterogeneousness through the co-existence of both Latin and Germanic elements in Belgian culture. Young national nineteenth-century historians and scholars tried to see medieval Flanders as the core and predecessor of the Belgian nation. In the atmosphere of this introspection, images of a bipolar Belgo-Flemish image emerge, with on the one hand mystical, ecclesiastical images (impressive cathedrals, but also intimate beguinages) in addition to a so-called exuberant Burgundian lifestyle, the Flemish peasant life, a style of tasty food, a culture of epicureans, a preference for the lavish.

An important figure that incarnated this feeling was the literary hero Thyl Ulenspiegel, described among others by the Belgian (Flemish, but French-writing) author Charles de Coster (1827–1879). The specific hero-typology of Ulenspieghel by De Coster and its epigons will be discussed in the next paragraph. Charles de Coster was a typical icon of the new Belgian style: a French-speaking author writing about a Flemish topic. Later on, a cultural Flemish movement emerged that pleaded for more attention to the Flemish people and their linguistic and cultural and culture rights. With the growing political ambitions of this Flemish movement, regionalist sensitivity also grew (Verschaffel 2007: 110-111). Lately, the Belgian national feelings give the impression of being an anti-country, surreal and with its anarchism and individualism somewhat reluctant when it comes to real nationalism and

chauvinism. Marcel Janssens (2004: 79) aptly summarised the image of Flanders when he talks about a number of images from his imagological publication on Flanders: ‘the fat and the pious’, so called after a poem by the writer Hugo Claus, in which one element stands for generalisations that represent the enjoyment of life, images of rural life and rich food and beverages, on the other hand Flanders of the realistic Flemish primitives, religious paintings of Rubens and Brueghelian landscapes.

Lotte Jensen (2006: 208) emphasizes that in glorifying both the nation and their heroes, different genres also carried out their influence. In the Netherlands, this was particularly the case for (theatre) plays, where, for example, farces were excellently placed to carry out anti-immigrant sentiments. In addition, poetry was often used as a means of resistance and propaganda. In times of political turbulence, many poems with national-historical themes always appeared in the north of the Netherlands. However, the patriotic-historical novel, following the example of Sir Walter Scott, came to thrive in the Netherlands much later. According to Jensen (2006: 209-210) this is due to the slowing down of the Belgian revolution in 1830, on the one hand, and on the other hand also to the genre of the novel itself, which was rejected by critics as a ‘bastard genre’. The novel had a hybrid character and many critics feared that a serious study of history would suffer from the rise of this popularizing medium. Jensen (2006: 211) shows in her study that there are cases of heroes who were to be presented as a supplement between the Northern and Southern Netherlands, but that after the Belgian uprising a deep rift emerges in the Belgian and Dutch hero worship. She notes a heroic pantheon with mainly medieval sovereigns (e.g. Godfried van Bouillon, the first king of Jerusalem during the Crusades), freedom fighters (e.g. Nicolaas Zannekin, hero of a medieval peasant army at the Battle of Cassel, but also anonymous heroes like the rebellious Brigands against the French) and painters (Peter Paul Rubens). The Dutch mainly focused on the Golden Age. Sometimes there was an overlap, for example, during the Eighty Years War, the Counts and Heroes of Egmond and Hoorne were highlighted by both Belgians and the Dutch. A special Belgian folk hero, who represents a particular category, originally appearing in German stories but soon occurring in the context of the Eighty Years War, is *Tijl Uilenspiegel*, referred in English as Thyl Ulenspieghel, about which the next part of this chapter is devoted.

Thyl Ulenspiegel as a literary hero – a casestudy

The literary character of Thyl Ulenspiegel (Dutch: Tjil Uilenspieghel) is perfectly suited to serve as the image of the Belgian (and later on Flemish) nation. Depictions of the Ulenspiegel protagonist were already present in German stories around the fourteenth century and it turns out he was shown as a typical character of a picaresque novel, a rascal. The scabard tricks that Ulenspiegel performs can be divided into three categories: puns, scatological tricks and satire. Strangely enough, his harassment never finds its justification in self-interest or self-protection, as we see, for example, in the medieval narrative of Reynart the Fox (*Reynaert de Vos*), also often described as a rascal protagonist in Flemish literature, but turns out to be a mere criminal and a slew fox. Sometimes Ulenspiegel seeks to enrich himself at the expense of others, but in theory he is only motivated by the pleasure he creates in bullying or causing damage to body and property. He is a person on the fringes of society, without a fixed residence, who keeps necessary distance from daily concerns. He turns out to be a clever observer who, thanks to his cleverness, manages to escape the norms and values that other people obey so nicely. In this way he manages to maintain his freedom (Stapper et al. 1994: 224). Beyen (2002: 81-96) compares this rascal with the Spanish Don Quijote and the Norwegian Peer Gynt.

It was the main goal of the author to promote and uplift Thyl Ulenspiegel as a national symbol. This can be clearly discerned in what was to become the most famous depiction of the Ulenspiegel-saga. Charles De Coster created in 1867 his *La légende d'Ulenspiegel* (The legend of Ulenspiegel) a work that became more well-known in 1869 with an extended title, *La légende et les aventures héroïques, joyeuses et glorieuses d'Ulenspiegel et de Lamme Goedzak au Pays de Flandres et ailleurs* (The legend and the heroic, joyous and glorious adventures of Ulenspieghel and Lamme Goedzak in the country of Flenders and elsewhere). Ironically, the figure of Thyl Ulenspiegel, eventually becoming the embodiment of the Flemish soul, is given shape here thanks to the French-speaking pen of his Brussels creator. Stapper et al. (1994: 225-226) also mention Ulenspiegel as a Flemish resistance hero, who according to De Coster has to be situated in the tradition of the Dutch Giant Revolt against the Spanish authority of King Philip II. Ulenspieghel later gets a modern appearance when he becomes a Flemish warrior during the First World War and opposes the Germans. A number of important Flemish canonical authors are also devoted to the theme of Thyl Ulenspiegel. Herman Teirlinck in particular published *De nieuwe Uilenspiegel in tien boeken of de jongste incarnatie van den scharlaken Thijl* (1920, The new Ulenspiegel in ten books about the

youngest incarnation of the purple Thyl) and this work was dedicated to the symbolist poet Karel van de Woestijne (1878–1929), an indication of the affinity of Teirlinck's book with this writer's neo-romantic and symbolist views. In 1965, the most famous post-WW II Flemish writer Hugo Claus (1929–2008) made an adaptation of the story content by De Coster.

A comparison in the case study about rural outlaws here is the one made by Stapper et al. (1994: 226) between the national adaptation of the Thyl Ulenspiegel figure as a rascal and a national flamingantic figure and the bandit leader Jan de Lichte:

The 18th-century gang leader Jan de Lichte, reinvigorated by Boon in two novels (1957 [*De Bende van Jan de Lichte*, BB] and 1961 [*De Zoon van Jan de Lichte*, BB]), lacks the mischief of Tjil, but is comparable to him in terms of cunning and not entirely purely motivated patriotism. (transl. BB).⁶

In two studies (2002, 2016), Beyen explores the position of Thyl Ulenspiegel as a literary figure throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Literature plays an important role in the development of collective memories, as it takes shape especially in the nineteenth century. He notes (Beyen 2016: 412-413) that the cheerful Thyl Ulenspiegel sharply contrasts with an anonymous group of heroes, the so-called 'Klauwaerts'. These are medieval Flemish knights and craftsmen from the novel *De Leeuw van Vlaenderen* by Hendrik Conscience. Such anonymous groups of heroes, with whom the common people used to identify, are increasingly being displaced later on in literature. Thyl Ulenspiegel reached an audience of both romantic flamingants and cosmopolitan avant-gardists who accepted him as a hero instead of the masterpiece of Conscience, who at that time was a prominent writer of the Flemish movement.

It is no coincidence that all these three figures, Peer Gynt, Don Quijote and Thyl Ulenspiegel, who have performed in the canonised literature as well as in an endless series of widely distributed folk books, show same characteristics. A gap that could easily be bridged by these literary figures was the one between upper and lower culture. The people were encouraged by these figures not so much as to *act* like these figures, but rather to incarnate them, so the authors depicting the fictional protagonists wanted their readers to *be* like these

⁶ De 18e-eeuwse bendeleider Jan de Lichte, opnieuw tot leven gewekt door Boon in een tweetal romans (1957 en 1961), mist de schalksheid van Tjil, maar is in het opzicht van gewiektheid en niet helemaal zuiver gemotiveerd patriottisme wel met hem te vergelijken.

heroes. The commemorations of these figures were also very much linked to the commemorations of their respective creators, the authors. These authors were already much less regarded as the most representative figures, examples of their nation to be followed. Later on, this process of linking the literary protagonists to their respective authors, the fictional characters could later be included among the creations of world literature and at the same time belong to a national and international heritage (Beyen 2002: 91-92).

In this way, these figures became during the twentieth century in a lesser extent national figures and more international. Beyen concludes with an interesting question and reflection: could there be any historical figure in any European country that survived nineteenth-century romanticism and could still play a truly vital role in national image-building in the twentieth century? In his study he limits himself to Western Europe and in our opinion quite appropriately mentions the image of William of Orange, *Willem van Oranje*, in the Netherlands, nicknamed the Father of the Nation, who had from about 1880 onwards a place in the collective national memory in a party-political consensus (Beyen 2002: 92). It seems clear that Jánošík can also be added to Beyen as far as the Slovak case is concerned. The heroic role that made the transition from historical to literary figure and continues to work in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is played by Juraj Jánošík. It is a line that can be drawn from Janko Král's revolutionary poems, to the partisans of the Second World War who made songs and battle battalions with his name. In the next paragraph, we will further explore these images of Slovak heroism.

2.2.2. Slovak depictions and imagology

As far as the image of Juraj Jánošík is concerned, Vladimír Segeš (2015: 15) states that quite a number of Slovaks do perceive him as a positive hero. This is confirmed by a survey carried out in Hlôšková (2013: 95), in which between 1993 and 1996 primary and secondary school students were asked to mention who they would place in a national heroic pantheon. The results showed that consistently Juraj Jánošík also held a place in the pantheon next to figures such as the saints Cyrillus and Methodius, Ľudovít Štúr, Gustav Husák (sic) or ice hockey trainer Peter Bondra. Even though Jánošík was by no means the only robber who used to be active in the Carpathians, his image continues to have an effect today.

In his study, Segeš (2015: 17-23) presents an overview of Slovakia's main central auto-stereotyping. He notes that all these stereotypes cannot be seen in isolation from a Central

European context. Here, the co-existence between other more dominant nations undeniably had an impact against which the Slovaks had to resist. Thus, as a reaction to increasing *magyarization* and national oppression (especially from the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867 onwards), the first stereotype of the *Eternity* came into being: the Slovaks who were looking for an older, glorious history and who sketched themselves as the oldest Carpathian people. A hero like King Svätopluk (†894), who was the leader of the Great Moravian Empire, about whom little was known historically, had to create a feeling of *Eternity*. It collapsed after the battle of Pressburg (907), which led to the second myth, the stereotype of *eternal oppression* or even the *mythical millennial Magyar occupation*, the "Hungarian yoke". At this place, classical imagological views are to be found such as the dichotomic "we versus them", a friend versus enemy struggle reinforcing polarity towards Hungarians. The romantic writer and thinker Ján Kollár (1793–1852) shows us a Herderian *Volksggeist*, describing a so-called Slavic interconnectedness⁷ and adherence as an extraordinary quality. This places the Slovaks, as the central Slavic nation, in opposition against the Germanic peoples and Hungarians. The next stereotype is that of the so-called *Centre*, which at the same time can be linked to the image of Slovakia as a connecting or transitional area: this is and was a country where many cultures come together, mingle, merge, and where one finds depictions from the heart of Europe. It constituted a transition area between the East and the West. Historians such as Pavol Jozef Šafárik claimed the Tatras as the *Urheimat*, the core area of the Slavic Period.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, together with romantic feelings, the so-called *Plebeian stereotype* emerged, creating a fascination for the common people and their folklore. This celebration of popular culture has to do with a move away from the countryside and a move towards urban culture. Concepts such as mountain landscapes, collectivity, close family ties were cultivated and this imagery was opposed to cityscapes and the modernity of factory workers and entrepreneurship. Katharina Richter-Kovarik (2015: 151) and Eva Krekovičová (2013: 86-93) elaborate on this stereotype and the myth of Slovakia as a *plebeian people*. They remark that when defining a typical Slovak culture in processes of nation building, priority was given to folk culture and folklore. In this way concepts such as *národný* (national) became synonymous with *ľudový* (folk). In its nation-building process, Slovakia was given a dominant image of an agricultural country, which was subsequently strongly promoted in the touristic sector (Richter-Kovarik 2015: 151-154). This image continued to permeate visual

⁷ The nearly intranslatable term is *vzájomnosť*, which means the reciprocal brotherhood of all Slavonic nations.

culture, for example through the eyes of the Czech film director and ethnograph Karel Plicka (1894–1987). With his series of postcards from the years 1924–1928 depicting the simple life of peasants and shepherds and his images, he remarkably influenced the later stereotypes about Slovakia. Everyone knows the film *Zem spieva* (1933, The Earth sings) directed by Plicka, where Slovakia is perceived as a country of music and rural backwardness. This rural image, with its folklore dances and accompanying culture, which is still untouched and not rotten by Western values, remains to this day a dominant discourse.⁸

Krekovičová (2013: 88-89) points out that the *plebeian stereotype* also entails a number of other stereotypes. It is primarily about the Slovak as a shepherd, but also as a member of a suffering nation and the one who passively goes through the course of history, on the other hand it shows the hero of a social struggle, the revolutionary fighter against social injustice, of which Juraj Jánošík is the embodiment. The Slovakian stereotype of the shepherd with accompanying attributes such as the axe, the fujara⁹ as a typical Slovak musical instrument, the flock of sheep and the free life in the mountain landscape actually originated mainly as a hetero-image to distinguish itself from the Hungarians and the Czechs. This stereotype was therefore developed in order to raise its profile more clearly with these neighbouring peoples.

Just as there is a relationship with the neighbouring peoples of France and the Netherlands in Belgian stereotypes and image (in north-south antithesis), the Slovaks also know their relations in auto- and hetero-imago with their neighbours, especially the Hungarians and the Czechs. Krekovičová (2015: 34-38) refers to the Czech researcher Kandert, distinguishing the four important key concepts in the comparison of stereotypes between Czechs and Slovaks that have taken shape over the past 150 years or so of co-existence and the approximately 70 years of the unified state. In the first concept the unique character of both peoples is emphasized and there is a dividing concept. The second concept encompasses the so-called Czechoslovakism, which evolved in the course of the nineteenth century and was eventually to become the basic pillar of the Czechoslovak Republic, this idea being particularly important from a confessional point of view. The main advocates of close

⁸ Recently, a dance and song programme of the same name was broadcasted on Slovak national television, in which folk ensembles from Slovakia, including Slovak community ensembles from abroad such as Serbia or Romania, took part in a competition to become the best folk group.

⁹ A large folk shepherd's flipple flute.

Czechoslovakian cooperation were Protestants¹⁰ who used Czech as their standard literary language. In a third concept, we find the image of Slovakia as the ‘little brother’ of Bohemia. This concept also implies a hierarchical difference and also stimulates a certain form of complex and rivalry. Finally, Krekovič (2015: 38) mentions a stereotype of the ‘greedy’ Czechs, who dominate Slovakia. This stereotype appeared in the media from 1990 on, but as well after 1993, mainly in the days of Prime Minister Mečiar. The concepts that deal with the uniqueness and the distinctiveness all have certain ambivalence. Krekovičová also sees this image in the heroic figure of Juraj Jánošík, in whom she recognizes both characteristics of a hero and an anti-hero. In the fourth chapter, more will be presented about this irony, typical for the modern-day Jánošík depiction.

The rural image as a dominant stereotype into Slovak imagology can be discerned in particular. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that a robber-hero like Juraj Jánošík, whose activities took place explicitly in the Slovak-Hungarian-Polish-Moravian countryside, could become a representative hero, useful for a Slovak hero pantheon. Further on, it is explained how a number of important writers and thinkers devoted attention to the incorporation of this image into the literatures of their own vernaculars.

2.3 Rural Outlaws vs. Common Robbers

2.3.1 General outlines of the typology

Primitive Rebels (1959) by the British historian Eric J. Hobsbawm (1917–2012) is one of the first publications devoted to the issue of social rebellion in Early Modern European societies. He was the first to focus on a phenomenon that until then had been neglected in studies of social movements. These movements were able to exert bottom-up revolutionary changes in modern European societies. He points to the remarkable manifestation of a phenomenon that occurs worldwide in almost all societies:

Social banditry of this kind is one of the most universal phenomena known to history, and one of the most amazingly uniform. Practically all cases belong to two or three clearly related types, and the variations within these are relatively superficial. What is more, this uniformity is not the consequence of cultural

¹⁰ A lot of leading figures of the Slovak national movement were evangelicals (members of the protestant Lutheran denomination), such as Ján Kollár, Pavol Jozef Šafárik, Ľudovít Štúr, Jozef M. Hurban, Michal M. Hodža, but also later on in twentieth century, such as Milan Rastislav Štefánik.

diffusion, but the reflection of similar situations within peasant societies whether in China, Peru, Sicily, the Ukraine or Indonesia (Hobsbawm 1959: 21).

Even though Hobsbawm did not claim to be exhaustive in his first study, there were critical remarks and he subsequently responded and refined his theoretical work. According to Adam Votruba (2010: 11-13) historians in Western European and Eastern Central European tradition independently from each other have developed the consensus that a robber is considered to be a rural outlaw if the attitude of the population in the countryside where the robber was active is positive towards him and either supports, permits or at least has a neutral stance towards him. Votruba also mentions the German researcher Carsten Küther, who focuses on the life and activities of ordinary thieves in Germany, thereby redefining his typology. After all, Hobsbawm only paid attention to the stereotype of the so-called ‘noble robber’, who is known as the archetypal Robin Hood figure, whereas this character hardly occurred in Germany in the eighteenth century. Therefore, the difference between these two categories can be explained by using the useful overview of Adam Votruba, who subsequently applies these characteristics comparing them to three groups of robbers: in the German geographical area, in the Bohemian-Moravian geographical area and then in the Carpathian area, including the Slovak area, but also including border areas with Poland and Ukraine.

Votruba (2010:12-14) uses the English terms Hobsbawm created with the type of Social Bandits on the one hand, and Common Robbers on the other. Küther adopts the terms and translates them into German as *Sozialbanditen* versus *Kriminelle Banditen*. For his Czech typology, Votruba takes as equivalent of the first group *zbojník*, which could possibly be extended to *sociální zbojník*, which he opposes to the *lupič*, adding sometimes *obyčejný lupič*. As an all-embracing term he uses the term *loupežník*. If we compare it with the Dutch terms, we do find in the work of Florike Egmond (1985) for the first category *Sociale Bandiet* or *Edele Bandiet/rover*. She juxtaposes this with the negative *Onedele rover*, we also suggest *Criminele Bandiet*, so that *Rover* can continue to be used as an all-embracing term, as robbing remains the basic character trait of these figures. The typology of the two type heroes is compared here in a scheme according to Votruba (2010: 15-16).

<i>Social Bandit</i>	<i>Common Robber</i>
Countryside background	Vagabond background

Operating in a small area	Large raiding area
Openly attacks	Secret activities
Collecting loot is not the main motivation	Loot as a main motivation
Authoritarian leader	hierarchy only during raids

Votruba expands on the insights of Hobsbawm, but primarily on the German case of Carsten Küther, who with his study *Räuber und Gaunerbanden in Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1976) paid systematic attention to the German robbers. He investigates whether this typology can be applied to the Czech and Slovak Carpathian characters and applies it to the following heroes/bandits, here in random order: Václav Babinský, Juraj Jánošík, Ondráš z Janovic, Oleksa Dovbuš, Michal Vdovec, Nikola Šuhaj, Jan Karásek, Jan Janeček, the so-called Bayerische Hiesel/Klostermayer, Schinderhannes or Johannes Bückler, Hölzerlips (Georg Philipp Lang), Jan Jiří Grasel. He concludes from the comparison that the typology of Hobsbawm and Küther can be considered useful, but should be used with some caution (Votruba 2010: 32-35). The motive whether the robbers did fight a social or just struggle against the establishment is difficult to determine historically from the sources of the eighteenth century. The same applies to the attitude of the (rural) population towards the bandits. He concludes that “the later idealization of the robber in oral form does not mean that he was seen as such by his immediate environment.”¹¹ (Votruba 2010: 35, transl. BB). In any case, he places the Carpathian robbers rather in the paradigm of social bandits (in the German case only Hiesel could count as a *Social Bandit*), while in Germany the paradigm of *criminal robbers* is more likely to be encountered. The Czech Republic faces a transitional situation, in which the Moravian Ondráš has the same stereotyping of the *social bandit*, while the others have previously been booked as *criminal robbers*, as can be seen, for example, from the use of the Czech and Slovak word *grázel* as a colloquial expression for a crooked villain.

As a folklore researcher, Graham Seal gives a synthesis of the Robin-Hood principle in his own typology. For his model he uses resources from all around the world, for a period of more than two millenia and all over the world, from Australia to China and also Central Eastern Europe, England, France and Germany are included in his parameters (Seal 2009: 68), but as well as in the publications of Votruba, the Low Countries are missing from the

¹¹ Pozdější idealizace loupežníka v ústním podání neznamená, že tak byl vnímán ve svém bezprostředním okolí.

comparative material. He suggests the contrary of the thesis in the study of Anton Blok (1972), who insists that the noble robbers ultimately strengthen the status quo rather than break, through their networks, and suggests a different interpretation. He proposes a cyclical motive of the social bandit, which he describes as follows: the outlaw hero evolves within a certain culture with a developing conflict within certain political, social or economic circumstances (e.g. war, poverty). There will be a conflict between two moral groups, over wealth, power, and resources. There will be a charismatic figure that identifies with one of the oppressed groups. This leads to a trivial incident involving violence. Then, through a moral code and a certain narrative, a process comes into play that stimulates the creation of songs and stories. This leads to a cultural script in which the hero is almost always betrayed and comes to a violent end. At that moment, post-death principles of his life come into effect. His life after death becomes a separate chapter and appears variable in time and space and is (slightly) followed by others. Seal concludes:

Wherever and whenever significant numbers of people believe they are victims of inequity, injustice, and oppression, historical and/or fictional outlaw heroes will appear and continue to be celebrated after their deaths. (Seal 2009: 83)

2.3.2 Flemish/Belgian *outlaws* and the place and position of Jan de Lichte

In France, spectacular bandit figures, such as Cartouche, who has shaped the popular imagination for a long time, were the subject of research. Fernand Vanhemelryck (1978: 197-198) gives an overview of the situation in Flanders. For example, Hosten and Strubbe (1927) showed the legendary robber leader Bakelandt in his true appearance. In a detailed dissertation on Bakelandt, Professor of Folklore Stefaan Top then devoted a great deal of attention to group criminality at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. The author tries to determine to what extent there were differences between banditry abroad and that in our regions. He concluded that group criminality during the French domination in the Lys department (Leie in Dutch) had a distinctly agricultural character and manifested itself in attacks on the prevailing social order. The violations were committed by groups of paupers, organised or otherwise committed by outlaws, deserters, tramps and, above all, people from the shattered class of manual workers.

Jan de Lichte is still a well-known novel figure. The halo of mystery that surrounded another gang of robbers, namely the history of the *Bokkenrijders* (The billy-goat-riders),

inspired several authors to re-examine the phenomenon. Cultural anthropologist Anton Blok (1975) has studied these gangs operating in the southern border area of the Dutch Republic. He addressed, among other things, the following questions: How was the gang composed? What were the motives behind the gang members? What was the social background? What was the hierarchy within the group? Similar issues have been examined for German cases by Carsten Küther, who has already been mentioned here before.

Various studies on rural outlaws continued to be published, each of which examined the appearance of gangs from a different angle, both as a regional phenomenon and as a comparative or interdisciplinary phenomenon. For example, we find studies by historians (Van Boxelaer & Deneckere 2003), folklorists (Top 1983, among others), there is some socio-literary research (Egmond 1985), and recent research into criminal literature (De Laet 2004). The phenomenon of robbery gangs was therefore undeniably widespread in the Low Countries and Flemish regions. G. Simons writes:

Everyone involved in ethnological research is confronted in their region with the existence of a robbery gang. In the region Alost-Geraardsbergen-Dendermonde we could consider the gang around Jan de Lichte as one of the most famous gang leaders of the eighteenth century and his remembrance has not disappeared despite world wars and other sensational events. (Simons 1968: 26. Transl. BB)¹²

Researchers do not agree on what robber hero could be the most popular in terms of imagology, depiction and literary tradition. Florieke Egmond (1985: 647) remarks that the position of Lodewijk Bakelandt and Jan de Lichte, at least their fame, was not the same as the French robber hero Cartouche. But “They were by far the most famous bandits of the Flemish speaking regions and provided tales to a long range of literary publications. Bakelandt is the more famous character (Egmond 1985: 647, transl. BB).¹³” As a contrast the quote of

¹² Iedereen die aan volkskundige opzoekingen doet wordt in zijn gebied gekonfronteerd met een dievenbende. Voor de streek Aalst-Geraardsbergen-Oudenaarde is dit de bende van Jan de Lichte die wel als één der voornaamste bendeleiders uit de XVIIIe eeuw kan beschouwd worden en wiens gedachtenis ondanks wereldoorlogen en andere sensationele gebeurtenissen nog steeds niet uitgeroeid is.

¹³ Ze waren wel veruit de beroemdste bandieten van de Vlaams-sprekende gebieden en hebben stof geleverd voor een lange reeks literaire publikaties. Bakelandt is de bekendste van de twee.

historian-archivist Peter Laroy¹⁴ can be mentioned, who, in a popular publication about the life in gangs all around Flanders, states:

We will start in the first half of the eighteenth century with the story of Jan de Lichte. This robber-captain is probably known everywhere in Flanders and could serve as a prototype. He has to share this honour with Bakelandt, though, who was as notorious as the former.¹⁵ (Laroy 1997: 6)

Both gang leaders still occur in Egmond's study because they experienced a similarly changing literary performance as bandits. Both underwent a similar stereotypization. Therefore, it seems to be appropriate to consider the Lodewijk Bakelandt¹⁶ case more profoundly.

The Bakelandt gang operated between 1789 and 1802. Lodewijk Bakelandt was one of the most important members but certainly not the captain, in the western part of Flanders. Unlike his French counterpart Cartouche, who had a connection with Paris, Bakelandt's gang activities were an exclusively rural phenomenon. They robbed farms, burgled traders and shopkeepers, occasionally acted as bush robbers and invaded travellers who came back from market visits. The robbers came from these rural areas and were mostly employed as day labourers, craftsmen, cart drivers and small traders. It arose at a time when the French, who were occupying our regions at the time, just managed to suppress a rebellious movement in some parts of the Flemish and Brabant countryside. This revolt was also known as the *Boerenkrijg* (Peasant's War). Resistance to the compulsory conscription was one of the reasons for this uprising and some members of the Bakelandt gang were known to be deserted conscripts. Some of these themes were later incorporated into nineteenth and twentieth-century literature (Egmond 1985: 647). It is noteworthy that both the theme of the Peasant's War as well as the robber Bakelandt deserved some attention in Czech reception of Flemish literature. The novel *Boerenkryg* of the famous Flemish writer Hendrik Conscience was already translated in Czech as *Selská vojna* (1881), according to Engelbrecht and Vajdová (2015: 37) the first historical novel ever translated from Dutch, through a French translation.

¹⁴ Laroy published a study about banditry in the so-called Meetjesland (1995, Taptoe: Eeklo), a county in the north of the province Oost-Vlaanderen (East Flanders) with Eeklo as regional centre.

¹⁵ „We starten halfweg de achttiende eeuw met het verhaal van Jan de Lichte. Deze roverskapitein is in heel Vlaanderen wel bekend en geldt zowat als prototype. Die eer deelt hij dan wel met de even beruchte Baekelandt.”

¹⁶ In this study the spelling of Bakelandt will be used, unless cited otherwise elsewhere.

In 1964, the West-Flemish writer Fred Germonprez wrote the novel *Dossier Bakeland* that was translated by Olga Krijtová in 1964 as *Lupič Bakeland*.

Egmond (1985: 649) describes the dominant stereotypes of both Bakelandt and Jan de Lichte in their various literary depictions and discerns a broad spectrum on an imagological scale. In Bakelandt's case, they can be categorised into a very positive series of stories and a distinctly negative series. Some see Bakelandt as a reformer and avenger for injustice, but in most cases he remains a negative figure for the authors, a helper of the devil, drunk and a villain, a dictatorial gang leader, a gangster or a nozzle. During the nineteenth century, Jan de Lichte was always described as a much more dangerous figure than Bakelandt and his gang as a kind of counter-society. It is precisely this subversive aspect that the author Louis Paul Boon will use for his novel. The image of Jan de Lichte in the context of the ideological positions of the authors is similar: he is either a social bandit or a brutal, murderous autocrat (Egmond 1985: 651-652).

2.3.3 The Slovak context: Carpathian robbers – Jánošík's position

It is striking that in the Polish-Slovak research tradition in all case studies Juraj Jánošík stands out in the Slovakian heroic pantheon. As a result, he is undeniably the robber who has been most followed in his depiction. However, he was far from the only robber. Hlôšková (2013: 95-96) has been recording sporadic written references from robbers since the 11th century., They were on the other hand most common in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially in the Beskyd Mountains, White Carpathian and Javorniky regions. Explorations of the territory in the 1970's revealed that, in addition to Jánošík, there were 34 other rural outlaw figures to be found on Slovak territory. As one of the explanations of Jánošík's dominant position in the image, Hlôšková refers to the events that took place after 1948, when the Communist Party came to power in Czechoslovakia. At a certain point, certain figures in historiography, art and publishing became marginalised, but this was offset by an unbroken tradition in oral tradition (Hlôšková 2013: 96).

In the 1960s, two Slovak intellectuals, Ľubomír Lipták and Vladimír Mináč used Jánošík's figure to describe the robber phenomenon '*Jánošíčenie*' (litterally "behaving as a Jánošík") as a typical characteristic of the Slovak mentality. As a result of this upgrading of the tradition, Jánošík's figure was mythologized in many multimedia genres. He became a positive pole of the robbery tradition (Hlôšková 2013: 97).

Eva Krekovičová (2015: 38-39) explicitly states that Jánošík can be considered an ambivalent figure in history and image, both hero and anti-hero. Especially the romantic poets of the nineteenth century elevated Juraj Jánošík to an incarnation of heroism. Research suggests that Jánošík was considered to be a good representative of ‘Slovak identity’ in two respects: he is a strong hero and he appears as a symbol of a social struggle, i.e. as a protector of the socially weak.

Comparing the Slovak Jánošík tradition with its Polish, Bohemian and Moravian equivalents, Krekovičová (2015: 47) states that although Jánošík is found in Moravia alongside, for example, Ondráš, he remains rather a regional folkloric figure. In other words, the Czechs do not actually use the Jánošík figure because it is still associated with Slovaks today.

2.4. Assmann’s *Schriftliche Folklore*

One of the key concepts that are very useful in this study alongside image is ‘written folklore’ or *Schriftliche Folklore*. This is a term conceived by Aleida Assmann (1983), who in turn consulted other literary scholars. For example, Roman Jakobson (1896-1982) distinguishes between oral and written folklore. The first form is typical for oral cultures, the second in written cultures. Hans-Heino Ewers (2000) was the first to connect written folklore with children’s literature and this is the reason why Sanne Parlevliet (2009) applied this written folklore in her dissertation on adaptations of adult stories to children’s versions (Rijns 2010: 430-431). It is remarkable that Jánošík as well as Jan de Lichte appeared as heroes also in versions of novels adapted for children and youth literature (in more adventurous stories).

Written folklore is based on a synthesis of Jakobson’s distinction between ‘folklore’ as a characteristic form of text transfer in oral cultures and ‘literature’ as a characteristic form of text transfer in written cultures. Written folklore is a written text that is handed down in a folkloric way. This concerns often storytelling materials that cross cultural boundaries, without knowing where or who the author of the primal material is. Written folklore consists of compilations of texts, or parts of texts, adapted to time and the public, giving them the character of user texts, functionally only for a certain audience in a certain period of time. (Assmann quoted in Parlevliet 2009: 36-37). In addition to all kinds of children’s songs, (nursery) rhymes and verses from ‘the old days’, Ewers also includes stories that transcend language and cultural boundaries and of which the archetypal version is often unknown.

According to him, the adaptations from classical works to children's books are between literature and written folklore. Emer O'Sullivan (quoted in Rijns 2010: 431) on the other hand, sees a distinction between 'literary translation' and 'written folklore'. In the case of a literary translation (meaning an adaptation), an attempt is made to reproduce the original text. Written folklore consists of 'compilations of lyrics, or parts of lyrics, adapted to time and the public, giving them the character of user texts, functionally only for a certain audience in a certain period of time (Rijns 2010: 431).

Texts that deal with rural outlaws and that are picked up later by canonical authors, whether important or not, through folklore songs, legends, legends, folk tales to folk novels, canonical books, can according to our research also be placed in this paradigm of written folklore. Assmann distinguishes five characteristics of written folklore: openness of the work, its variable form, the status of the author (authority and authors will be discussed in chapter three and four), the way in which the work is transferred and its utility. Also with rural outlaws there are several creators of the work and the images that each in their own way edit the texts. I will continue to work with these depictions within written folklore.

2.5 Histoire croisée – Entangled history

In addition to Assmann's cultural research, there will be a further focus on the theoretical paradigms of cultural transfer and the possible challenges and problems involved in research into culture and national thinking. The comments made by the French historians Werner and Espagne on comparative research (summarized by Marjet Brolsma, see online source) – which they and other pioneers of the cultural transfer elaborated on in later articles – mainly concern the following points. First of all, the comparative method of cultural transfer presupposes that cultural areas coincide with the borders of the nation state. Therefore researchers often regard their nation and the research traditions of their national traditions as a starting point for a comparative approach. However, that was, identifying differences and similarities between two countries risk being biased towards the national culture and background of the researcher. Werner and Espagne argue in favour of breaking national frameworks and consider cultural areas (*Aires culturelles* or *Kulturräume*) to be dynamic units rather than closed entities. The cultural transfer distinguishes many different cultural areas, such as a certain region, a group of emigrants or an international network. (Brolsma:

online). Then, in other research, an alternative view is suggested. A special example of this is the so-called *histoire croisée*.

This so-called “Entangled history” or intertwined history starts from a transcultural point of view with the principle that all societies are connected to each other. The basic assumption is that neither nations, nor empires nor civilizations can be exhaustive units in the categorization of historiography. As entities, they themselves were formed by a process of interaction and global circulation of connected ideas. Entangled history owes much on the one hand to the spatial turn in history and the fundamental knowledge philosophical challenges that post-colonial studies provided alongside the criticism of the political, social and cultural world order after decolonization (Bauck & Maier 2015).

Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann (2003) argue in favour of focusing the research on *histoire croisée* on the interweaving and intersections in history and thus to let go of the (national) frames of reference and also the transfer as a primary research object. This has the advantage that intersections, in which there is no direct, concrete and explicit transfer can also be investigated. According to Werner and Zimmermann, the *histoire croisée* is dynamic, reciprocal and transformative, and justifies the fact that changes can also take place at a later point in time or indirectly. As far as Werner and Zimmermann are concerned, the interweaving not only appears between historical objects, but can also be a category of thought in itself, in which developments on the one hand may be the result of developments on the other (Bauck & Maier 2015). A prime example in historiography where one can no longer rely on national frames of reflection is the description of the history of the European Union and the unification of Europe, because there are too many frames of reflection intermingled to be based on a single national framework.

A shortcoming of the *histoire croisée* is that the concept, as well as the cultural transfer, is theoretically well elaborated, but offers little guidance for a practical and purely empirical approach. According to Werner and Zimmermann the only aspect of their concept that could be linked with practical or empirical approach is that the entangled (crossed) history can best be traced and analyzed by a method of pragmatic induction, in which the research object itself must be taken as the starting point instead of the context or the theory (Brolsma: online). This is why I consider the research of rural outlaws as a topic suitable within the entangled history framework, since all national movements are encountering this rural outlaw/common robber spectrum paradigm. The rural outlaw as an object of research will be discussed and scrutinized at the background of the history of written folklore with both type heroes in the

respective Flemish and Slovak national movements. As far as science is concerned, important intertwinements will be distinguished in the concept, but mutual influences in Western and Central European perceptions of *rural outlaws* will also be discerned.

2.6 *Schriftliche Folklore* in the Jan de Lichte-case in historical perspective.

The most accurate overview of the ‘folklorisation’ of the historical hero Jan de Lichte into a tradition of folk tales was analyzed by folklorist Paul Maes together with ethnologist Stefaan Top (1982). They give an overview of robbery in Flanders and conclude that the figure of Jan de Lichte, next to the gang of Bakelandt and the Limburgse Bokkenrijders, is probably the most famous Flemish robber figure today. The legend of Jan de Lichte became known only relatively late to a wider public. As remarked in chapter 1 of this thesis, in 1873 the amateur historian Ernest Ternest from Wetteren wrote a semi-historical novel about this gang leader, partly based on facts, but he also used a substantial part of folk tales and oral tradition in his novel, which people told each other about the terrible deeds of Jan de Lichte around Aalst. Hugo Nevejans was not as successful with his 1896 edition *De Grootte roversbende van Jan de Lichte* (The great gang of robbers of Jan De Lichte) (De Laet 2004: 219). A second novel, *De grootte bende van Jan de Lichte, Bewerkt naar de oorspronkelijke processtukken, en de meest herhaalde en meest verspreide overleveringen* (The large gang of Jan de Lichte, edited according to the original trial documents, and the most retold and widespread oral tradition) appeared in 1888 by an anonymous author. This anonymous author has been revealed by Danny Lamarq (2017) as J. Branteghem, who could however also be the editor. The popular novel by Hans van Hoorenbeek (pseudonym of Abraham Hans) from 1908, *Jan de Lichte en zijn zwarte roversbende* (Jan de Lichte and his black gang), was a completely fictional story. This novel was based on earlier versions of the folk tales and has a plot that mainly focuses on a love story between the robberies. An intriguing storyline is introduced between an archetypal villain, the French-speaking lord of the castle Johan De Creil, who wants to make money of his daughter; she can only be saved by the gang by stealing the diligence. This novel certainly inspired Louis Paul Boon to write his version of Jan de Lichte, although he himself mentions his grandfather Peetje Sooi, who had a book from which the stories were taken (Van ‘t Hof, 1979: 325). Lamarq (2017) also mentions four other folk books, of which he is however not sure, whether Louis Paul Boon read them, but they all draw basic material from the so-called ‘primal book’ by Ernest Ternest. In chapter three the influences and

authority of this book will be discussed. The other four authors are Charles de Hulster, *De bende van Jan de Lichte naverteld door K.D.H.* (The Jan de Lichte gang, told by K.D.H., Antwerp, 1917), Bert Cornelis, *Jan de Lichte en zijne bende* (Jan de Lichte and his gang, Antwerp, no year) and Jozef Firmin Vincx with *Zoo kind zoo man! Uit het leven van een beroemd rovershoofd* (Like father, like child! Sketches from the life of a gang leader. Steenbrugge, 1931). In a collection of folk tales and sagas, collected by Anne Marie Vanden Herrewegen, she states that the folk novels were heavily influencing and enhancing the intensity of the folk tales, noted down and collected until the beginning of the 20th century. Even more, what has been told as a folk tale would turn out to come straight “from the books” (Lamarcq 2017: 5). Hence Lamarcq remarks that there was a mutual influence between the folk tales and the oral tradition about the Jan de Lichte stories. This matches with my first two criteria, the openness of the work and its variable form. In chapter three, the authority Ternest uses as a writer will be discussed.

The folk tales and popular novels often depicted The Lichte as a rebel who stole money from the rich and gave it to the poor, was cherished by many poor and even led a kind of resistance against the ruling class. Concerning the last fact, it is now known that this was an anachronism, as there actually was no authority that really controlled the war-hit Land of Aalst. It also includes (untrue, non-historical) religious motives as according to some folk Jan de Lichte confessed his true faith to a priest when he was sentenced to death (Humbeek, 2007: 392-4).

Maes and Top conclude (1982: 26-27) that the work of Ternest probably contributed the most to the legendarization of the folk tales in a coherent and, moreover, popular folk novel, which was reprinted until 1926. Louis Paul Boon was also partly inspired by Ternest. It is thanks to Boon who turned the gang leader into a ‘tender anarchist’ and added his own vision to the hero in his own original style. Maes and Top claim that Boon knew the anonymous novel of the gang of robbers, but because of his original processing and his humanic view on the historical facts, he changed it into an unusual work. More evidence of this anarchism, nihilism, the attractiveness of communism and the search for alternative ideologies in the literary traditions may be found after the Second World War (see paragraph 2.7).

2.7. *Schriftliche Folklore in the Juraj Jánošík-case in historical perspective.*

In this paragraph the folkloricisation of the Slovak case hero Jánošík will be the focus of attention in a contrastive perspective. Particularly under the impetus of the Polish researcher Joanna Goszczyńska (2003), several myths were exposed about Juraj Jánošík found in folklore and oral tradition. Goszczyńska not only found a possible reason for the popularity of Jánošík in the Slovak national consciousness but also she particularly emphasized the great discrepancy between his punishment and his crimes (Jánošík ended up at the gallows and was hung with a rope around his waist, died of deprivation rather than of torture) as one of the decisive motives for his great heroism. From the very beginning, the depiction of this hero was not only positive or negative. Writers and thinkers such as Janko Kráľ or Sámó Chalupka (see later) depicted him as a man who fought in rebellion and protected the poor from the Hungarian upper class, while others condemned his appearance as an outlaw and condemned his sense of disorder. His heroic status was only usefully turned around in a positive way and used by Ľudovít Štúr, a politician, teacher and codifier of the standard Slovak vernacular.

Štúr decided to place Jánošík in a pantheon of Slovak national heroes and introduced a specific poetical approach that the young Slovak authors should use to create a new literary tradition in Slovak. Since there was only recently a new written vernacular, they also needed heroes and the invention of a (literary) tradition. Before the codification of the Slovak language, however, one could already find images of Jánošík figures in the oeuvre of Bohuslav Táblic, who used seasonal year market songs as a source (as early as 1809), and also in the *Slovanské starožitnosti* (1837, 1865 Slavic History) by Pavol Jozef Šafárik, an ardent supporter of the so-called Slavonic *vzájemnost*, an intensive mutual cooperation between Slavonic countries and cultures in the form of the exchange of Slavonic intercultural contacts. Both of them blended folklore elements with character traits such as courage, strength and even magical powers into the Jánošík depiction. Šafárik goes even further and even depicts Jánošík as a true Christ figure, who was betrayed, suffered and tortured for his own Slavic people. As the students of the Czech-Slavonic society (orig. Spoločnosť česko-slovanská) read, were being taught and analysed the works of older Slovak and Slavonic authors, mostly Aleksandr Pushkin, Adam Mickiewicz and Ján Kollár (Podolan and Viršínská 2014: 112), it is very likely that Šafárik, being one of the members of this society, was influenced by the topic of the Polish people suffering as Christ, as Mickiewicz depicted. On the other hand, Ján Kollár, a Slovak evangelical preacher who fiercely defended Czechoslovak mutual relations, did not rally for Jánošík: he placed our rebel in his

masterpiece *Slávy dcéra* (1824, The daughter of Sláva) in an allegorical hell, because according to Kollár robbing was nothing but bad and a mortal sin (Goszczyńska 2007: 60).

Goszczyńska (2007: 76-77) argues that three authors were crucial in transforming Jánošík into a beloved, popular and national hero: Štefan Marko Daxner (1822–1892), Samo Chalupka (1812–1883) and Janko Kráľ (1822–1876). All of them were known as romantic poets, and were also politically very active. We can even consider Daxner together with Ján Francisci and Janko Kráľ within the generation of young followers of Štúr to belong to the radical revolutionary wing of the Slovak nation movement: Francisci and Daxner actively tried to find more support with the lower classes, farmers, workers, rather than the gentry and noblemen inclining to the Slovak national sentiments. (Podolan and Viršínská 2014: 144-145) Daxner was since then known as a revolutionary poet and Kráľ was later canonised as such by Slovak literary historians. It is therefore not surprising that he himself set an example for the heroic, romantic death of Juraj Jánošík. The key aspect of the life of Juraj Jánošík formed the idea that a bandit and a robber stood up for his own freedom and the looting because symbolic for the struggle of the Slovak nation. Janko Kráľ also studied Jánošík's original trial documents and he wanted to write a more important work than just poems about him, but unfortunately died at an early age.

Other authors of this young promising generation (including the already mentioned Daxner and Chalupka) followed the romantic poetics of the Ľudovít Štúr movement, claiming that the primary goal of the Slovak national movement was to create a literary tradition. Pedagogical motives were paramount. They did not turn, however, to the popular paradigm of the English romantic poet lord Byron. Byron's reception in the Czech and Slovak territories is very different from the surrounding countries, especially in the first stage, from 1823-1848. Pavol Josef Šafarík even stopped in his duty as a censor for the Austrian government the publication of the complete works of Máchá, at that time known as a Byronic Czech poet. (Cardwell 2004: 284) The other writers around Štúr despised the idea of a Byronic Hero in a novel, because this type of a hero was too individualistic and couldn't force him to serve a higher goal in life. Štúr saw Byron as a contemporary representative of the "threatening other" of the harmonical Slavic poetry, his self-love represented the wild, unassimilated nature of the decaying Western world (Cardwell 2004: 287). Ľudovít Štúr needed the Byronic poetry to serve as an anti-force to build his aesthetic views of Slavonic poetry. After the revolution and the spring of 1848, however, this literary concept began to change, because many members of the Slovak intelligentsia were dissatisfied with the results of this

(failed) revolution, where Slovak attempts at forming an own militia, own nation-building institutions were thwarted by the oppression from Hungarian state officials. The writer Ján Botto (1829–1881) wrote *Smrt' Jánošíkova* (1846-1858, published 1862; the death of Jánošík), that became a classic in Slovak literature until today. Botto is considered as a canonical romantic Slovak author. He inspired himself on folklore elements, but broke up the poetic views of the generation of Štúr supporters and created a so-called messianic hero, who struggles and fights for his freedom against foreign oppression. The idea of a mythical hero remained attractive in the sixties of the nineteenth century (for example in the lesser-known work *Matora* by Michal Miloslav Hodža) and formed the basic pattern for later romantic and popular literature. This literature moved further and further away from the basic motive of *rural outlaw*. (Goszczyńska 2007: 112-115)

2.8. The fifties and sixties of the twentieth century: Social(ly driven) historiography

The novel *De bende van Jan de Lichte* (1953/57, The gang of Jan de Lichte) holds an interesting position in Louis Paul Boon's oeuvre. Van't Hof (1979: 325) states that "Jan de Lichte's gang is one of the first books in which he [Boon, BB] deals with a historical subject. Later he started to process more and more 'history'." Boon's view is that the gang leader's revolt was a real prelude to the French revolution. We notice from edition history that the story of Jan de Lichte, which appeared in serial form in the popular Flemish newspaper *Het Laatste Nieuws*, was published in book form in 1953, but that the latest version from 1957 emphasizes the revolutionary character of the gang far less ('t Hof 1979: 327). Boon tells the story of Jan de Lichte's gang – like other folk writers – very realistically, exciting and smoothly. He does indeed write a folk book, but he also puts the story and the genre in perspective by giving his personal view of the story and 'the revolution' very clearly in the comments he gives as a narrator and later in various interviews. In this way, the different form of Boon's folk book supports its revolutionary content ('t Hof 1979: 338). Jean Weisgerber (1962: 229) points out that Boon is actually the first writer in Jan de Lichte's written folklore to raise him to become a real hero:

In the gang of Jan de Lichte, his sympathy goes out to common robbers, depicting them as heroes who could rightly claim their place in a Belgian pantheon next to

the six hundred Franchimont-soldiers and Frans Anneessens“(Weisgerber 1962: 229, transl. BB).¹⁷

As a literary scholar, Weisgerber therefore places Jan de Lichte in a Flemish-Belgian heroic pantheon next to a French-speaking group of heroes and the Brussels hero Frans Anneessens, an eighteenth-century Brussels uprising leader. It is true that Boon does not emphasize intentionally the national character, but later in his novels he mainly emphasizes social aspects among his protagonists.

In the tradition of varying narratives by the Slovak hero Jánošík, in the 1950s and 1960s official historiography mainly presents his gang activity as a fight against the feudal conditions, against the rich, the bourgeois class and gives the Jánošík figure an aura of a social revolutionary. This performance was supported by folklorist Andrej Melicherčík (1917–1966) in two works (1952, 1963) and these works were counted for a long time as the trendsetting works in research about Juraj Jánošík from a folklore perspective. However, Hroboň and Krištofík (2014: 152-153) mention that Melicherčík’s works were conceived according to the dogmatic Stalinist principles of socialism, depicting Jánošík as a hero of the common people who revolted against the bourgeoisie and feudal structures of his time. At the same time, Melicherčík opposed the folklore image of Jánošík that had been sketched up until then, because this folklore image distracted attention from his real struggle as a popular revolutionary warrior. The impact of his research will be discussed in chapter four.

It might be expected that since the former socialist (communist) regime strongly promoted this socialist ideology, Jánošík’s image was further characterised as a hero who stood strongly for the ordinary people. This is a common trend in the Czech and Slovak literary tradition between 1949 and 1989. Originally, Hroboň and Krištofík (2014: 155-159) did indeed mention these narratives when a libretto of an opera was created by Ján Cikker (1911–1989) in 1954, but they note that at the end of the 1970s a more balanced image between historical truth and the legendary traits occurred, particularly in terms of literary representation. From the 1980s onwards, ideological clichés about Jánošík became increasingly rare or minimal. It is mainly the revolutionary aspect that became important for socialist historiography. The Marxist social image of the two case heroes, which thus emerged from the 1950s, is further tempered or less emphasized in later adaptations (Hroboň and

¹⁷ In *De Bende van Jan de Lichte* gaat zijn sympathie uit naar de struikrovers, van wie hij helden maakt die met recht in het Belgische pantheon een plaats zouden innemen naast de zeshonderd Franchimontezen en Frans Anneessens.

Krištofik 2014:159). In the case of Jan de Lichte, further spin-offs and later adaptations are mainly based on the important scenario of Jan de Lichte recorded by Louis Paul Boon, such as the comic strip series from the eighties, drawn and the scenario created by Nagel (ps. of Edwin Nagels), who literally mentions the novel by L. P. Boon (Nagel 1985), but the Boon literary heritage continues as up to this day, when a television series based on the novel will probably be launched on the Flemish commercial television channel VTM in autumn 2020. The series has already had an international release on Netflix at the end of 2019 titled as “Thieves of the Wood”.

2.9. Conclusions on imagology, written folklore and entangled history

[I]t protects not against the fact that peasants are poor and oppressed, but against the fact that they sometimes are excessively poor and oppressed. Bandit heroes are not expected to make a world of equality. They can only right wrongs and prove that sometimes oppression can be turned upside down. (Hobsbawm, 1957: 24)

Hobsbawm argues that the image of these heroes is not actually intended to show people social justice, but to serve merely as a sign that the ordinary people have the power to resist. This powerful message came into the spotlight in the 1950s and 1960s both in literature and in scientific research (with Marxist foundations) on rural outlaws and later became overlooked in other narratives as the images and forms of adaptation changed, such as in art, opera, comic strips, films, television series. If we compare their images, both heroes in our case study are sharing a focus on their social, revolutionary aspect, especially in the 1950s and 1960s.

If stereotypical images between Flanders/Belgium and Slovakia are compared, some clear parallels may be noticed. It can be seen, for example, that the image of being dominated by foreign powers occurs in both national movements. In addition, a process of creation of an own identity by distancing oneself from the neighbouring countries is being shown. There was an image in Flanders that glorified rural life and at the same time emphasized the hardships of this type of life and the issue of poverty. Over the course of time this image has been pushed into the background. Contrary to the situation in Flanders/Belgium, in Slovakia the so-called plebeian myth and the mountain landscape still provide a strong stereotypical image, which in itself is implying that heroes, who fit into a pantheon, will have to join this

dominant image. This is most likely to be the first explanation for the rural outlaw's dominant position as a hero in the Slovak national movement.

The image of Juraj Jánošík can be seen as a successful top-down process, thanks to the efforts of the poets, writers, thinkers and politicians as early as the nineteenth century. There were eventually successful attempts to place this hero in a Slovakian heroic pantheon. Similar processes were not successful in the case of Jan de Lichte. There are various reasons for this. Firstly, the historical Jan de Lichte was depicted in a very negative way in most popular sources, and therefore worked as a frightening image until deep into the nineteenth century. Secondly, the image of rural outlaws was limited to the literature of a few middle-class folk novels, but not to canonical authors or established nineteenth-century Flemish writers, poets or playwrights who adopted the theme, as we can see, for example, with *Die Räuber* van Schiller and *Götz von Berlichingen* van Goethe, but also in nineteenth and twentieth century poetry and drama in the Slovak case, as will be scrutinized in the fourth chapter. Thirdly, Jan de Lichte faced strong competition as a robber hero or even as a rascal or positively depicted bandit: in the first place, one ought to mention the completely fictional hero Tijnl Uilenspiegel, who was somewhat easier to reclaim by both Belgian and Flemish nationalists (see more in Beyen 2002), and nineteenth-century authors in other regions told stories about the gang of Bakelandt and the Bokkenrijders. As a consequence of that, not a single figure of these three gangs was able to develop into a dominant hero. Until the finished political unity in 1993, no clear unity in the Flemish community gathering around a clear national hero-pantheon paradigm has ever been really shown. Differences between the Western- Eastern Flanders, Brabant, Brussels and the Easternmost Limburg regions still existed to matter in regional identification.¹⁸ The permanent ambivalent character of the heroes, which in the Slovak case in the twentieth century leaned much more towards emphasizing the social struggle, could not become a predominant narrative in the Belgian case, despite attempts by Louis Paul Boon to emphasize this social aspect in the life of Jan de Lichte. In chapter three there will be a focus on special *posture* and authority of Boon and other writers.

Looking at the interdependencies between the rural outlaws, one can discern the main focus of scientific attention devoted to them dates back to the late 1950s and the 1960s (Hobsbawm, Melicherčík, Boon as an amateur historian). This scientific attention is linked to

¹⁸ On the contrary in the Slovak case, once the standard language quarrel between the Catholic and Protestant intellectuals was set, their national movement could evolve politically and addressing the mass movement with clear hero-paradigms.

emerging research paradigms on the history of social struggle, rebellion and social movements. The following chapters will have a twofold structure. The central concepts of the third and fourth chapter will be the authors and the authority of the texts about the rural outlaws. The connection between the writers who wrote about the rebels and their lives, depictions and their authority in the Flemish and (Czecho-) Slovak literary tradition will be the centre of attention.

AUTHORS, AUTHORITY AND JAN DE LICHTE.

3.1 Authors and authority: a broader framework. Positioning writers.

In the following two chapters, the literary context of the rural outlaws will be further investigated. A factor that has not been discussed yet is the relationship between the socio-cultural context and the authors who dealt with these heroic figures. In what environment did these authors operate, what is the literary-societal context in which they acted? How do the rural outlaw heroes they wrote about relate to their writers' environment, and what could encourage these authors to document or fictionalize about the rural outlaws? These chapters will examine this in more detail.

The theoretical framework that will be chosen for this purpose has been taken from literary sociology, that is, the one concerning authors and their autonomy, on the one hand, and their authority, on the other. Laurens Ham mapped in his research *Door Prometheus geboeid* (Prometheus bound, in Dutch is 'fascinated by Prometheus' a second meaning), Laurens Ham (2015) in Dutch literature the authoritative arguments made by five authors and made through a discourse analysis their position in their literary environment. He investigated their *posture*, a concept of the sociologist Jérôme Meizoz, a combination of hetero- and auto representation of a writer. His main starting point lies in an operational vision of authority. He observes that in modern literature writers are constantly moving between the axis of freedom, willing to act independently, and authority. Therefore he searches in his corpus for auto- and hetero representations by authors (Ham 2015: 12-15), that help him to criticize the common view that the process for writers to gain more autonomy is a linear process, in which the author gradually acquires more autonomy and authority. His critique is that this process is not that much a linear but rather a dynamic concept and he poses his research within a broader socio-economic framework:

This institutional, literary-historical, political or social environment, therefore, determines what possibilities an author has to claim this autonomy, and which strategies are appropriate or valuable. At the same time, however, these strategies form the context again: authors create opportunities that future writers can make use of again. (Ham 2015: 16, transl. BB)¹⁹

¹⁹ Die institutionele, literair-historische, politieke of sociale omgeving bepaalt dus welke mogelijkheden een auteur heeft om die autonomie op te eisen, en welke strategieën passend of waardevol zijn. Maar tegelijkertijd

The possibilities of creating a hero figure from Jan De Lichte or another rural outlaw as a hero, such as Juraj Jánošík (discussed in the next chapter), can be exploited or not. This depends however on the historical framework in which the author exists and the authority he can claim. Some people, writers or critics will react to this claim. They create a counter-authority. This is the main thesis that will be investigated in this chapter. First of all, an overview of authors who have adapted to the story material around Jan de Lichte's gang will be presented. From this corpus, it will be argued that three of these authors deserve more attention: Ernest Ternest, Abraham Hans and Louis Paul Boon. These three authors will be juxtaposed with the social and literary-historical context, i.e. the end of the nineteenth century, the beginning of the twentieth century (the so-called interbellum) and the post-war period. The tension between autonomy and authority will be outlined as well as how these authors presented themselves. This will show how these authors were connected to the main character of their novels and what textual and internal elements they use to legitimate their Jan de Lichte character.

3.1.1 A look upon authority. Defining authority.

In this chapter a broad definition of authority will be suggested in order to be applied to the case writers and the figure of Jan de Lichte.²⁰ This includes contextual, textual and textual external elements that can help determine the authority of a writer.

The authority of an author consists of power, which is legitimized by one or more institutions. An institution can be defined according to the *Dutch Algemeen Letterkundig Lexicon* (Van Bork et al. 2012),²¹ which means that an institution can be a certain movement,

vormen deze strategieën de omgeving ook weer: auteurs scheppen mogelijkheden waar latere schrijvers weer gebruik van kunnen maken.

²⁰ This definition has been developed with the help of a collective of literary scholars at the 2019 Vienna Summer School: literature and literary scholarship in the 21st century: digital humanities, thanks to Toni Bandov, Małgorzata Dowłazewicz, Christine Klausová, Veronika Holáčiková, Damian Olszewski, Catalina Oslobanu and BB.

²¹ Authority, organisation or any other social association engaged in the production, consumption, dissemination, promotion, review or study of literature. In practice, all these forms of organisation play a role in the creation of what we call the canon-1 of literature. These institutions include publishers, bookshops and other sales organisations, literacy education in schools and universities, libraries, literary criticism, writers' organisations, journals, and their editors, the literary prize circuit, government bodies involved in literature policy, poetry associations and reading circles. Historically, one can add to this the monasteries where manuscripts were

(reading) club, society, but also an author, reader and so on. Authority is a dynamic concept, that can change depending on perspective and time. Someone with authority can exert influence. Authority is not linear neither does it have only one dimension. Those who have acquired authority can also wield it in other areas, but they are not obliged to do so. The authority is not expected to justify itself, the authority can be strengthened by the *posture* of a writer. The *posture* of an author, this is the interaction of auto- and hetero representations about the writer, can become a stimulating factor for his authority. The authority itself, however, says nothing about the literary value and/or quality of the author's work or oeuvre; this depends on external elements, such as literary criticism. We can also assume that authority can also be attributed to a certain text (think of the Bible) or to a story, a language, which means that these texts/stories have a certain influence or authority.

Certain internal text elements can contribute significantly to an author's authority. These could be various autobiographical elements, such as (professional) activities that confirm credibility, statements that show intellectual capacity, the enumeration of achievements and the showing of social and/or political involvement. These chapters will be mainly focused around on the historical context and writers reacting to each others depiction of the rural outlaws to enhance their own authority and their own writer's image.

3.1.2 The relation between rebels and authority

If we want to join Rural Outlaws with authority, we are confronted with a contradiction that needs further attention, since rural outlaws are of course are *outlawed* and therefore form a kind of counter-power to the prevalent mainstream values. In other words, rebels attack authority and therefore might appeal to the imagination. This paradox is the subject of the recent study by Adam, Suykens, and Vlassenroot (2017: 6-8). They perceive rebel groups as social actors who exercise a certain influence in their territory in co-existence with the society in which they operate. Rebels constantly adapt to their environment and are therefore difficult to grasp in normative models. If we move in a continuum of perpetrators of violence (the criminal gang and/or the rebels) against the victims, we ignore the fact that there is also a kind of cohabitation, a way of living together, between the two groups. Rebel leaders and

produced, chamber of ecclesiastical rule, the literary salons, etc. This whole complex is referred to in literary sociology as 'the literary field'. (Van Bork, et al. 2012)

outlaws can combine different functions and therefore at the same time carry out an ordinary profession and be a traditional leader.

This means that, depending on their historical context, rural outlaws can invoke two or more types of authority: they are able to create a counter authority (vis-à-vis the establishment, the established power), and their contact with the population is also a credential of their authority for them. The big difference between the so-called noble robbers and the common criminals is that in the first category their authority also gets elements of political struggle, they revolt against established authority.

3.2 The (known) authors of *De Bende van Jan de Lichte* (The Gang of Jan de Lichte)

In this chapter, a clearer profile of a couple of authors who have been involved in the literary adaptations of the story about the gang of Jan de Lichte is presented. This discourse will not mainly concern with the historical figure of Jan de Lichte and historical facts or the written folklore traditions that were elaborated (see chapter one and two), but with the literary hero, his incorporation in the story, his contextualization and how the authors approached it. However, it will be gradually noticed that various authors call for historicity as an authoritative argument in order to give their stories more legitimacy. Others, such as Bert Cornelis and especially Louis Paul Boon, deal with the historical context creatively and originally.

It is not always easy, especially for older literature, to establish the authorship of the stories about Jan de Lichte. Moreover, historian Danny Lamacq is right to point out that folk books and oral tradition influenced each other to a great extent (Vermassen 2017: 266), which gives us a fluid impression in older books and makes it difficult to determine which passages in the texts are based on facts and which are fictionalised. The first attempt at research into this subject was made in Maes and Top (1982), who investigated the folklorisation and mixing of historical sources and folk novels.

In this article, folklorists Paul Maes and Stefan Top (1982) present a first comprehensive overview of authors around Jan de Lichte's gang, which is supplemented by Lamacq (2017). Both refer to a first edition by Ernest Ternest, *Jan de Lichte en zijn bende, voorafgegaan door de Familie Hoogenbergh* (1873; Jan de Lichte and his gang, preceded by

the story of the Hoogenbergh Family), which subsequently had many reprints, the last in 1926 (Maes and Top 1982: 12).

A second important book is by an anonymous author. Usually, this is referred to as 'Branteghem', according to the publisher. Its title is *De Grootte bende van Jan de Lichte, bewerkt naar de oorspronkelijke processtukken en de meest herhaalde en de meest verspreide overleveringen 1745-1748* (1888; the large gang of Jan de Lichte, edited according to the original trial documents, and the most retold and widespread oral tradition). This is a very extensive book of more than six hundred pages which was published by publisher Branteghem in Aalst. Lamarcq completes the nineteenth-century folk literature with a folk book by Hugo Nevejans, *De Grootte rooversbende van Jan de Lichte* (1896, Brussels: J. Vergaert; The great gang of robbers of Jan De Lichte) and after that there are folk books from the twentieth century, by Karel de Hulster (1971), Jozef Firmin Vincx (1931) and Bert Cornelis (s. a.). However, the work of the latter author is undated and Maes and Top report that the first two popular books are to large extent summaries of Ternest's work. Taking into account the fact that all these authors refer back to Ernest Ternest and that it is this very author who is the first in a popular novel to publish the story of Jan de Lichte's gang in book form, he will be the first author considered in this corpus on authority.

The most influential popular book of the early twentieth century is *Jan de Lichte en zijn zwarte rooversbende* (1908; Jan de Lichte and his black gang) by Abraham Hans, who wrote under the pseudonym of Hans van Hoorenbeek. His book was reprinted many times in the 1950s and eventually, a children's version as a popular adventure novel was published in 1970.²² For this dissertation, this version has been consulted. Maes and Top, as well as Lamarcq, mention that Louis Paul Boon read fragments written by Hans and possibly used them as inspiration for his version of Jan de Lichte. He will be considered, being a popularizer of the feuilleton genre of the folk novel, the second case author claiming authority in his *posture*.

Finally, the figure of Jan de Lichte appeared with the author Louis Paul Boon in 1972 in the adventure novel *De Bende van Jan de Lichte: een bandietenroman uit de jaren 1700* (The gang of Jan de Lichte: a bandit's novel from the 1700s),²³ after an earlier mention in the older novel *Zomer-te-ter-muren* (1956) and after an earlier feuilleton version in the

²² Hoorenbeek, Hans van (1970). *Jan de Lichte en zijn zwarte roversbende*. Antwerpen: uitg. L. Opdebeek.

²³ Boon, Louis Paul (1972). *De Bende van Jan de Lichte*. Amsterdam: Arbeiderspers.

newspaper *Het Laatste Nieuws*. This novel is known as the most famous and widespread representation of the figure of Jan de Lichte. Together with Bert Cornelis' novel, Boon's depiction of Jan de Lichte differs from the other authors. He is depicted as a heroic figure and is idealised. However, no personal data are known about this Bert Cornelis and this novel has not been followed up either. Boon's novel, on the other hand, was by far the most influential version in the visual development and canonisation and transformation of the gang leader. The narrative and the plot of the Boon novel will have the most adaptations after its publishing and can be considered as a new source of stories developing around Jan de Lichte. For this reason, it is interesting to consider Boon as the third author of a case study on authority. His posture and image as an anarchist writer are closely related to the rebel figure of Jan de Lichte, which will be explained in more detail.

After Louis Paul Boon's novel, the overviews with stories about Jan de Lichte of Lamarcq and Maes and Top are no longer up to date. I have discovered three more authors after the publication of Louis Paul Boon's popular novel from the seventies. At the end of the eighties, Jack Verstappen made two collections of several stories about gang life and a crime under the titles *Bendeleven in Vlaanderen* (1984; Gang Life in Flanders) and *Mysterie en misdaad over Vlaanderen* (1987; Mystery and crime over Flanders), in which both the gang of Jan de Lichte and other legendary robbers make their appearance. Besides, historian Peter Laroy, who wrote a thesis on the robber Bakelandt, also presents a dramatised, historical sketch of the so-called brigandism in Flanders in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in *De Roversbendes van Vlaanderen* (1997; Gangs in Flanders).. He began his collection of stories based on historical sources, also with Jan de Lichte. And in 2007, exactly 50 years after Jan de Lichte made his first entry into the Boon universe, Danny Cantaert, an inhabitant of Velzeke, the native village of Jan de Lichte, published his version of a picaresque novel *Jan de Lichte - de weg naar de hel!* (2007, Jan de Lichte – the way to hell!)

Since Cantaert's version refers directly to a commemoration of the Jan de Lichte depiction by Boon and the versions of Verstappen and Laroy are more broadly framed in traditional popular stories about gang leaders in general, I regard them as being epigones of the image that Boon made up of Jan de Lichte in his context, and therefore they will not be included together with these three more recent authors in the corpus of the research into authority. It does, however, show that every decade of the twentieth-century novels and popular stories about gang leaders and rebels in Flanders continued to appear and that every generation of readers, therefore, had access to an image of Jan de Lichte.

3.3 Nineteenth century: Ernest Ternest as the standard novel: historical prose

Ernest Ternest is important in the overview of authors because written folklore begins with his work the literalization of the rebel and the stories about Jan de Lichte are considered. Lamarcq mentions this several times in his historical research on the gang of Jan de Lichte (see Lamarcq 1984, 2017, Vermassen 2017):

In addition to the historical sources, there are also sources of fiction. (...) many other authors were inspired by Jan de Lichte. The ‘primary original book’ is the novel by Ernest Ternest, *Jan de Lichte and his gang* (1874). After all, there is a clear resemblance between the stories about Jan de Lichte from this book and the folk tales. (Lamarcq in Vermassen 2017: 266, translation BB)²⁴

Lamarcq (in Vermassen 2017: 266) mentions an edition from 1874 (probably a second edition), Maes and Top speak of an edition from 1873 in the University Library in Ghent, which has also been consulted (Ternest 1873). The title of the work reads: *Jan de Lichte en zijne bende, naar de echtste bronnen bewerkt* (Jan de Lichte and his gang, adapted according to the most real sources), by E. Ternest, municipal secretary in Wetteren. The book was published by H. and I. Vanderpoorten, in Ghent. In what follows, some biographical information about Ernest Ternest and his surroundings will be presented, where he was able to start writing about the legendary gang leader and to what extent this environment could stimulate writing about Jan de Lichte’s gang. Then his novel will be situated among other historical novels of the nineteenth century within Flemish-Dutch literature.

3.1.1 Ernest Ternest, son of Karel Lodewijk Ternest

What can be told about Ernest Ternest? As early as in the nineteenth century, his name is already mentioned in the biographical dictionary of Frederiks en van den Branden, naming all

²⁴ Naast de historische bronnen zijn er ook de fictie-bronnen. (...) zijn er nog heel wat andere auteurs die inspiratie vonden bij Jan de Lichte. Het 'oerboek' is de roman van Ernest Ternest, *Jan de Lichte en zijne bende* (1874). Er is immers een duidelijke gelijkenis tussen de verhalen over Jan de Lichte uit dit boek en de volksverhalen.“ (Lamarcq in Vermassen 2017: 266)

significant Flemish *hommes des lettres*, writers and scholars of the Flemish movement. The lemma tells:

Ternest (Ernest), son of Karel Lodewijk, born Ouwegem, 26 Oct. 1841, was from 1861 till 1872 teacher in Wetteren and since then municipal secretary. His writings are: *De gedolven Schat* (the treasure) and *De Suikertante* (sugar aunt), drama plays for schools; *Klaas de Tuischer*, story for children; *De Koe*, (the Cow, also for children), rewarded by the society for protection of animals; *De Familie van Hoogenberg, verhaal voor jonge lieden* (the Hoogenbergh Family, story for young people), and *Jan de Lichte en zijne Bende*, story (Jan de Lichte and his gang). (Frederiks & van den Branden 1888-91; transl. BB)²⁵

The emphasis in the lemma lies on his duties as a teacher and municipal secretary, which means that Ternest had to come from a well-educated family. Father Karel Lodewijk Ternest was indeed an influential Flemish scholar, who wrote an important book on Dutch phonetics, *Uitspraakleer der Nederlandsche Taal* (Pronunciation of the Dutch Language, 1860), which was awarded and was regarded as a standard work on Dutch pronunciation in the southern Dutch (Flemish) language region until the twentieth century. He had good contacts with, among others, Jan Broeckart and Frans de Potter, East Flemish scholars who were connected with the establishment of the Royal Flemish Academy for Language and Literature, the current KANTL (Royal Academy for Dutch Language and Literature), an important institution in the Flemish language struggle and crucial for philological research (Keersmaekers 1988: 79-83).

Keersmaekers (1988: 82) mentions about the literary work of Ernest Ternest that the literary value of his stories and plays is low, but in the context of their circles this was considered to be less important than the fact that they were being literary active in a literary environment dominated by French-speaking intelligentsia. This fact did not only shape the environment in their inner circles, but also led to the formation of a network of the intelligentsia and, gradually, a Flemish middle class, which would also determine Flemish-Dutch literature through these kinds of popular stories.

²⁵ Ternest (Ernest), zoon van Karel Lodewijk, te Ouwegem geb. den 26 Oct. 1841, was van 1861 tot 1872 onderwijzer te Wetteren en is sedert dien tijd secretaris dier gemeente. Zijne schriften zijn: *De gedolven Schat* en *De Suikertante*, tooneelstukjes voor scholen; *Klaas de Tuischer*, verhaal voor kinderen; *De Koe*, idem, bekroond door de maatschappij tot bescherming der dieren; *De Familie van Hoogenberg*, verhaal voor jonge lieden, en *Jan de Lichte en zijne Bende*, verhaal. (Frederiks & van den Branden 1888-91)

The importance of the circles around Ternest can be noticed by the fact that in the important Flemish literary magazine *Het Belfort* an obituary of Ernest Ternest is published. Once again an overview is made of all his published works and the mention that he was the son of Karel Lodewijk Ternest, as well as the son-in-law of Jan Broeckaert, who was also Municipal Secretary of Wetteren (Scharpé, 1897: 431).

In her research, Nele Bemong focuses on the social and cultural capital of Flemish writers in the Bourdieuan sense of the word. In an article that examines several peritexts, she also states that Ternest refers in his peritext to his function as a town clerk (municipal secretary), a civil servant. The fact that his function appears on the cover of the text indicates the authority of that function. Knowing now that he is a town clerk, it cannot be found out however whether he has received social promotion through his novel(s). (Bemong 2010: 34) Contemporaries who wrote about rural rebels and gang leaders, such as Pieter Ecrevisse (with the *Bokkenrijders* gang) and certainly with the largest and most important Flemish national writer Hendrik Conscience (1812-1883), who after his successful novels started to work as a Belgian state official did receive social promotion through their official professional status next to their writing. In my opinion, Wetteren was a municipality too small to receive such social promotion through writing.

3.4. The novel of Jan de Lichte in its genre of the historical novel

Van den Bergh and Couttenier (2016: 685) include Ternest's *De bende van Jan de Lichte* (1873) as the only work of his oeuvre in their *Alles is Taal geworden. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Literatuur*, their literary history of Dutch literature in the nineteenth century. They classify the attempt of the Wetteren municipal secretary to create a novel of the bandits and robbers based on local sources in a tendency to make the historical novel more scientific. This genre that was particularly successful in Flanders after the writings of the above mentioned Hendrik Conscience. However, this Flemish tendency of the 1860s to make historical novels more scientific, moralistic and didactic took place after a more interesting period before, during which there was more room for horror and adventure. Even the most important and influential Flemish author of the period, Conscience, was carried away by elements of horror and anxiety. Because of this interest in the occult, Flemish literature also found a connection with European Romanticism, more than was thought until now.

However, these tendencies were quite often overlooked in literary criticism (Van den Bergh & Couttenier 2016: 414). Conscience and the other Flemish romantics drew their material of these evil stories from the rich Flemish oral heritage. Van den Bergh and Couttenier (2016: 417-418) see three examples of Flemish prose writers who, in their processing of historical elements mixed with horror and adventure, could find their inspiration in English gothic novels and the German *Schauerromane*. It concerns *de raadselachtige geschiedenis van Graef Hugo van Craenhove en van zijnen vriend Abulfaragus* (1845, *Count Hugo of Craenhove, 1855*) of Hendrik Conscience from 1845, which tells of the family secret of this count, who wanders on the heath as a werewolf. The adventurous aspect and creepy decors play a leading role in this novel.²⁶

The clearest example of a novel influenced by German ghost and robber novels is the work of Pieter Ecrevisse (1804–1879), *De Bokkeryders in het land van Valkenburg* (1845, *The Bokkeryders in the Land of Valkenburg*), a success story especially in the nineteenth century, with four reprints following a feuilleton version, including at a later moment a German and a French translation. This novel is about banditry and a band of robbers near the river Meuse in the Belgian and Dutch provinces of Limburg. In his novel, Ecrevisse also shows his knowledge of strongly idealised folk traditions. In Ecrevisse's work, there is a clear moralisation in demonising the bad gang leaders. On the other side of the country, in West Flanders, priest Victor Huys (1829–1905) collected legends in 1860 about a gang leader, which he compiled into *Baekeland, of de rooversbende van het Vrybusch* (*Baekeland, or the Vrybusch gang of robbers*). These stories took place at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century in the fight against French rule and combine the brutality of the gang with morality of impunity (Van den Bergh and Couttenier 2016: 418). This novel too has been reprinted many times.

Jan de Lichte was executed in 1748. Although there were more than a hundred years between the historical figure and its written precipitation in the first popular novel (Ternest 1873), there were to be found several older examples of rural outlaws and adventure novels in

²⁶ This novel drew as well a lot of international attraction. When looking at translations and international critique, one can find translations into Czech and Slovak. The Slovak translation counts as one of the oldest of Conscience and as such the oldest translation of Flemish/Dutch literature into Slovak, in 1862 published as *Deje hrabäta Huga z Kraenhovu a jeho priatel'a Abulfaraga. Dejepisná povest' z XVI. stoletia*. In: *Sbierka vybraných spisov J. Conscience-a*, Budín: Martin Bagó / Slovenský cirkevný literárny spolek na ústredňom semenišťi pešťanskom. (see <https://www.kgns.info/recepcia>) The novel was published by the liberal translator and high school director Václav Petrů in Czech as *Hugo van Craenhove a přítel jeho Abulfaragus*. Knihtiskárna Cyrillo-Methodějská. See more in Engelbrecht et al. (2018: 97-99).

Flanders that provided popular narrative material for nineteenth-century readers. During this period, the novels by Victor Huys and certainly by Pieter Ecrevisse were more successful and certainly found their way to their readers.

3.5. Historic depiction and authority of the Ternest novel

Ternest finds it necessary to make a historical sketch about the situation and the history of the region in which he operated before he starts his novel about Jan the Lichte. It is interesting to go into this in more detail because Ternest aimed to enhance the historicity of his novel, which has significantly incorporated the subtitle “from the most real sources” (de echtste bronnen).

In order to make it easier for the reader to understand our story, (...) we consider it necessary to give a short sketch of the situation of our country and our country at that time, for one would honestly be deceiving oneself if one imagined Belgium of that time in the same state, as the blossoming and happy little country, which we are now allowed to look at and (...) live in.²⁷ (Ternest 1873: 3, transl. BB)

Ternest recalls that the peasants between 1740 and 1745 were ravaged by wars between the French and Austrian armies, as well as by crop failures which led to famine and poverty among the population.

It was in these circumstances that, at various points in Belgium, bands of thieves and roadside poachers were formed and developed, (...). One of these gangs was the sadly notorious Jan de Lichte, who according to tradition murdered his captain, to become the chief of the gang in his place.²⁸ (Ternest 1873: 6; transl. BB).

These quotes do not show any sympathy with the robber hero Jan de Lichte, but on the contrary a patriotism, in which the incursions of the French are described as a clear threat to

²⁷ „Teneinde de lezer in staat te stellen ons verhaal gemakkelijker te begrijpen,(...) achten wij het noodig, van den toenmaligen toestand onzes vaderlands enen korte schets te geven, want deerlijk zou men zich bedriegen, indien men zich het België van dien tijd in denzelfden staat voorstelde, als het bloeiend en gelukkig landeken, dat wij thans mogen beschouwen en (...) bewonen.“ (Ternest 1873: 3)

²⁸ „Het was in deze omstandigheden, dat zich op verscheidene punten van België benden van dieven en baanstropers vormden en ontwikkelden, (...). Tot eene dezer benden behoorde de treurig vermaarde Jan de Lichte, die volgens de overlevering zijnen kapitein vermoordde, om in zijne plaats het opperhoofd der bende te worden.“(Ternest 1873: 6)

the legal order of our regions at that time. It is also remarkable that Ternest is already imagining a kind of Belgium, struck by the onslaughts of the French. Then he continues with the novel, which begins with a peasant scene on the way to the fair of Sint-Lievens-Houtem in South-East Flanders, where two girls are attacked by Jan de Lichte (Ternest 1873: 7-18), with which the popular novel begins.

According to Maes and Top (1982: 13-14), Ternest creates the impression of historicity by relying on written and spoken sources. But because he also leaves a lot of crimes undated and moreover provides some stories with oral stories about sorcery, Ternest also de facto starts the legendarization in book form of the Jan de Lichte figure. His authority, built up by presenting some historical facts, such as the correct mention of the fact that the arrival of the French armies had completely disrupted the country in chapter five, is therefore somewhat nullified. The Ternest version however did give rise to inspiration from almost all authors who, after Ternest, dealt with the gang of Jan de Lichte, so that this version of the popular story must ultimately be regarded as the original story.

3.6 The beginnings of the 20th century: Abraham Hans – a forgotten popular novelist

3.6.1 Abraham Hans, life and main Works

The hard labour of Abraham Hans originates out of the misery of his people. Such a beautiful country is Flanders; such a wonderful past it has known; it disposes of such sensitive and gifted people; and yet it knew so much backwardness. The work of Abraham Hans is an act. Not an act of sadness and despair, but serviceable dedication, courage and love. He comforts, turns on and makes the life we lead purer for young and old. (Herman Teirlinck in 1939: cited in Ryssen 2003: 149, transl. BB)²⁹

According to his biographer Daniel Walraed (1996:5), Abraham Hans grew up in an environment where it was difficult to survive. This had everything to do with their faith, a

²⁹ ‘De arbeid van Abraham Hans is geboren uit de ellende van zijn volk. Zo een schoon land is Vlaanderen; zo een schoon verleden kende het; zo een gevoelig en begaafd volk bezit het; en toch kende het zo een achteruitstelling. Het werk van Abraham Hans is een daad. Geen daad van jammer en vertwijfeling, maar van dienstbare overgave, levensmoed en liefde. Hij troost, beurt op en maakt het leven dat wij dragen schoner voor groot en klein.’ (Herman Teirlinck in 1939: cited in Ryssen 2003: 149)

very important factor in his life and work. Hans was born into the Protestant Dutch family of the teacher Bastiaan Hans in Sint-Maria-Horebeke in a part of the village known as the 'Geuzenhoek' because a Protestant community settled there since the revolt against Spanish Catholic rule and is still presently living there. This small Protestant community meant that this author, because of his environment, has been operating from the very beginning from the margins of Flemish-Dutch literature because mainstream literature of the Southern Netherlands was situated in Catholic circles. It is no coincidence that in his first important works a historical novel in feuilleton form was published in the liberal-free newspaper *Het laatste nieuws* in 1911-1912 entitled *Een heldenstrijd of de kapitein der Boschgeuzen* (A heroic struggle or the captain of the forest Beggars), in which he chose Captain Jacob Blommaert's struggle in the Eighty Years' War against the Spanish as his theme, the struggle of the former Protestants in his native region. The editor-in-chief of the newspaper, Julius Hoste (1884–1954), was known as a liberal representative within the Flemish movement and had connections with the institutions of the liberal Flemish movement official institutions, such as the cultural organisation Willemsfonds. Hans also regularly spoke at meetings of the Willemsfonds.

In the *Nieuwe Encycloedie van de Vlaamse Beweging* (New Encyclopedia of the Flemish Movement) Durnez (1998b: 1404-1405) emphasizes the educational aspect of Hans' career and mentions that he was indeed a socially-minded, tolerant and pious flamingant, who began to worry about the course of Flemish nationalism after the 1930s. He especially praises his commitment and the educational aspect of his work: Durnez gives him the title of founder of the Flemish novelistic feuilleton. Seeing that the lack of good, popular Flemish literature was a problem, he started writing various historical novels in a feuilleton form that were widely read.

His second great achievement was the establishment of the so-called *Kinderbibliotheek* (Children's Library). As a teacher, he realised that children needed simple, compelling stories and so he decided to write a short story every week. He started in 1922 and in collaboration with his friend, the Antwerp publisher Lodewijk Opdebeek; they published simple, cheap editions of about thirty pages. This series was named the Children's Library. In all, an enormous volume of booklets was published, with a number of 1424 issues in total. Hans himself wrote 745 issues of these, the series was continued by his children after his death (Marchau 1980: 12).

3.6.2 Jan de Lichte in the writings of Abraham Hans

According to Daniël Walraed (1996: 17-19), Hans started writing after his marriage, partly because of necessity, because he had to support his father, who was often too ill to write articles. He composed his first story in the newspaper *Christelijk Volksblad* in 1901 with the title *Christmas in Flanders*. That was remarkable, because as a Protestant, Hans would find it difficult to publish in Catholic magazines. That's why he often chose pseudonyms when he wrote stories with the most Protestant *engagement*. Some of his well-known pseudonyms are Van Vrijsbeke (he signed his very first story with this name); A. Van de Corseele and Hans van Hoorenbeek. These pseudonyms refer to his native region. Other *nom de plumes* known from him are Jan van Contich, Jan Verbeke, W. Freeman, and Maria van Hove. For example, in the 1970 series by Opdebeek both the work of Bakelandt and Jan de Lichte can be found with two pseudonyms, Van Contich and Van Hoorenbeek respectively. Another reason why he published with pseudonyms was that his additional earnings as a writer should not be too obvious to the Antwerp city council since they paid him already a teacher's salary. A third reason may have been to avoid clerical criticism.

Literary qualities and fame are not to be sought in Hans' career and work. Although it was certainly true that he met the most important canonical writers of his period (Walraed publishes photographs of Hans with important Flemish writers such as Cyriel Buysse, Ernest Claes, Stijn Streuvels, Cyriel Verschaeve, Hugo Verriest, but also literature professors, publishers, and critics), Hans' work is not mentioned in any important literary history of Dutch literature (Ryssen 2003: 154). Marchau (1980: 10) writes that although Hans was almost worshipped by the large mass of popular readers, the literary criticism from the catholic review *De Boekengids*, among others, had maligned him as a multifaceted writer, citing a review from the *Boekengids* (Book Guide) of January 1928:

Hans is an apprentice in French literature. From them, he has inherited all the qualities: writing as ugly as a dragon, sensationalism, and mental insignificance, sensual and passionate stimuli that are seemingly lulled away with a bourgeois conventional sermon in a disapproving sense. They are directed against the Catholic Church and harm it.³⁰ (Quoted in Walraed 1996: 18, transl. BB)

³⁰ „Hans is in de leer gegaan bij de Franse letterkunde. Van hen heeft hij al de hoedanigheden geërfd: drakerigheid, sensatiejacht, geestelijke onbenulligheid, zinnelijke en passionele prikkels die dan seffens daarop weggesust worden met een burgerlijk konventioneel zedepreekje in afkeurende zin. Ze zijn gericht tegen de katholieke kerk en brengen haar schade toe.“ (gecit. in Walraed 1996: 18)

In the reading directory of the parish priests, Hans' work ended up on the list of forbidden reading in Catholic education, where most schoolchildren in Flanders went to and are still going to school. This, of course, had an impact on the status and authority of Hans as a writer. Walraed (1996: 19) states: "He was a gifted and versatile writer, but at the time he had the misfortune to be a Protestant."

Looking to Hans' oeuvre, one may see that he started writing stories about heroes early in his career. In fact, thanks to his copy-writing, not a single hero of the Belgian-Flemish pantheon escapes his attention, ranging from the Brussels insurgents during the Austrian domination led by Frans Anneessens, the Spanish insurgents, the counts of Egmont, Hoorn, but also Jacob Blommaert the forest Beggar leader, over the gang leaders Jan de Lichte and Bakelandt, to the fictional heroes such as Reynaerd the Fox and Thyl Uylenspieghel. But because Hans was forced to find enough inspiration to produce a story every week in the youth library, foreign rural outlaws are also included in the series, so we notice stories about both Robin Hood and the German Rhineland robber Schinderhannes, as well as adventures that take place in the American wild west.

3.6.3. Jan de Lichte en zijn zwarte roversbende. Hans's novels twice (1908 and 1970).

The book of 1970 can be considered as a much shorter version youth adapted of the original novel that Hans already published in 1908. The 1908 version is a long folk novel which first appeared as a feuilleton in the liberal newspaper *Het Laatste Nieuws*.

Remarkably, Hans was actually the one who started to romanticise the story, adding love elements to the story. He introduced the archotypically bad French-speaking character Baron de Creil, who wants to marry his daughter to the candidate who can offer her the most money (Humbeeck 2007: 392). Maes and Top (1982: 18) mention that historical facts are rather scarce for Hans, although he mentions in his book that he got what is historically correct from Ternest. In other words, he did not do any archival work nor consulted any court documents.

However, three clear goals in the book, which Abraham Hans himself describes are to be found in the book: 1) to appreciate his history better in order to learn children to appreciate the present, 2) to teach parents to take the upbringing of their children seriously and 3) to warn against the calamities of alcoholism (Hans quoted in Maes and Top 1982: 19). Therefore, it can be clearly stated that Hans intended to write a somewhat historically correct

story, but at the same time to write in a popular and entertaining way. It can be concluded from this that the characterisation of Jan de Lichte by Abraham Hans is less psychologically sophisticated in all respects. Focusing at the target audience of Hans's readers, either the youth or a low literacy audience, it does not come as a surprise that Hans's style was much simpler.

From a literary point of view, the conclusions of Humbeeck (2007: 393) about Hans's novel versions are particularly revealing: "Because of their ultimately normative character, these bandit novels were tolerated by the official guardians of authority and good morals in Flanders, but they did consider books such as *Jan de Lichte en zijn zwarte rooversbende* (and his black robber gang) to be the cultural baseline. The norm for popular literature was still Conscience."³¹

However, it is Boon who will explicitly take sides against this kind of sentimental, social moral novels with which Conscience will become known in Flemish literature and is attracted by Hans' novel. In this way, a direct line can be drawn between Hans as a source of inspiration and authority for Louis Paul Boon, who will approach the depiction of Jan de Lichte in an even more original way.

3.7. After the Second World War: Jan de Lichte of Louis Paul Boon: an atypical adventurous novel

3.7.1 Louis Paul Boon, life and Works

To characterize Louis Paul Boon as a writer in all his versatility is a special challenge, because after his death in 1979 researchers have often researched his work. Louis Paul Boon (Aalst 15/03/12 - Erembodegem 10/05/79) comes from a simple working-class family and is not well off at home; he starts working as a facade painter. He continued to combine painting and writing until the end of his life. Boon made his debut in 1942 with the work *De voorstad groeit* (The suburb is growing) and later received the Leo Kryn Prize for it. In the beginning, he was mainly occupied with descriptions from the Second World War.

³¹ „Op grond van hun uiteindelijk normbevestigende karakter werden deze bandietenromans getolereerd door de officiële hoeders van het gezag en de goede zeden in Vlaanderen, maar ze beschouwden boeken als *Jan de Lichte en zijne zwarte rooversbende* wel als de culturele ondergrens. De norm voor volksliteratuur was nog steeds Conscience.“(Humbeeck 2007: 393, translation BB)

Louis Paul Boon did not write an autobiography. Romain Van de Maele reports, however, that the titles *Verscheurd jeugdportret* (Torn Youth Portrait, 1975) and *Memoires van Boontje* (1988) do include some developments in his life story. He has also included many biographical references in novels and stories, but he has always made eager use of the writer's right to deform. For example, he has written several times that he was born in the Eilandstraat, a gloomy street in the middle of an Aalst factory district. Various details contributed to the development of a mystery and some myth about the person of Boon himself (Van de Maele 2004). Some biographical data about Boon have been written, but at the moment Kris Humbeeck, who is also chief coordinator of an edited reissue of Boon's complete works, is working on an extensive biography.

For the Flemish movement, the narrative prose and several chronicles are particularly important in Boon's work because they create a special atmosphere and represent a unique vision of the author. An important aspect is, as in the work *Mijn kleine oorlog* (1946, *My Little War*, 2010), the theme of the misery of the small, ordinary man in wars and conflicts (Durnez 1998a: 549). Boon never really abandoned this theme again and will continue to develop it in his magnum opus, the postmodern diptych *De Kapellekensbaan* (1953, *The Chapel Road*, 1972) and *Zomer te Ter-muren* (1956, *Summer in Termuren*, 2006). In these works, Jan de Lichte was depicted by Boon for the first time.

Boon's early literary work did not sell well at all, so Boon had to look for an extra income and succeeded in doing so as a journalist. He works successively for the then communist newspaper *De Roode vaan* (1945-1946, *The Red Flag*), *Front* (1946-194) and *De Vlaamse Gids* (1948, *The Flemish Guide*). Boon started to work for *Vooruit* as a freelance collaborator and was definitively appointed from 1954-1972. He will continue to publish his daily *Boontjes*, his columns, until his death. In between, Boon wrote under countless pseudonyms for the most varied newspapers and magazines such as *Parool*, *De Zweep*, *Zondagspost* etc. It is thanks to the publications of the Dutch Arbeiderspers (Workers' Press), which produces simple paperback editions, that he also started to be successful in the Netherlands. In 1994, the known Dutch writer Jeroen Brouwers wrote that "Boon deserves a statue on the border between Belgium and the Netherlands but with his ass out to Flanders" (online: lpboongenootschap).

If one wants to classify Boon's work, one might discern three tracks. First of all, his epitheton of 'Tender Anarchist' is used. People have often tried to map out Boon's political views, but in his works he regularly creates spaces where chaos reigns, such as the region of

South-East Flanders, which was torn apart between wars in Jan de Lichte's gang, but also the Low Countries during the Spanish uprisings in *Het Geuzenboek* (1979, The Book of the Beggars) and also in a nineteenth-century factory environment, where he sketches for example in the historical novel *Pieter Daens* (1971) the rising of a Catholic workers movement and political party by the priest Adolf Daens, a story told by his brother Pieter. Both were real existing historical figures. Attempts by his main characters to found utopias or to create a new world order always end in disappointment, and things turn out badly for them. A typical Boon quote at the beginning of his career is when he finished the book *Mijn kleine oorlog* (1947, in 2010 transl. as *My Little War*) with the sentence "A last cry: Kick people hard TILL THEY GET A CONSCIENCE" (Boon, 2010: 113, transl. Paul Vincent). In later editions he had this sentence changed to: "WHAT'S THE POINT OF IT ALL?" (Boon, 2010: 120, transl. Paul Vincent)".

His second aspect was a moralistic-erotic theme. Boon was a collector of erotic pictures of naked women and also wrote several books with explicitly sexual themes such as *Mieke Maaikes obscene jeugd* (1972, The Obscene Youth of Mieke Maaike). According to Frans Vyncke (1920–2013), this theme is in Boon's work his way of holding up a mirror to society, as a metaphor for criticising people and society (Ipboongenootschap: online).

Thirdly, his historical theme comes up. Not only with Jan de Lichte's gang, but he also began to delve into the history of the Eighty Years' War when he wrote *Het Geuzenboek* or his regional history of the nineteenth century when he started writing about Priest Daens and the industrialisation of Aalst. The criticism of his historical works was that he sometimes violated the truth by mixing his vision with historical reality. Kris Humbeeck on the contrary praised the qualities of this combination of literary talent and historical awareness:

And yet he was a historian, and even a very important one. With which I do not want to claim that this amateur historian from the factory town of Aalst, although not very accurate, provides a much more colourful and lively picture of the past than the professional historian.

A little further:

I am so bold as to say that Boon, as a novelist, often presents a sharper picture of the past than many a professional historian.³² (Humbeeck 1995: 23, transl. BB)

Several researchers pointed to Boon's intention in writing *Jan de Lichte* to work towards a more just society, as may be seen in Wauters (1983), Humbeeck (1995) and Roggeman (2008). He does this in his way. Maes and Top (1982: 25) concluded after a thorough investigation of Boon's work: "Through his committed vision and his human approach, Boon has forged all these elements (borrowed, historical and original) into a, particularly coherent story. He has created a new work, an epic with a dramatic ending."³³

3.7.2 Boon: posture and authority

When Boon was asked to express himself about his examples, he briefly always gave the same answer: "That's easy, you read a book by a French doctor (Louis-Ferdinand Céline, *Voyage au bout de la nuit*, G.G.) and *The Karamazow brothers* of Dostojewsky and there you go" (Boon quoted online, lpboongenootschap, transl. BB).

How was the relationship between Louis Paul Boon and political engagement? Dick Gebuys (1983: 11) reported that everyone who knew Boon was aware that he was embedded in the left-wing movement, but that he never really liked any organisation or a strong leash. Boon remained idiosyncratic in his work. Although he was asked to be a list pusher during the elections for the BSP, the Belgian socialist party, he never followed a party line. Gebuys also states that it would be a pity if Boon's criticism and interpretation were to be seen considered purely due to his being a socialist writer because he himself wanted to be taken much more seriously. Boon received different critique. His critics did not necessarily come from Catholic circles and his supporters were not necessarily socialist. Even the reviews and reception of his works in the Netherlands and Belgium (Flanders) were quite diverse. Gebuys (1983: 13) notes that he was particularly annoyed by the superficiality of political critical

³² "En toch was hij dat, een historicus, en zelfs een heel belangrijke. Waarmee ik niet wil beweren dat deze amateur-historicus uit de fabrieksstad Aalst een weliswaar niet erg accuraat maar zoveel kleurrijker en levendiger beeld van het verleden schetst dan de vakhistoricus". Iets verder: "Ik ben zo brutaal om te stellen dat Boon, juist als romancier, vaak een scherper beeld van het verleden presenteert dan menig vakhistoricus" (Humbeeck 1995: 23)

³³ „door zijn geëngageerde visie en zijn menselijke benadering heeft Boon al deze elementen (ontleende, historische en originele) tot een bijzonder coherent verhaal aaneengesmeed. Hij heeft een nieuw werk gemaakt, een epos met dramatische afloop.“ (Maes and Top 1982: 25, translation BB)

comments and that he wanted to be taken seriously because of the innovative form, content, and structure of his books; he considered his work to be much more than just a piece of writing.

Finally, Boon also takes a stand against the great authority of the most important Flemish author of the nineteenth century, Hendrik Conscience. He claims that Conscience consciously closed his eyes to the reality of his own time and also of the middle Ages. He saw him as a conformist author who taught people to be obedient and contrasted his example with the writer Eugene Zetternam (1826–1855, ps. of Judocus J. Diricksens), a writer who may have been forgotten in modern literature but who saw the struggle of the proletariat as his struggle, even though for him it was a certain way of denying and keeping his authorship to one side (Durnez 1998a: 550).

Considering these positions it is clear that on the one hand, Boon has to be situated as an author who wants to position himself in the intellectual literary field between committed, realistic authors (think of Dostoevsky, or the local example Zetternam) who in the nineteenth century denounced injustices, and on the other hand, in this way, he wants to be an anti-Conscience. He took a different view from that of the established order. Therefore, Boon can be seen as a writer who attacks authority and opposes it with an anti-authority. He embraces the rebellious morale as a human trait.

3.7.3 The novel *De Bende van Jan de Lichte* and its sequel *de Zoon van Jan de Lichte*

The genesis of the novel *De Bende van Jan de Lichte* (The Gang of Jan de Lichte) is a particularly complex story that is investigated in Maes and Top (1982), but especially in De Preter (1995) and finally by Humbeek (2007). Maes and Top (1982: 22-23) state that for the rough structure Boon has borrowed the most from the anonymous Jan de Lichte novel from Aalst published by Branteghem, but that at the same time Boon is also the author who has consulted most meticulously the historical sources. Certainly in his first versions of the novel he describes the various characters in great detail and refers to the long court documents, which is why his original manuscript had to be drastically shortened, so that it could be published by the Dutch Arbeiderspers (see also Humbeek 2007: 402 - 406).

Willem Roggeman (2008: 93-96) discusses the position the figure of Jan de Lichte concerning Boon's entire oeuvre and concludes that these two novels, *De Bende van Jan de Lichte* (1957, The Gang of Jan de Lichte) and *De zoon van Jan de Lichte* (1961, The Son of

Jan de Lichte, are in a key position to be able to understand his work. Roggeman writes that Boon often wrote feuilleton articles and columns to earn money, for example in the newspaper *Het Laatste Nieuws* and the weekly magazine *De Zweep*. He often wrote under a pseudonym but did not mention in any interview that he may have been inspired by former colleagues such as Johan de Maeght and Abraham Hans because he probably did not take his feuilleton work seriously. But with *De Bende van Jan de Lichte*, this is not the case and he has taken the effort to merge the folk tradition full of historical details with the imagination and the message that he wanted to spread as a writer.

Boon even wrote a sequel to the traditional gang story, for which he could already take the frame story from the traditional folk novels, to elaborate its views on history and society, *De Zoon van Jan de Lichte* (the Son of Jan de Lichte), whom he aptly calls Louis (his first name) De Lichte. The story has a more positive ending than the first novel.

Writer Hugo Claus, the most important Flemish writer of the twentieth century, has written only one literary essay about a colleague, and that which was dedicated to Louis Paul Boon, in 1964. He admired in his oeuvre the basic theme of Boon's work, namely the stupidity and cowardice of mankind, which always causes ideals to perish. The writer, Claus writes, can only counter this stupidity and cowardice with a sensitive, aesthetic story. (Roggeman 2008: 95-96)

Interestingly, Boon tried to stimulate greater involvement of the readers with internal text elements, such as the narrative perspective. The narrator repeatedly leaves the story and addresses the reader directly; he wants to make the link that the reader can connect the conditions of the past with the situation of mankind in modern times. This is early on noticed and contextualized by literary scholars such as Weisgerber (1964: 219).

Louis Paul Boon had no intention of telling the story of Jan de Lichte from the point of view of the established order. Because, although De Lichte was a criminal, a common robber according to the law, Boon thought that he was a rebellious person in his primary way. In this way, Boon actually turns his book against official history, which is written by winners, into a counter-history. Humbeeck (2007: 394) considers Boon's stance as a reaction to the social reality, the chaos of these times, in Jan de Lichte's criminal act of standing outside society. With this novel, Boon tried to sketch a realism that balances between the personal commitment of the writer and the critical historical distance of the subject. Boon felt that the popular novels of, among others, Conscience and Hans lacked convincing images of how and

why these people acted according to their social conditions (Humbeeck 2007: 395). Boon thus places Jan de Lichte on the one hand as a victim of his time, on the other hand as an idealist who, through his gang formation, wants to do something about the injustices by uniting the poor and the impoverished and thereby giving them hope for a better situation. Because of the cowardice and jealousy of some characters, the mission of the hero Jan de Lichte ultimately fails and he ends up condemned to death.

3.8 Concluding chapter remarks

The possibilities of creating a hero figure out of Jan De Lichte or another rural outlaw by presenting him as a noble robber are exploited or unrealised and depend on the historical framework in which the author moves and the authority he can appropriate. This was the working hypothesis of this chapter in which we looked at the historical context of three key authors in the formation of the rural outlaw Jan de Lichte.

First of all, the first two authors cannot be considered as pioneers in the development of Dutch-language literature: Ternest was a municipal secretary and not a professional writer as was mostly the case in the nineteenth century; Abraham Hans, as a Protestant popular popular writer, had a bad reputation in the literary critique. Louis Paul Boon gained a reputation as an innovator and his attention to the common man in literature was recognised, also by Catholic literary criticism, but because he took a stand against the establishment, he too was eventually pushed into a certain, mainly socialist position. A link between Boon and Hans can be made through the feuilletons that Abraham Hans wrote and also Boon had to earn money as a journalist.

Secondly, the different roles of historical facts in the stories about Jan de Lichte can be noticed. Ternest uses this as an argument of authority in his title. In the case of Abraham Hans, the historical context is no more than a reason to start fantasizing, but at the same time to include a popular pedagogical mission in his work. Based on the basic book and feuilleton styles of Ternest and Hans, Boon eventually adds his unique vision: he makes Jan de Lichte a real noble robber, someone who is made who he is by social circumstances and historical context. Boon thus succeeds in dealing with the historical context in an original way as an author, which he uses according to his vision and, on top of that, with a sequel in the Son of Jan de Lichte.

Ernest Ternest is an author who, as a son of a teacher and municipal secretary, is legitimised by his position to write a historical story, but at the same time his oeuvre is not very extensive and there are also more successful stories about gang leaders that were written earlier, such as Victor Huys about Bakelandt and Ecrevisse about the Bokkenrijders, and the literary value of his novel is also too small to be called an authority. He lives on as the source on which almost all authors after him have based themselves as a book of basic facts about Jan de Lichte. He can hardly be called a successful authority in his historical context.

Although Abraham Hans was a popular and well-read author because of his numerous folk novels, serials in the newspapers and his *Hanskens*, his children's books, which are rightly regarded as one of the forerunners of a flourishing Flemish children's literature, it was the authority of the Catholic Church that played a crucial part in his work. Hans was a Protestant author, published in liberal journals or newspapers and was certainly no mainstream author. Moreover, the literary quality of his work was also poor, because rather elements of popular education were more important to him. As a result, he was not canonised in Dutch literary history either. In his historical context, Hans may not be called a successful authority either.

This situation is somewhat different with Louis Paul Boon. This writer dares to confront the character of the novel Jan de Lichte in various ways and to renew the tradition. In the first place, he does this from his point of view to give the little man more attention in the literature. In the second place, he started to profile himself against conformist writers who were main stream in Flemish literature, such as Hendrik Conscience. By putting himself in the spotlight as an anti-authority, he actually positions himself as a new authority. He also renews the genre of the adventure novel in serial form. By linking it to his historical vision, he creates a successful parody of the genre. Literary criticism also positively approaches the novel. Based on textual elements, such as the narrative perspective, he also involves the readership more closely in his message that Jan de Lichte actually founded his group of robbers because of the bad historical circumstances and out of the chaos. In this way he is the first to approach the figure of Jan de Lichte originally, to transform him from an ordinary criminal into a noble robber and as a result, his Jan de Lichte version will then also be followed the most in various forms of adaptation, later on, in comic strips, film, radio play, but also in television series, which are currently being made. All these forms of adaptation are based on the book by Louis Paul Boon.

The appearance of the Jan de Lichte narratives in other forms than its literary shape shows a tendency to revive and to continuously adapt the basic plot and the basic legendary and historical narrative for a new - or significant other, modern - audience. It is interesting to take a look at the phenomenon to prove our thesis about the detrimental, yet dynamic mode of the figure of Jan de Lichte not appealing as a model hero in Flemish society. In the terminology of Hutcheon in her *Theory of adaptation*, it is useful to research three ways of narrating a story for the public, each requiring other modes of engagement from the audience. Each of them requires other engagement and expectations from their respective audiences. These modes are 1) telling, in written texts, 2) showing, in performative genres such as theatre and film and 3) physical and kinesthetic interaction, in which the consumer participates in the story, such as video games and theme parks (Hutcheon cited in Brems e.a. 2017).

As Ann Rigney states:

Translations and adaptations can be seen as forms of productive remembrance: a combination of repetition and innovation. Texts that are passed down through the ages must be continuously re-inscribed to remain readable and relevant. (Rigney 2012: 220-221)

This is a contribution of the works of Louis Paul Boon to the rural outlaw typology: he proved to combine repetition and innovation in the Jan de Lichte depiction. Therefore he can be called him a meaningful authority (and, towards the given hero examples a counter-authority) of the hybrid Jan de Lichte depiction in Dutch and Flemish literature.

AUTHORS, AUTHORITY AND JÁNOŠÍK

4.1 Authors and authority, Czech and Slovak traditions: a broader framework

The tradition of research on the character of Juraj Jánošík covers a long, rich and wide field, especially in folklore studies, history and literary studies, and several academics have been working on the subject since the early nineteenth century. Thus far a rather underexposed issue of literary research remained the connection of the authors writing about Jánošík with robber hero from a literary-sociological point of view. By way of analogy with the in the former chapter (§3.1) quoted University of Utrecht researcher Laurens Ham, who complements the *posture* theory of Jérôme Meizoz by giving a place to the characters the authors describe (Ham 2014: 37), in this chapter will be examined whether some selected authors who have a work about Jánošík in their oeuvre share a specific relationship with the posture of a rebel figure or just use a different side of the figure or the life of the rebel hero or another aspect in their lives. How does the relationship between the authors in their historical context work and how do fantasy, folklore and legendary elements interact?

Contrary to the situation described in the previous chapter, the number of authors dealing with Juraj Jánošík is many times greater than the number associated with the Flemish rural bandit hero Jan de Lichte. It is therefore appropriate to start with an overview of previous made corpora mapping the situation as complete as possible and then explain some important tendencies and movements that are crucial for the development of the hero typology of the Jánošík figure. While Joanna Goszczyńska (2003) has been more concerned with myth and legend formation around the figure of Jánošík, researcher Milada Písková (1997) has carried out a very extensive study of the Jánošík tradition in the light of its historical facts, as opposed to folklore, followed by an overview of the Jánošík tradition in Slovak literature, in Czech literature and, finally, she provides an overview of Czech and Slovak scholarly research on this theme. Here, her overview will be used to argue that some authors who wrote about Jánošík contributed to the Jánošík tradition in a more representative, original and distinctive way. They used a special authoritative function of the robber hero. From this some typological characteristics in this corpus may be deduced that allow to figure out a more accurately representation of the hero typology of the *Rural outlaw*.

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, in the popular vernacular tradition, a typical characteristic of the folklore tradition around Jánošík is the image of a noble and righteous

robber. However, an image of Jánošík as a cruel robber and murderer in lowbrow literature and popular literature (Písková 1997: 11) can be found as well. Písková (1997: 14) attributes a bilateral dimension to the Jánošík tradition, i.e. prominently present in two literary systems, but focuses exclusively on the dissemination in the Czech and Slovak literary and research tradition, leaving aside the dissemination of the Carpathian robbery tradition in Poland and Hungary and Ukraine, of which historian Adam Votruba (2010) makes mention in his work. In this chapter, too, the focus is limited to the Czech and Slovakian literary fields, having influenced each other mutually.

4.2 The (known) authors about Juraj Jánošík

Písková describes in her publication that the written folklore around Jánošík started in the same century as the figure was active. Since the middle of the eighteenth century, fairs were held where the reputation of Jánošík and his gang was sung. It is true however, that Baroque literature depicted Jánošík's reputation as an example *not* to be followed, because it was here that his alleged mortal sin, the murder of a priest, was given greater prominence.

At the beginning of the literary tradition around Jánošík there are two writers dedicated to the development of both Czech and Slovak literature, namely Ján Kollár (1793–1852) and Pavol Jozef Šafarík (1795–1861). It is in the 19th century that the tradition of Jánošík culminated as highlights in the work of poets who wrote in imitation of the popular poet of the national thinker, politician, journalist and man of letters Ľudovít Štúr (1815–1856). These poets are also called the Štúr generation (some of them were also taught by him to the Protestant Lycea in Bratislava or after his banishment to the Eastern Slovak town of Levoča) or the *Štúrovci*. They adapted their oeuvre to the needs of the people and linked the fate of the robber(s) to current political and social developments. From this point of view, Janko Kráľ (1822–1876), Ján Botto (1829–1881) and the playwright Samo Chalupka (1812–1883) are the most important contributors to a Jánošík image. Písková notes that, especially since that time, the figures around the then robbers (gangs) and their stories often formed a creative framework of the author's position around a social development (Písková 1997:84). Therefore, this representation around the theme of writers and revolutionary social developments becomes crucial as the first image of the Jánošík tradition in this chapter.

In the period of realism we find Jánošík depictions in particular in the prose work, although the canonical poets Pavol Orszagh Hviezdoslav (1849–1921) who is after all known

as the national poet of Slovakia *par excellence*, as well as Martin Rázus's (1888–1937) poems with the Jánošík theme are also included in their oeuvre. At the end of the nineteenth century, prose forms and novels appear that emphasise the adventurous aspect of the gangs of robbers as well as the romantic ideal. Thus, for example, Ján Hrušovský's (1892–1975) novel *Jánošík* (1933) became famous. Other interesting adaptations of the Jánošík novel are the three-part epic prose (*epopea*) *Jánošík* by Milan Ferko (*1929) and *Já musím byť zbojník* (1966, I must be a robber) by Vlastimil Milota (1923–1993). After the Second World War, more and more children's novels were written around the Jánošík theme (such as the versions of Jiří Mahen, Rázusová-Martáková or Figuli). By comparison with what Sanne Parlevliet (2009) researched about written folklore (see 2.3), it can be mentioned here that due to the openness of the narrative material around Juraj Jánošík, these stories were found suitable to be converted into youth stories.

In the theatre world, the motivations surrounding Jánošík's gang have also been treated in a very original way to this day. The first important impulse for the theatre was mainly influenced by puppet theatre. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the theatrical adaptation *Jánošík* (1910) by the Czech writer Jiří Mahen (1882–1939, ps. of Antonín Vančura) played a particularly important role, up to the cinematic adaptation and later on especially in the 1970s. Ľubomír Feldek, Štefan Králik and Stanislav Štepka of the still popular theatre company *Radošínske naivné divadlo* (the Naive theatre from Radošina) opened up the Jánošík tradition to changes in the then dominant paradigm, to the parodying trend.

In the Czech literary tradition, the Jánošík theme was mainly responsible for the development of joint Czechoslovakian literary ties and imagery that could also define Czech and Slovakian representation vis-à-vis each other (with the well-known stereotypical image of the Slovak countryside). In particular the efforts of Božena Němcová (1820–1862) should be mentioned. She incorporated Slovakian folklore elements in her work and published some works of the writers around the movement of Štúr in Bohemia. The work *Staré pověsti české* (old Bohemian tales) by Alois Jirásek (1851–1930) also contains a short story about Jánošík. In addition to the already mentioned Jiří Mahen, Písková mentions the writer Václav Cibula (1925–2009) as the writer who popularized through lots of tales and myths called *Pražské pověsti* and his work *Jánošík* (1981) the person of Jánošík in the Czech Republic from the seventies of the twentieth century for young and old, and the play *Juro Jánošík* (1974) by

Karel Steigerwald (*1945), which adds an absurd drama to the robber tradition (Písková 1997: 85).

4.3 Nineteenth century: Ján Kollár - Ľudovít Štúr – and the development of Jánošík in poetry – Janko Kráľ, Ján Botto. Realism and Maršall-Petrovský

A typical feature of poetry in the period of the transition from Baroque to Romanticism is that literary themes become to a large extent more national, and this is also observed in Slovak literature. More and more Slovakia is being presented as a territorial unit, in which natural elements such as the mountains form a rewarding metaphor, in the same way the Tatra Mountains are often presented in Slovak poetry in the first half of the nineteenth century as the centre of the Slavic world. After that, the image of Slovakia crystallizes, partly due to the efforts of writer Pavol Jozef Šafárik, more and more as the country between the Danube and the Tatras, which sometimes has a messianic connotation due to the oppression of the Hungarian side by, among others, Janko Kráľ and Ján Botto.

Miloslav Vojtech (2018: 320-321) distinguishes in the development of Slovak literature two myths that colour Slovak literary space. Firstly, he makes the double distinction between the real national space as it is represented in poetry, metaphorically or in other ways, and the imaginary mythological space of the national past. The image of the former Great Moravian Empire fits in with this imagery. The second myth he mentions as a constant in the poetry of the nineteenth century is the noble robber myth, which culminates in the character of Jánošík. Vojtech considers the origin of the Jánošík tradition in the poetry of the nineteenth century as a convergence of several factors. Firstly, he outlines the higher interest in folklore in the light of international European literary tendencies, where the theme appears in folk culture and in popular literature. For example, he believes to see a parallel with the theme of the robbers in German *Sturm und Drang*-literature, where already in 1781 Friedrich Schiller wrote the hugely popular play *Die Räuber* (*The Robbers*, 1792) and the folk novel about the robber *Rinaldo Rinaldini* (1798) by Christian Vulpius also met with great success. In addition, he recorded a growing interest in the robber theme after the Napoleonic period. The Slovak Evangelic priest and poet Bohuslav Táblic (1769–1832) was the first to describe in a poem one of the market songs about Jánošík in his *Slovenští veršovci* (1805–1809, Slovak verses), but it was up to Pavol Jozef Šafárik to approach the Jánošík theme literarily for the first time with some poems about Jánošík in his *Tatranská múza s lýrou slovenskou* (1814, The Muse

from the Tatra mountains with a Slavic lyra). Šafárik succeeds in approaching his Jánošík figure in a love motive inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In his monumental Panslavic epic *Slávy dcéra* (1824, The Daughter of Sláva), Ján Kollár also devotes a few sonnets to Jánošík and some other robbers. However, the image of the robbers is ambivalent: both Kollár's and Šafárik's sonnets depict the robbers as morally repulsive and Kollár depicts them straight in hell. For Kollár, Jánošík is a disrupter of social order and it is only in the period of Romanticism that the image of the noble robber becomes less ambivalent (Vojtech 2018: 322-323).

In the 1930s several cultural-philosophical and literary-aesthetic works appeared in Czech and Slovak culture that presented philosophical concepts in the context of the still developing nation-building. Ladislav Čížý (2004: 11) distinguishes two important works: 1) an article by Karol Kuzmany *O kráse* (on beauty) and 2) the article *O literárnej vzájemnosti mezi kmeny a nářečmi slavskými* (On the literary exchange between Slavonic tribes and dialects). While the first article was based on a Kantian ethics, Kollár used a cultural-political article to lay the ground for the idea of a common panslavic thought, which would later be developed by a messianic group of followers of Ľudovít Štúr. Kollár helped to smooth the way for a Herderian and Hegelian notion of an evolving movement that would develop over successive periods in the history of mankind. It is this concept that Ľudovít Štúr further explained in his lectures on Slavic poetry. In these lectures, Štúr argued that each nation considers its own art form to be its highest good, so the Greeks and Egyptians have known their architecture, the Germanic and Romanic peoples have known their painting and music, and eventually Štúr considers poetry to be the highest art form for the Slavic peoples (Vongrej 1987: 27).

Although Štúr talked about genres in his lectures, he used a different classification from the one we would use now. He characterized the typical characteristics of Slavic lyric poetry where the external world is internalized and mentions family, life and nature as the most important characteristics. He also talked about politics and mentions in this context that foreigners organized the societies of Slavic peoples, such as the Varjagas (Vikings) among the Russians, but that poetry politically speaking only comes from expressing oneself in the face of this oppression. Štúr mentioned in this context the Cossacks, the Serbian prince Lazar who died against the Turks near Kosovo and in the Slovak context Juraj Jánošík (Vongrej 1987: 72-73). Štúr presents here the historical facts that he served in the rebellion under Ferenc Rákóczi as a soldier and then depicts him as a suitable Slovak poetic hero:

So as a skilled soldier - who saw great misery and was strengthened by it - he embarked on a march and became the avenger of the people. As they say about him - he gave to the poor what he took from the rich. This Jánošík is a very poetic person - (...) from this point of view, Jánošík is actually a Slovak character, because he works for the people, he lives for the people (...) Our people, who saw in him a man who devoted himself to the people, saw in him a defender, who really devoted himself to the people against oppression, and therefore immortalized him in memory.³⁴ (Vongrej 1987: 74, transl. BB)

In this period it should be emphasized that in the first half of the nineteenth century poetry was the dominant literary genre and in its development tried to expose its viability and possibilities of manifestation of an evolving language (Vojtech 2018: 308). Thus, it is not surprising that Ľudovít Štúr focuses mainly on this genre in its philosophical conceptualization. Already in his lectures he gives examples of the poetry of one of his pupils, namely Janko Kráľ. Pavol Vongrej concludes in his edition of the lectures on Slavic poetry that Štúr's intention to portray Jánošík as a hero is an original idea. Marcela Gbúrová places a similar way of thinking of Štúr in connection with his image of the French emperor Napoleon, whom Štúr himself and later his pupils depicted as a positive example and hero, and suspects, as with the idealisation and adoration for Napoleon, also in the case of Jánošík a hidden polemic with Ján Kollár and in this way wants to move away from his concept of the Slavic Reciprocity. Kollár makes both figures end up in hell in his monumental poem *Slávy dcéra* (Gbúrová 2017: 30). The image of Jánošík as a positive, revolutionary hero seems to have been definitively established by the lectures of Štúr that he gave to his students, some of whom later had a remarkable successful literary career. In her survey of Slovak writers of the generation of Štúrovci, Písková mentioned no less than six writers who adopted the Jánošík motive in their works: Samo Chalupka, Janko Kráľ, Michal Miloslav Hodža, Samo Bohdan Hroboň, Ján Botto and Štefan Marko Daxner. The two most relevant authors, Janko Kráľ and Ján Botto will be chosen in this chapter. In their *posture* they identified most closely with the rebel figure Jánošík and his tradition. It can be seen that Štúr himself in his *posture* uses the

³⁴ Takto ako vojak vycvičený – vidiac biedu hroznú a týmto príkladom posilnený – vystúpil a za pomstiteľa ľudu sa dal. Ako sa o ňom hovorí – že bohatým bral a chudobným dával. Tento Jánošík je veľmi poetická osoba – (...) z tohto ohľadu je Jánošík docela slovenská postava, bo on za ľud robí, za ľud žije (...) Národ náš, že videl v ňom muža, ktorý sa za pospolitosť namáha, že videl v ňom obrancu, ktorý proti utlačovaniu skutočne vystupuje – preto si ho v pamäti zvečnil.

image of Jánošík as a hero to create a counter-example towards Ján Kollár, who considered Jánošík an example not to follow.

4.3.1 The revolutionary poet Janko Kráľ

Janko Kráľ is the most revolutionary poet of the generation of romantics after Ľudovít Štúr. He was born in Liptovský (Svätý) Mikuláš in 1822 and went as a twenty-year-old student to study at the Protestant Lyceum in Bratislava where he was taught by Štúr, and after Štúr's conflict with the government, he left together with a group of students for the Lyceum in Levoča. Štúr himself compared him to such giants as Pushkin and Mickiewicz, but because of Kráľ's stubbornness they often came into conflict (Parenička 2019). After leaving the lyceum he travels on the trail of Juraj Jánošík and visits places in Slovakia where the robber is said to have been, but Kráľ travels also on to the Serbian Vojvodina.

In 1848 he takes an active part in the anti-Hungarian Slovak revolution and was imprisoned and sentenced to death. After the revolution he joined in a disappointed way the state service and met Božena Němcová in Balassagyarmat (Slovakian: Balážske Ďarmoty), who describes him as a short-tempered type. Kráľ had seen the execution of a robber on the square in Liptovský Mikuláš in 1829 and also went to investigate the trials of Juraj Jánošík which were kept in the local archives. He copied the original trial documents with his colleague Gašpar Fejérpatáky-Belopotocký (1794–1874) in 1844. It is thanks to these copies that the content of the Jánošík and Uhorčík trial documents are still preserved, as these originals later got lost. Kráľ also collected various folk tales and songs on his journey in search of Jánošík, which he used as inspiration for poems (Jaloviarová 2015).

Janko Kráľ stopped writing for several years after the revolution. Pišková (1997: 22) describes the robber character of Kráľ described in the cycle *Výlomky z Jánošíka* (1844–1847, Scenes from Jánošík) as positive and timeless. He carries the characteristics of an exceptional romantic hero in the spirit of revolutionary modern times and sets himself off against a Byronesque landlord. In a triptych named *Mladenec, Žobrák, Zbojníkova baláda* (The Youngster, The Beggar, A Robber's ballad), Jánošík shows himself in a dream and a young man longing for salvation from oppression against feudal relations. In the poems Kráľ dissociates himself from Jánošík's folkloric representation and turns it into his own literary creation. Dagmar Košťálová (2003: 55) calls Kráľ's Jánošík interpretation the most

revolutionary and makes the analogy with his own activities when he uprooted the peasants during the revolution of 1848.

4.3.2 The romantic poet Ján Botto

Besides Janko Kráľ, Ján Botto is the Štúrist most commonly associated with Jánošík thanks to his two poems *Pieseň Jánošíkova* (The song of Jánošík, 1847) and *Smrť Jánošíkova* (The death of Jánošík, 1848-1858). Pavol Vongrej connects these two romantic poets in a special publication written in 1994, where he brings together Botto and Kráľ in the form of biographical essays sketching their lives through literary non-fiction. As in the case of Janko Kráľ, very little about Ján Botto's life is known.

He was born in the small village of Vyšný Skalník in the poor region of Gemer in south-east Slovakia in 1829 and studied at the Levoča gymnasium from 1843 to 1847, where he came into contact with Štúr's ideas through one of the Slovak revolutionaries from 1848, Ján Francisci-Rimavský (1822–1905). It is not known if Botto actually ever met Štúr in his life. Botto is listed as the youngest of the *Štúrovci* poets. He also had no training in philosophical sciences but was a land surveyor. He studied for this profession engineering in Pest, where during the revolution years in 1847-48 he translated the Hungarian national song *Nemzeti dal* (The National Poem) into Slovakian and gave it the name *Pochod* (The march). This translation was successful and widely distributed. It caused disorder in Pest, but Botto was in Gemer and therefore not arrested. He travelled as a surveyor after his studies in the Gemer region and then in Turiec from 1851 onwards. He developed his poetry skills mainly at the gymnasium, where he was the classmate of the famous fairy tale collector Pavol Dobšinský. Botto was known by one pseudonym, Maginhrad, named after a hill in the Hrachovo area, where there was a castle where Jánošík was captured in 1712, but was able to escape again after bribing his guards. Perhaps this inspired him to start writing around the rebel figure. At least this pseudonym was a remarkable connection with Jánošík's historical life.

Already in the period of his gymnasium studies, his contemporaries appreciated his poetry talent with which he could incorporate folk themes melodiously into poetry and write balladic epic works (Macko 2015). His ballad epic *Smrť Jánošíkova* was not published until 1862 in an almanach. Košťalová (2003: 56) describes the contents of 9 chants in which Jánošík, as the head of a robber group with 12 robbers, is betrayed by Gajdošík. The

messianic parallel is made, but in the last song Jánošík marries a fairy queen. This portraying of Jánošík cannot be considered a realistic reflection of the Jánošík tradition, but clearly the robbers are depicted as romantic heroes with a political-programmatic slant. The work of Botto was published by the Czech collector of Slovak folk art Rudolf Pokorný in 1880 and became the most widely published Slovak book of the time in the Czech Republic. *Smrt Jánošíkova* was also staged after the Second World War and finally ended up in the opera *Juro Jánošík* by Ján Cikker in 1954 (Gašparikova 1988: 40-42).

4.3.3 Gustáv Maršall-Petrovský

Gustáv Maršall-Petrovský was born in present-day Serbia in the Vojvodina region of Bački Petrovec (hence the second part of his surname pseudonym), where there are some local Slovak communities. Katarína Mosnáková (online) refers to him as one of the first writers from Slovak Vojvodina who, despite their prose with a regional character, rightly belongs to the whole Slovak literature and transcends the local. She classifies him in realism in the style of the novels of Svetozár Hurban-Vajanský (1847–1916) and Martin Kukučín (1860–1928, ps. of Martin Bencúr). He studied law in Prešov in Eastern Slovakia and after studying medicine in Vienna he became an active member of the Slovak national academic community Tatran.

However, he had to flee from conviction in 1880 because he was accused of hate speech by the Hungarian government and then went to the United States. There he establishes contacts with the Slovakian community in America and writes, for example, a handbook of Slovak in German and an English conversation book for Slovaks. His work on Jánošík, *Jánošík, kapitán horských chlapcov* (Jánošík, captain of the mountain boys), was published in 1894. Mosnáková mentions that his pseudonym in any case already reveals that he was actively inspired by his native region and that his work had a nationalistic undertone. According to Písková (1997: 37) the nationalist idea is the most important factor in Maršall-Petrovský's motivation and the historical truth in the novel is subordinate to it, which is shown by the fact that he let Jánošík fight against the troops of the Hungarian leader of the uprising Ferenc Rakóczi.

Goszczyńska (2003:157) also stresses that Maršall-Petrovský was well aware that in the closed Slovak communities in the United States there was a certain demand for nationally inspired literature to counter assimilation processes. At the same time, in order to connect

with what this average Slovak reader wanted, it was necessary to join the popularizing, adventurous genre, which the Slovaks already knew through translations such as *Rinaldo Rinaldini* by Christian Vulpius. The colourfully portrayed hero had a great deal of success and was finally published three more times between 1894 and 1905. In 1967, his novel was published again during the socialist period, this time with an epilogue by Dr Ján Kmeť, who situates the work and his oeuvre in more detail. He compares his situation in Slovak literature and the complex relationship between life and work with that of Turgenev in Russian literature³⁵ and places him in the middle of Slovak realistic tradition. Kmeť, too, does not fail to link his literary ambitions to his politically committed ideas as chairman of the academic community named Tatan, a Slovak reading society. Kmeť is clear about the connection between Maršall-Petrovský's character Jánošík and his own biography. He was born in 1882 in a well-to-do family in Petrovec where his grandmother showed her wealthy ancestry and belonged to the local intelligentsia. This was clearly reflected in his work:

Probably it was precisely for this reason that, in spite of everything, these grandiose allures penetrated so strongly into the young Petrovský and were thus emphasised in his oeuvre. Many of the characters in Maršall's works probably play a great role even better than the heroes of Vajanský's novels, even a folk hero like Jánošík, who in Maršall's novel, *Jánošík, captain of the boys in the mountains* (1984) would probably not be so ideal if he were not at the same time an unknown knight figure and a gallant lieutenant of the imperial guard (Kmeť, 1967: 265-266, transl. BB).³⁶

Adelaida Mezeiová (2019: 175) considers Maršall-Petrovský's novel as a turning point in the Jánošík depiction. Bringing the fictional world closer shows a transition from subordinating literature to national objectives to a broader aestheticization: prose more fulfilled the function of pleasure and entertainment in the epic genre. Before the publication of this novel, the Jánošík theme was more the playing field of poets and playwrights. Nevertheless, in the

³⁵ The Russian writer Ivan Sergeevich Turgenev was known to write most of his works in France, where he adopted a Western point of view lifestyle and tried to influence Russian literature on philosophical nationalistic debates about the state of the country.

³⁶ Azda preto sa, napriek všetkému, zemianské a veľkopanské alúry tak mocné ujali i u mladého Petrovského a zvýraznili sa tak nápadne i v jeho tvorbe. Mnohé osoby v Maršallových dielach si vari ešte smelšie zahrávajú na veľských pánov, než hrdinovia Vajanského noviel a románov, ba i taký ľudový hrdina Jánošík, v Maršallovom románe *Jánošík, kapitán horských chlapcov* (1894) nebol by vari dosť ideálny, keby medzičasom nebol i Neznámym Rytierom a galantným plukovníkom cisarského vojska (...).

context of Slovak literature, this novel remains rather marginal because it was primarily intended for a specific audience: the Slovak community abroad in the United States and thus far away from the motherland. Mezeiová (2019: 180) mentions that only one reviewer, Jozef Škultéty (1853–1948), who remembers the novel briefly. The literary critic František Votruba (1880–1953) even forgets to mention it when he discusses the second publication of Maršall-Petrovský, a collection of short stories entitled *Zpod zavejov amerických* (Among American Snow Hunters) as perhaps the first originally in Slovak published work in the USA.

4.4 Between the wars: looking for the Jánošík novel. Jiří Mahen. Margita Figuli. Ján Hrušovský.

The theme of Jánošík in poetry had been gradually waning, which was related to the fact that in the twentieth century prose forms become more dominant, but also because according to the Slovak literary canon the aforementioned works acquired such a great status that attempts to follow in these tracks to depict a poetic-heroic Jánošík would only be labelled as epigonism. The more epic forms of poetry such as ballads also passed their peak in the twentieth century. Marcela Feriančeková and Anna Ondrejková (2014: 106) note, however, that just like a great historical novel about the revolution year 1848 or the wars against the Turks, Slovak literature also lacks a clear canonical novel about the Jánošík theme. This does not mean that Jánošík does not appear in prose, but rather in adventure novels and middle brow or low brow literature. Jánošík does appear as a theme in more and more theatre play versions. In the previous paragraph has been noticed that the image of nature, the romantic heroic figure of Jánošík was also used in the Czech literary tradition and takes on different dimensions. The most successful Jánošík image in Czech literature was the drama *Jánošík* (1910) by Jiří Mahen. In fact, Mahen took the inspiration to work with the storylines around Jánošík from writer and painter Miloš Jiránek, who was fascinated by the robber motives during his travels through the Slovak countryside. He wrote the essay *Zbojníci* (The robbers) which contained a chapter about the Jánošík tradition in which he refers most to the work of Ján Botto and connects thematically the works of Botto with Karel Hynek Mácha and on the other hand is very critical towards the adventurous Jánošík in the novel of Pavol Beblavý, naming it a worthless story. Mahen met with Jiránek in Přerov where he was inspired by the Jánošík-themed paintings and from 1909 onwards there was an intensive correspondence between them about the Jánošík theatre play of Mahen.

Renáta Bojničanová (2018: 43) identifies the main three reasons why Mahen began to write his play about Jánošík: First, she mentions the revolutionary nature of the author and his social feeling. Písková (1997: 66) mentions that Mahen saw an alternative way of showing the ideas of anarchism. He saw Jánošík as a symbol of struggle against the world order. Secondly, there was a newly formed impression of Slovakia he received during his travels. Thirdly, the earlier positive experiences he got in dealing with a robber motive in literature and his interest in this subject. It is significant that Bojničanová begins with the relationship between the author and the association with his revolutionary ideas and rebellious ideas, therefore showing his *posture* as a rebel writer.

Jiří Mahen's real name was Antonin Vančura and adopted the pseudonym Mahen, which is actually a writing error by *Maheu*, a character called Toussaint Maheu who appears in Emile Zola's novels. According to the author himself, the features of this character, who was always willing to fight for social justice, died under social pressure and was known as a stormy rebel, corresponded with his own personality. According to Bojničanová (2018: 43-45) Mahen applied these characteristics to his staging of Jánošík. He connected the idea of a struggle for freedom in three ways: a struggle for personal, social and national justice. Mahen reacted in his personal memoirs that Jánošík's struggle had parallels with his own social feelings and links it to a historical event, namely the massacre of Černovej near Ružomberok, where Hungarian gendarmes had shot at a Slovak Catholic crowd.

There is disagreement among researchers about the extent to which Mahen really knew or had visited Slovakia. However, it is known that his sympathy for Slovakia was associated with positive qualities such as the energetic and kind-hearted, with a simple but also cruel nature. These qualities will also be reflected in his Jánošík imagination. Mahen already had positive experiences with the subject of robbery in his first one-character *Juanův konec* (1905), published in book form. Here he connected Spanish realia with the figure of the robber. He also wrote a collection for children *Dvanáct zbojníků a vrána* (1922, Twelve robbers and a crow) and planned to publish one last collection of stories where another robber, Vuk Lopušín, would be honoured as a brother of Jánošík.

The historical framework of the play about Jánošík is difficult to trace in this case, and Bojničanová (2018: 46-47) considers it rather a pseudohistoric play, where the exotic colorite and the Slovakian element with folklore elements, music and language had to stand out. She mentions that the author himself commented the piece as 'rather Moravian' and not purely Slovakian, because he knew too little about the Slovakian literary tradition. Through his

knowledge of Western European and Czech literature Mahen considered himself rather a continuation of the tradition of romantic tragedies of robbers in the sense of Schiller and the Spanish predecessors.

Mahen's play could contribute greatly to the popularisation of the Jánošík tradition, after many successful performances it was also translated into Slovak and adopted by other ensembles in 1925. It also served as an underlying scenario for Martin Frič, who made the first Czechoslovakian film about Jánošík in 1935 with Pavol Bielik as the title character. Rassloff (2010: 426) mentions that the motive of vitality (with elements of adventurousness, ballads and elegy, the untouched) became a favourite theme in Czech imagery on Jánošík.³⁷ The Čapek brothers, however, opposed the image of Jánošík in the play and were ironic about it (Pišková 1997: 67).

The last highlight of Jánošík in poetry form in the interbellum period is the ballad written in verses *Balada o Jurovi Jánošíkovi* (Balas about Juráj Jánošík) by the writer Margita Figuli (1909–1995), written in the forties but only released in 1980. This is why this ballad will be included in this paragraph. Figuli is a representative of the literary style of naturalism and became known through her novel *Tri Gaštanové kone* (1940, Three Chestnut Horses) as a canonical author in Slovak literature. In her biographical details she herself mentions that the reason she came to her Jánošík depiction is because her mother's niece kept a blue decorated ribbon which, according to her tradition, Jánošík had given to her great-great-grandmother. She had lived in the Orava region of northern Slovakia. She mentions that Jánošík went along the valleys of Orava towards Liptov and one day went dancing at a party with girls from Vyšný Kubín (the native village of Figuli).

Figuli says that she kept the ribbon as a sign of faithfulness and unforgettable human spirit in human feelings such as love. Jánošík is described lyrically with the feelings in her ballad mixed with folklore, folk and fantasy elements. However, Jánošík does not appear as a hero, which in the eighties could be seen as a protest against the representation of Jánošík as a fighter and advocate against the feudal oppressors (Machala 2002: 83; Feriančeková & Ondřejková 2014: 106). In the foreword to the work a legitimation of her ballad in verses about Jánošík can be found.

³⁷ Czech authors have used the Jánošík character imagologically and incorporated it into the Czech literary tradition to create a certain counter-image to Czech culture. This is illustrated by Rassloff (2010), where she juxtaposes the Jánošík of Mahen with the play *Loupežník* (The Robber) of Čapek. In a later period, Ivan Olbracht created the Sub-Carpathian robber Nikola Šuhaj as a Czech counterpart to the Jánošík tradition.

If the reader wants to get to know Jánošík as an important figure, Figuli gives a foreword to her ballad, where she looks back on the genesis of this work and contextualizes it. “*I loved the life the sun gave and brave people, already from a young age on*“.³⁸ (Figuli 1980: 7, transl. BB) This is how she starts her introduction to the ballad. She tells the reader that from her early childhood she was familiar with the songs, stories and folk ballads about robberies and gangs of looting that made injustice undone. According to Figuli, Jánošík’s images wandered in her mind for decades about his typical characteristics such as his courage, cleverness, stubbornness but also his handsome appearance as a young man, but only after the end of the Second World War she could write this story, which she was able to finish with this publication in 1980. She quotes the work of literary scholar Stanislav Šmatlák to give her work a more authentic status as an ‘epic in verses’. At the same time she covers herself in that she used elements from fairy tales and incantations, but only because in this context these were connected with folk ballads from those feudal times (Figuli 1980: 9-10). In this way, in accordance with the prevailing ideology, she can refer to historical sources to legitimise her work: “*I have tried myself to reconstruct the life of the rebel of the serfs, Juraj Jánošík according to sources I studied which can be trusted*“.³⁹ (Figuli 1980: 10, transl. BB)

So loyalty to historical facts and source is mentioned, but not exactly which sources were used. At the same time Figuli suggests in her foreword that as a writer she has a different task in depicting Jánošík than (literary) scholars or academics and she concludes with the statement that with her ballad she tried to create a more universal type of depiction and a flow of thought.

Ján Hrušovský (1892–1975) is another author who had success both before and after the Second World War with his version of Juraj Jánošík. His work is compared by Sedlák et al. (2009: 41-42) with naturalism but with characteristics of modernism. He adapted his experiences of the First World War into short stories in 1919 and his most famous novel is *Muž s protézou* (The man with the prothesis) from 1925, about the alienation of characters with war experiences in society. During a stay in Italy, where he worked at the Czechoslovak embassy, collections of short stories, *Pompiliova Madonna* (the Madonna of Pompilio) and *Dolorosa* were published. Ján Babik (2004:10) points out that Hrušovský definitively gained a place in Slovakian literature. Ján Igor Hamaliar (1958: 152), a literary critic, sharply

³⁸ Životodárne slnko a statočných ľudí som mala rada už v detstve.

³⁹ Sám život poddanského rebelanta Juraja Jánošíka som sa usilovala zobrazit’ podľa hodnovernej faktografie z preštudovaných prameňov.

criticizes Hrušovský's collection of short stories, titled *Zmok* in a review of 1925, saying that Hrušovský's stories are taken from abroad and that there is enough narrative material in the Slovak environment as well, but that too many writers have prejudices about Slovakia and would rather write about foreign countries.

Hrušovský was very active in the decades of the twenties and thirties, but it is mentioned that his work began to take on the character of best-selling literature and is no longer aesthetically at the same level as his earlier works, such as the *Muž s protézou* or his other expressionist novels. Viera Žemberová (2003: 31), for example, mentions the particularly negative criticism by literary scholar Andrej Mráz (1904–1964) that his later work is a concession to the pleasures of the wider readership, and another reviewer, Alexander Matuška (1910–1975), considered this work belletry in the worst sense of the word. Žemberová makes no doubts about it, however, that it is precisely his prose work with a historical theme and found a permanent place among the public in regard to literary education. So it seems the pedagogical function of literature is stressed here.

The novel *Jánošík* from 1934 should be considered in that second part of his career. Babík (2004: 10) sketches the genesis when Hrušovský worked for the newspaper of the Conservative Agrarian Party, *Slovenská politika* (Slovak politics), which lost readers at the time. To counter this, Editor-in-chief František Votruba decided to publish novels in feuilleton version following the Western example, as in France or England, in his newspaper. He contacted the popular writers Jožo Nižnanský (1903–1976) and Ján Hrušovský. But he noticed that the readers did not like themes from abroad, so the former wrote about the Countess of Čachtice (Báthory, the blood countess) and the latter, Hrušovský, about *Jánošík*. They were exceptionally successful in increasing the circulation of the newspaper from the original 2,000 to 40,000 copies. *Jánošík* became very well spread: in 1938 a Czech translation was published by the propagator of Slovak literature in Prague Leopold Mazáč and also the Slovak version had various reprints in book form.

In the twenties, Hrušovský also worked as a journalist for various national Slovakian newspapers and periodicals and during the Second World War was an employee of the Institute of Propaganda of the Slovakian State. Because of this self-compromising activity he was for more than ten years literary non-active. After the Second World War he managed to become an editor again at the magazine *Sloboda* (Freedom) from 1946 to 1956. He wrote a *Jánošík* version, which was adapted for the youth (see Hrušovský 1977). The 1967 edition of Hrušovský refers explicitly in the peritext the successful novel in which the older copies from

the thirties “*go from hand to hand and their crumbling appearance testifies best to the remarkable interest and appeal of this work*” (Hrušovský 1967). In a review of Hrušovský’s collected work, Pavol Rankov (2005: 5) comments on the author that his work should be judged independently of the *zeitgeist* in which it appeared, which, according to him, applies especially to the period when he was active during the fascist Slovak regime. He juxtaposes Hrušovský’s prose and short stories of the 1920s as exceptionally cosmopolitan and expressionistic with other tendencies that mainly reflected an idealisation of the Slovak and a pity for his social position. Rankov thus sees Hrušovský as an exceptional author especially in his first period, but leaves the second period of his work, when his feuilleton work and *Jánošík* was written, undetermined. It seems that even today the position of *Jánošík* in the works of Hrušovský could not fit in his more modernist and internationalist *posture*.

4.5 After World War II: The rise of historical novels and parodies

4.5.1 Embedding in Socialist Realism

After the Second World War, the *Jánošík* theme was firmly embedded in the official socialist-realist ideology. From a scholarly point of view, the folklorist Andrej Melicherčík (1917–1966), in particular, caused a great popularization of an officially approved *Jánošík* image with, for example, his short publication *Jánošíkovská tradícia* (1952, The Tradition of *Jánošík*) where he interprets the long tradition of *Jánošík* historically, folklorically and in literary terms. Melicherčík does not save the folkloristic tradition from sharp criticism. For example, Gustáv Maršall-Petrovský’s ‘*bourgeois*’ image of *Jánošík* is sharply criticised because his representations of *Jánošík* as a nobleman are not in accordance with the revolutionary, antifeudal ideal of this robber in the socialist era. Melicherčík also opposes images that overemphasize love affairs and eroticism. For example, he declares that thanks to the works of Pavol Beblavý, Karol Dúbravský and Karol Csecsotka, the *Jánošík* tradition became part of the domain of adventurous and popular literature and served to falsify the revolutionary character of *Jánošík* and keep the masses stupid.

Melicherčík, on the other hand, praises the play by Jiří Mahen (misspelled as Machen in this publication), who understands the true social nature of the *Jánošík* tradition. Here, too, he mentions a number of authors who are positively in line with the revolutionary theme and he includes Ján Hrušovský (Melicherčík 1952: 28-29). Hruboň and Krištofik (2013: 158) speak of a renewal of the literary tradition of *Jánošík*. They call Milan Ferko’s adaptation of *Jánošík*

at the end of the 1970s the most historically and factually balanced novel. The novels by Ján Hrušovský, Maršall-Petrovský and Pavol Beblavý are being republished and the first one includes a youth version. They also mention, among others, the youth versions of Jánošík by Mária Rázusová-Martáková, the previously mentioned Margita Figuli (already discussed) and Vlastimil Milota (Hruboň & Krištofik 2013: 158).

4.5.2 Vlastimil Milota

Vlastimil Milota was a writer, born 23 December 1923 in Lipany near Prešov from a Czech father and a Slovak mother. He spent his youth in Eastern Slovakia and his family was deported during the Second World War to the Czech part of the republic that was occupied by Germany and he was forced to work in Munich. After several different jobs he started to work as a professional soldier until 1963 and after that he started working as a writer. In the sixties he began his oeuvre as a poet; he was known to publish in both Czech and Slovak. In 1964 the adventure novel *Já musím byť zbojník* (I have to be a highwayman) was published, describing the life of Jánošík. Central to his work were realistically written novels, which depict various settings. They are inspired by historical events concerning war situations, warnings against situations that disrupt nature or depictions of characters in a totalitarian environment. His later work was more in the detective and humorous genre. He died 25 November 1993 in his birth village.

Here it can be acknowledged that his background as a soldier played a role in the imagination of characters who, after their service, find their way into civil life. Milota will look for the tension that exists between the good in man and the period in which he lives (Vlašínová 1998, online). The publication of Milota (1964) in the Slovak version is remarkably accompanied by a foreword by Andrej Melicherčík, who here explains the contradiction between the historical truth and the legend about Jánošík to the reading public. He also mentions Milota's predecessors and mentions Šafárik, Samo Chalupka, Janko Kráľ and Ján Botto, on whose tradition he continues as authorities of that time regarding Jánošík. He then sets out the outlines of the adventure novel, in which the writers Beblavý, Hrušovský and Maršall-Petrovský, according to him, turn Jánošík into a character as a robber-gentleman, in which he finds himself in love adventures and romances typical of that genre of the time. According to Melicherčík, it is therefore worth admiring that Milota tries to describe the historical epic tradition of Jánošík for the first time in a real historical novel (Milota 1964:

12). However, he does not leave behind some personal reflections that leave a trace of the legend open.

The novel itself begins with a short passage before the first chapter, in which an I-narrator figure (the later novel is an auctorial narrator) describes how his grandmother told him about Jánošík as a grandson. The following dialogue unfolds:

The gendarmes took him to (Liptovský) Mikuláš to court. I felt sorry for him, so I immediately gave him a piece of bread that I was eating. He laughed, but I was in tears. People then started telling me it was Jánošík who took it from the rich and gave it to the poor. I looked surprised at my grandmother. But Grandmother, Jánošík wasn't alive when you were young anyway. - He was alive, my son, told my grandmother. Jánošík is still alive. (Milota 1964: 16, transl. BB)⁴⁰

Only after this introduction, which is a memory from the childhood of the storyteller (in the I-perspective), the novel begins with a historical scene from the youth of Jánošík.

4.5.3 Milan Ferko

On the parathlon of the novel by author Milan Ferko (1987 edition), a remarkable positioning of Ferko's work in comparison to his predecessors can be found, as a legitimation for such an extensive work (580 pages) on Juraj Jánošík. Again, some historical arguments are encountered:

An original novel about the folk hero, adapted in line with the latest historical research, which celebrates its 300th year of birth in January 1988. Compared to all the previous imaginations in the belletrics about Jánošík (Beblavý, Mahen, G.M. Petrovský, Hrušovský, Martáková, Poničan, Gráf, Milota, Králik and others), Ferko's novel is the most complex (and important) work that has appeared on this theme. (Translation BB)⁴¹

⁴⁰ (...) Žandári ho viedli do Mikuláša na súd. Luto mi ho bolo, nuž podala mu som na voz kúsok chleba, ktorý som práve jedla. Zasmial sa, ale mňa slzy zaliali. Ľudia potom hovorili, že to bol Jánošík, ktorý bohatým bral a chudobným dával. Prekvapene som pozrel na starú mať. – Stará mama, Jánošík už dávno nežil, keď vy ste boli malá. – Žil, syn môj, povedala stará mať. Jánošík ešte žije.

⁴¹ Originálny, v zhode z najnovšími historickými výskumami spracovaný román o ľudovom hrdinovi, ktorého 300. výročie narodenia pripadá na január 1988. V porovnaní so všetkými predchádzajúcimi beletristickými podobami Jánošíka (Beblavý, Mahen, G.M. Petrovský, Hrušovský, Martáková, Poničan, Gráf, Milota, Králik a pod.) je Ferkov román najkomplexnejším (a najvýznamnejším) dielom, aké u nás na túto tému vzniklo.

The criticism by literary scholar Karol Rosenbaum is added. The novel situates the life of Jánošík with the Rákóczi uprising in a European context and is suitable for all ages. Peter Cabadaj (2009: 43-45) contextualizes the genesis of Ferko's *Jánošík* and gives an insight into his *posture*. He indicates that from an early age Ferko became interested in historical figures and the mythical power in creating historical consciousness. Cabadaj sketches that the youth literature publisher Mladé letá needed a realistic and appropriate image for the youth of Jánošík and therefore commissioned him to keep up with the facts. He therefore went on trips to the historical sites and inquired thoroughly together with historians. Previously Ferko had already started working on a youth tale as a reworking of Christian Vulpius' robber hero Rinaldo Rinaldini. Another point in Ferko's novel is that the peritext appeals to the cultural memory function of remembering the robber hero. Ferko's publisher clearly sees the novel as an important point to contribute to the memory of Jánošík and this also strengthens the authority of his writing and authorship.

Žemberová (2007: 32) situates the 1970s as a period in which the genre of the historical novel is increasingly emerging. Her research focuses on three works by Ján Hrušovský, namely *Rakócziho pochod* (1968 and 1970, the march of Rakóczi), *Pohroma* (the disaster, about Great Moravia), and the renewed edition adapted for the youth of *Jánošík* (1967). She argues that here the author works in an educational and at the same time entertaining manner with three striking heroic figures.

4.5.4 Alternative Jánošík-presentations

Melicherčík, Hrušovský, Milota, Ferko, but also in a certain sense Figuli and the youth editions of the authors who depicted Jánošík were in line with the official party literature guidelines. They took into account the robber's motive that had a redistributive effect and in which the folk hero opposed above all a feudal ruling class. In this sense, it was not so much national antagonisms that were highlighted, but rather class antagonisms and social despair. But the communist regime also fed narratives for other, alternative storylines about Jánošík. Especially the events after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 made way for several parodies about the famous rural outlaw. Initially they appeared in theatres, where the Jánošík theme is first moderated and where Jánošík, for example, is not a hero, as with Jánošík from Ľubmír Feldek and the parody *Jáánošík* by Stanislav Štepka and the Radošinské naivné divadlo collective. In a dialogue Jánošík expresses himself as follows:

And I'm supposed to be a guy? A hero? An example? And you guys will just look around, won't you? And I will lose my kidneys! But we have other plans with Anička, I want to be a normal person, living a normal and honest life. I don't want to end up in booklets ... for three hundred years this literature will live of my legacy, and I won't live even thirty! (Hlôšková 2013a: 247; translation BB)⁴²

The Radošínské naivné divadlo collective still exists and to this day Jánošík's performance is still popular and is part of the theatre group's regular repertoire. Hana Hlôšková (2013a: 254) identifies this theatre as a reaction to the 'burden' of folklorism, namely that there is too much manipulation around the folklore elements around Jánošík. She situates Štepka and his collective together with other artists such as the actor duo Milan Lasica and Satinský who go against the literary flow and ironize the sacred element of Jánošík. From the seventies onwards there is a popular trend with, among others, the Polish musical (copied in Slovak) *Na skle maľované* (painted on glass) by Ernest Bryll, who runs successfully in the Slovak national theatre or parodying robber heroes as in the filmed short story by Peter Jaroš Pacho *Hybský Zbojník* (Pacho, the robber hero of Hyb). (Písková 1993: 49-52)

4.6 Newest depictions

The legend of Jánošík does not only persist in the various film and image or comic strip adaptations. This is where the most references to the robber hero these days are to be found. Jánošík also continues to play a significant role in popular literature in Slovakia, also in newer genres. In this paragraph two books and writers that illustrate this will be highlighted: *Jánošík vs. Dračiemu radu* (2018, Jánošík against the Dragon's Order) by Svetozar Olovrant (*1975) and *Jánošík* (2019) by Mariana Cengel'-Solčánska (*1978). The former is particularly interesting because of his mysterious way of dealing with his identity, which betrays a special way of dealing with his *posture*; the latter, as a publicly known figure being a known Slovak cinema director, tries to respond to current memories and anniversaries with her writing about historical figures, thereby positioning her in a different role.

⁴² Ja mám byť chlap, ja mám byť hrdina? Ja mám byť vzor? A vy sa budete vyvaľovať doma v duchnách, čo? A ja prídem o ľadviny! Máme plány s Aničkou, ja chcem byť normálny človek, čo normálne pekne, čestne prežije svoj život. Ja nechcem vojsť do čítanky. (...) Tristo rokov bude zo mňa žiť táto literatúra – a ja ani tridsať...

4.6.1 Mariana Čengel-Solčánska

Mariana Čengel-Solčánska has actually only had a short career as a writer and has actually studied directing and film school. As a director, she had her greatest success with the film *Legenda o lietajúcom Cypriánovi* (2010, *The Legend of the Flying Cyprián*), a film based on historically true facts about a monk in the Red Monastery in Eastern Slovakia who, in addition to a herbarium, also invented a construction to fly. In an interview about this film, she portrays this figure as positive towards Jánošík, of whom she claims that she cannot tolerate him as a heroic figure, because his death did not make him morally repentant of his crimes, unlike this monk (Makayová, Online). In 2019 Solčánska wrote two books based on historical facts about the Slovakian politician Milan Rastislav Štefánik (1880–1919), the Slovak aviator, resistance fighter during the First World War against Austria-Hungary and the first Czechoslovak Minister of War, who was elected as the greatest Slovak in a national television show, and *Jánošík* (2019). She announces her story as being based on the real, historical Jánošík and stripped of legends and myths, highlighting, for example, the peasant uprisings led by Hungarian noblemen Thököly and Rakóczi and depicting Jánošík as a brutal robber figure. In a review the book is announced as a violent and exciting story, a successor to another image of Milan Rastislav Štefánik, detached from romantic pathos and idolatry, but with a Jánošík who in the army of Rákóczi is accustomed to murder and rape and continues these activities simply as a robber (Buno, online). Thus, under the influence and authority of historical facts, Jánošík is not depicted here as a positive hero but rather as a criminal. It seems that Čengel-Solčánska continues depicting criminal and/or pessimist narratives as she did in her latest directed films, such as the film adaptation of the book *Sviňa* of Arpád Soltész, about recent scandals in Slovak politics and endemic corruption.

4.6.2 Svetozár Olovrant

The identity of Svetozár Olovrant is only known by a few people. On the internet, only retrieve a very brief biography of him can be retrieved, namely that he was ‘apparently’ born in 1975 in Trenčín and lives as a hermit somewhere in Turiec, the region around Martin. He only communicates with his publisher through intermediaries or the internet. His hobbies are crossbow shooting and drinking red wine from the Fränkischblau grape (Olovrant, online). This biography is, just like his work, completely ironic.

Reviews of his work *Jánošík proti dračímu radu* (2018) are to be found in the *SME* newspaper (Kotian 2019) and in the literary review magazine *Knižná revue* (Janecová 2019: 27). Róbert Kotian reviews the book positively and begins his critique with value judgments from two authorities in the genre the novel claims to be ('fantasy steampunk'): Juraj Červenák and Jozef Karika, widely read popular authors, who refer to Olovrant's identity and cannot believe that this would be an author's debut, rather it must be a work from someone who has longer experience with the genre. The critic Kotian points to the mixing of different historical figures such as the blood countess Báthory, Empress Mária Theresia, inventor Wolfgang Kempelen and, of course, Jánošík as the main character, who are anachronistically, brought together and points to the loose storyline, but praises the work positively (Kotian 2018).

Tamar Janecová (2019: 27), a reviewer from the influential literary review *Knižná revue* on the other hand, is somewhat more conservative in her judgment and places Olovrant on the line of alternative historiography, calling it a subgenre of the historical novel. She finds the style of the bombastic monotonous after a while. In the same style, an interview with him appears in the Czech newspaper *Lidové noviny* on the occasion of the Czech translation of the book (Kopáč, 14 May 2019). In the interview, Radim Kopáč asks the author where the idea of linking Jánošík to the genre came from and he responds that the original character was the inventor Wolfgang Kempelen, but because Jánošík is known in all countries of the Visegrád 4, the author decided to link Jánošík anachronistically in a storyline with Kempelen. At the same time, he reveals in the interview that the purpose of his novella was to revitalize the outdated stereotypical images of the hero, which he compares with the ugly statue in Terchová, through the so-called steampunk, a genre which he refers to as very likely to Karika and Červenák.

4.7 Remarks – *Posture* and authority in the tradition of Jánošík-depictions

As a hero, Jánošík has taken many different roles, faces and shapes over the years, and the relationship to authority, the legitimacy of the character varies particularly according to the genre in which Jánošík appears and the historical framework. Nevertheless, it is possible to make some comments on case studies where the robber hero complements the *posture* of several authors.

In the nineteenth century, the literary-philosophical framework of Ľudovít Štúr Jánošík, outlined by Ján Kollar in response to the ambivalence of the character, played a positive role. His pupils or authors who write in the tradition of Slovak Romanticism will therefore use Jánošík as a national inspiration model in their oeuvre. The art of poetry is in this case the dominant genre. Because Janko Kráľ is most often described as a revolutionary poet, Jánošík fits well in his oeuvre as a rebellious character and we can call him the first writer in which the robber-rebel strengthens his posture. Through his travels he will tread in the footsteps of the historical Jánošík character and Kráľ will also carry out historical research on him. The same image suits Botto, who is searching for a new Jánošík image in the landscape of Eastern Slovakia that is rather messianic. Botto also participated in revolutionary activities in Budapest, so his *posture* of a rebel corresponds with this hero idea.

The image that Gustav Maršall-Petrovský sketches of Jánošík, as a nobleman-rebel, not working reliably with historical sources, was intended to strengthen the heroic figure especially within the Slovak emigré-community, but the image was later picked up in Slovakia itself. It suggests a turning point in the depiction of Jánošík in genres, in which Jánošík will be presented as a narrative further on mainly in popular, low-brow adventure novels. The character of Jánošík primarily strengthens the *posture* of Petrovský as a rebel figure. The same can be said of Jiří Mahen, but in stage version: as a socially committed author, to which he owes his own pseudonym, he takes the social inequalities in Slovakia with him to give shape to his play. Here, at the same time, a cultivation of a Czech hetero-*imago* of Slovakia that serves to function in Czech literature can be distinguished, and the image of the unspoiled, the whimsical of Jánošík is juxtaposed with Czech urban culture.

Margita Figuli refers in her memoirs and interviews to memories from her childhood and the landscape of Orava, where direct traces of Jánošík in her family inspired her to write something about Jánošík, but at the same time she took advantage of the partisan uprisings in World War II to publish a ballad about Jánošík in a youth version. Figuli mainly wrote stories that have a strong regional character.

In the case of Ján Hrušovský, he started writing about Jánošík as a journalist in feuilleton version at the request of his editor to provide a story about a typical national hero. However, there may also be a reaction to the criticism of various critics of his modernist, cosmopolitan work, where there was a sharp reaction that he does not include a Slovakian theme in his oeuvre. This is why his impulse to include Jánošík in his oeuvre is primarily career oriented. Because his work is fluently written in an adventurous style, it was

enormously popular, and in its youth version it was also acceptable for the socialist-realist style. The same applies to authors who, under the impulse of extensive folkloric-historical research by Andrej Melicherčík and others, wrote more historical novels about Juraj Jánošík, where, according to socialist doctrine, Jánošík's anti-capitalist, anti-feudal struggle is emphasized. In this way, both Vlastimil Milota and Milan Ferko created Jánošík figures in the style of historical adventure novels in their oeuvre. There is no great Slovak archetypal novel about Jánošík to be found, although Milan Ferko claims this position through his *posture* and large book. This historic way of writing in socialist tradition will trigger another paradigm of the Jánošík character, such as the theatrical parody *Jááánošík* of the Radošinské naivné divadlo, which portrays Jánošík as an antihero out of reaction to the dominant image of the righteous, social robber captain. Just like Ferko, Milota and others, Štepka and Lasica and Satinský Jánošík, for example, are using Jánošík as a character, but this time to introduce another, ironic rebel figure.

Jánošík has also recently been used as a character to position the oeuvre of various authors. Mariana Čengel-Solčanská, who is mainly active as a cinema director, uses her historical novel about Jánošík to create a more cruel, demystifying image of Jánošík and to place it in contrast to other (in her insight more) heroic figures such as Milan Rastislav Štefánik and the monk Cyprian. With his mysterious pseudonym, Svetozár Olovrant also uses Jánošík's fame to draw attention to his oeuvre within a new genre. Here again, Jánošík is not a classic, unequivocally positive hero, but in line with the genre of steampunk and the modern period and a reluctant hero, even an anti-hero. We can find traces of the hybrid hero here. Jánošík is molded the way the postmodern authors would like to see.

CONCLUSION: HERO-TYOLOGIES AND AUTHORITY

The key findings of the thesis on the main hypotheses are set out in this conclusion. Are the heroes "going places" or changing/switching places?

In the first chapter, following the typology that Leerssen and Neubauer (2010: 420) have categorised, I have described that rural outlaws inhabit four separate spheres, namely (1) historical documents (2) orality (3) literature and (4) the media. This order does occur for the most part chronologically in the present case study. In the example of Jan de Lichte it can be noticed that after his death folk legends appear, and market songs are transmitted orally, followed by the first story recorded by Ternest in 1872. But these spheres do not need to be separated so strictly. Many folk tales and their narratives were influenced by popular literature; they inspired each other, as historian Danny Lamarcq pointed out. This phenomenon could be described as a form of *Schrifliche Folklore*, in which the combination of oral tradition and adventurous elements, where it is still difficult to trace the original narrative, turned out to be particularly popular. In the Jánošík tradition, collectors of narrative inspiration such as Kollár, Šafárik but also Botto, Král', Figuli (childhood memories) became acquainted with an original way of telling the Jánošík story. In the twentieth century the visualization of heroes became especially important, although it can be observed that in the case of Jánošík the theatrical versions and paintings already earlier ensured a wider dissemination of the heroic image.

It was further found that both Jánošík and Jan de Lichte in general cannot be labelled as positive or negative heroes, but are hybrid heroes in the sense that both are depicted with both positive and negative characteristics by their many authors. In this sense, the dichotomy of the Küther-Hobsbawm typology must be nuanced in that, depending on the author and the work, both Jan de Lichte and Jánošík are depicted as *Noble robbers* (Štúr, Botto, Král', Petrovský, Ferko, Figuli/Louis Paul Boon), or as *Ordinary robbers* or *common criminals* (Čengel'-Solčánska/Ternest). Both heroes are an example of an ambiguous hero, as defined in the research of Benjamin van Tourhout. In his dissertation research van Tourhout (2017) defended the hero typology of the *Hybrid hero*, which he typified as followed:

The hybrid hero is neither a hero nor a villain, he or she is a species that consists of both classic archetypes and thus has heroic features like being strong, determined, brave, courageous, and villainous features like egoism, vanity, ruthlessness, noncaring/nonempathic. The hybrid hero is thus the sum

of the *classic war hero*, the *flawed hero* and the *villain*. (Van Tourhout 2017: 4, his cursivation)

Van Tourhout stated that after the events of 9/11/2011, these hybrid heroes became a dominant type of hero, especially in Western literature, next to the so-called more one-sided superhero or *franchised hero*. I think we can rightly call the ambiguous robber hero as a precursor of this *hybrid hero*. Jánošík and Jan de Lichte are *flawed heroes* in some, but certainly not all cases, because, just as Van Tourhout sketches in his research, they are capable of awakening empathy with their audiences in different ways. Authors achieve this in a variety of ways and especially in connection with their own representation (i.e. *posture*) for example with childhood stories or historicizing claims on real-life stories.

A third aspect was the hypothesis that either the spread of popular literature and later visualisation and other media would have made Jánošík's heroic image spread faster and led to a more successful hero. In a certain sense this did happen if we look at the principles of **written folklore**, where through legends, folklore with songs and market songs the tradition around Jánošík and other robbers was very present. The same principles were also present in the gang of Jan de Lichte, with stories about other robbers such as Bakelandt and the Bokkenrijders. But the research discovered that in addition to dissemination in written folklore, among other things, this bottom-up dissemination needs to include a top-down literary dissemination and hence a certain form of authority in the literary-historical and sociological field. For example, in the case of Jánošík, the literary theory of Ľudovít Štúr proved to be very important in disseminating a positive image of Juraj Jánošík. On the one hand, Štúr stressed in his lectures the importance of lyricism / poetry as the highest form for his Slavic compatriots; on the other hand, in contrast to his literary but also linguistic rival Ján Kollár, he felt that Juraj Jánošík could be regarded as an example for the Slovak national movement. His paradigm therefore led to imitation in higher forms of literature at the time, such as poetry, but also in plays. In chapter three Janko Kráľ and Ján Botto were singled out as the most important followers, who in their poetry paint a picture of Jánošík as a national rebel and even as a figure of Christ suffering for the Slovak people. On drama, Samo Chalupka could be mentioned. Lotte Jensen (2009) described precisely in her research into the formation of heroes that Dutch heroes also became more widespread through theatre plays, and this aspect was lacking in Jan de Lichte's work in the nineteenth century. He remained depicted only in popular novels or novellas, until only at a festive unveiling of a statue about Jan de Lichte, the famous Flemish author Hugo Claus would recite a cycle of

poems about Jan de Lichte. But here again one can speak of an image based on the imagination of the Jan de Lichte in the tradition of Louis Paul Boon.

Subsequently, the aspect of authors, their *posture* as an image that they present of themselves and the role of the rural outlaws in the process was discussed. A number of different types of authors emerge strongly in the comparison between the two traditions around Jan de Lichte and Jánošík. In the first place, the writer-journalist and writer- (amateur) historian can be seen as a common *posture*. The writer either tries to describe the activities of the robber heroes in a compelling feuilleton style or in a style as historically correctly documented as possible (LP Boon, which parodies the genre, but certainly also Hans, Hrušovský, Ferko, Milota).

Another element used in the *posture* of many writers is youth sentiment and references to childhood memories associated with the robber heroes. Often this takes place in a context of stories told by grandparents (LP Boon, Milota), or the author comes into contact with a tangible artifact linked to the robber (e.g. Figuli).

In both traditions there are adaptation forms from written folklore according to the model of Parlevliet (2009) to simplified literary narrative forms for children and youth. Here we find, for example, Abraham Hans and Margita Figuli, Jiří Mahen and Mária Martáková-Rázusová.

Writers who create a strongly nationalist image of the rural outlaw, especially in the case of Jánošík, are Gustav Maršall-Petrovský, but certainly also Janko Král' (in view of the events of 1848 and his part in the revolution itself a rebellious poet, so that his posture is to a large extent mutually reinforced by his character Jánošík), Botto and the other writers following in the footsteps of Štúr.

The aspect of a national hero is actually virtually absent in the depiction of Jan de Lichte. Jan de Lichte could have worked as a national hero, a freedom fighter for social justice in nineteenth century Belgium and Flanders, but it seems clear from chapter three that in the nineteenth century no author stood forward with the same authority as, for example, Hendrik Conscience, who would be able to claim this status for this robber hero. Moreover, with the Bakelandt gang in West Flanders, the Bokkenrijders in the east of the country and a few brigand heroes in the province of Antwerp, there was still too much of a provincialism competition, as a result of which no robber hero could really grow into the most famous Flemish nineteenth century hero. As a matter of fact, there was competition from the Belgian French-speaking author Charles de Coster with his Thyl Ulenspieghel, who in his reputation as a fictional rascal was much more suitable as a symbolic hero for the Flemish nation. In the twentieth century, Louis Paul Boon, in his *posture* as a socialist, anarchist writer, tried to

portray the position of Jan de Lichte in a more positive way. This hero as a rebel who sacrifices himself for the poorest also strengthens Boon's writer's image of a rebel in Flemish literature.

This brings me to writers who mainly highlight moral and social injustice, and here again similarities and authors can be found in both traditions. Both the Jan de Lichte of Ternest and Hans had educational and moral principles, but also Boon and his character emphasized an unjust society.

Although Ján Kollár portrays Jánošík as a negative figure on moral grounds, in the period of socialist realism, the struggle against feudal relations was greatly intensified, which we see in Ferko's Jánošík images, but also in Figuli and Milota and researcher Andrej Melicherčík. Educational aspects can be noted in the adaptations of the Jánošík figure for the youth.

Finally, it can be noted that the authors of this case study reacted to each other's work, just as the researchers and literary critics adjusted their posture in relation to their previous authors or asserted their authority in a positive or negative sense. In this way it can be seen that Abraham Hans takes over the narrative of Ernest Ternest and romanticises it, mixing it more with educational elements in his series for children. On the other hand, there is a negative reaction to Hans' literature from the Catholic main stream literary tradition. Boon continues to work somewhat as a parodying author on the genre of the serial, but turns his adventure novel about Jan de Lichte into a noble robber who fights social injustice. In his *posture*, Boon seeks a balance between intellectual authorities and the narrative style of Céline and Dostoevsky on the one hand, and on the other he writes for the common man and popularising style, not popularising therefore. Boon positions himself in the style of writing of the sociable nineteenth-century author Zetternam and sets himself apart from the dominant Catholic-Flemish Hendrik Conscience.

Such a meandering concept of authority can also be seen in the case of Jánošík and his authors. Ľudovít Štúr responded to Jánošík's imagination by Ján Kollár and is imitated by Kráľ, Botto and many of his pupils. Because this poetry threatens to get lost in epigonism, in the twentieth century Jánošík appears less and less in poems but the focus shifts to folklore, film, theatre and (popular) novels, both for youth and adults. In the thirties there is Hruškovský with his popular novel that first appeared in the form of a feuilleton, to which literary criticism responded. Mahen had success with his play in the Czech Republic, which was criticised (for example by Karel and Josef Čapek with their play *Loupežník* (The Robber) as a counterpart) and imitated (for example Karel Plicka's film, Ján Cikker's opera). The

highly socialist-realist Jánošík novels have as their counterparts parodying forms both on stage (Radošínské naivne divadlo, Lasica and Satinský) and in film (Pacho Hybský zbojník) up to modern times (Čengel-Solčánska), even in different genres, think of the new narrative genre of Olovrant's steampunk.

In any case, the authors interact with the freedom that the character Jan de Lichte or Jánošík offers them and in all cases strengthens the author's image as a rebel or (anti-) authority. Or as researcher Peter Cabadaj put it in the episode about Jánošík on the occasion of the election of the largest Slovak on Slovak national television: "Jánošík is freedom and freedom is for ever!"⁴³

⁴³ „Jánošík je sloboda a sloboda je večná!“

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ABSTRACT (DUTCH – NEDERLANDS)

Benjamin Bossaert – No nation without representation: heroes going places. A comparative research of Flemish and Slovak heroes in literature. Literary and historical representations of two national rebels: Jan De Lichte (Flanders) versus Juraj Jánošík (Slovakia)

Abstract:

Het doel van deze scriptie is een vergelijkend onderzoek op het snijvlak van geschiedenis, letterkunde en cultuurkunde waar een typologie onderzocht wordt van de zogenaamde *rural outlaw* een primitieve rebellen figuur als held in de nationale beweging. Aan de ene kant wordt in de gevalstudie de Vlaamse roverheld Jan de Lichte besproken, aan de andere kant de Slowaakse roverheld Juraj Jánošík.

In het eerste deel van de scriptie wordt een cultuurhistorisch overzicht gemaakt van de traditie rond Jan de Lichte en Juraj Jánošík met behulp van theoretische begrippen uit de imagologie, *Schriftliche folklore*, *histoire croisée*, een overzicht van heldentypologieën en stereotypes over nationale bewegingen.

In het tweede deel van de scriptie wordt gefocust op de schrijvers die de helden verbeeldden. Met behulp van het begrip *posture* van Jérôme Meizoz, scherper gesteld door de Nederlandse onderzoeker Ham (2015) wordt de relatie van de auteur als autoriteit met betrekking tot de personages Jan de Lichte en Juraj Jánošík onderzocht.

De resultaten van het onderzoek tonen aan dat er geen strikt onderscheid kan gemaakt worden tussen een dichtomisch heldenbeeld van een rover-crimineel tegenover een zogenaamde nobele rover, maar een ideale roverheld ambigu is afhankelijk van de context. In het historisch overzicht van auteurs en hun *posture* blijkt dat de auteurs expliciet naar elkaars verbeeldingen van de roverhelden verwijzen en er een meanderend, veranderend heldenconcept geschetst wordt.

Sleutelwoorden: helden, rural outlaw, Jan de Lichte, Juraj Jánošík, autoriteit, posture

ABSTRACT (SLOVAK – SLOVENSKY)

Benjamin Bossaert – No nation without representation: heroes going places. A comparative research of Flemish and Slovak heroes in literature. Literary and historical representations of two national rebels: Jan De Lichte (Flanders) versus Juraj Jánošík (Slovakia)

Abstrakt:

Cieľom dizertačnej práce je komparatívna štúdia prieniku historických, literárnych a kultúrnych štúdií, kde sa skúma typológia takzvaného *rural outlaw*. Na jednej strane sa v prípadovej štúdií diskutuje o flámskom hrdinovi - lupič (zbojník) Jan de Lichte, na druhej strane o slovenskom hrdinovi a zbojník Juraj Jánošík.

Prvá časť práce predstavuje kultúrno-historický prehľad tradície okolo Jana de Lichteho a Juraja Jánošíka s využitím teoretických konceptov z imagológie, písaného folklóru, *histoire croisée*, prehľadu typológií hrdinov a stereotypov o národných hnutiach (Slovensko verzus Belgicko/Flámsko).

Druhá časť práce je zameraná na autorov, ktorí zobrazovali hrdinov. Na základe koncepcie *posture* Jérôme Meizosa, doplnené holandským výskumníkom Hamom (2015), sa skúma autorský vzťah ako autorita k postavám Jan de Lichte a Juraj Jánošík.

Výsledky výskumu ukazujú, že nie je možné presne rozlišovať medzi poetickým hrdinským obrazom obyčajného lupiča oproti takzvaného ušľachtilého zbojníka, ale ideálny hrdina zbojníka sa zobrazuje podľa kontextu, črtá sa dvojznačný obraz ako medzikategória. V historickom prehľade autorov sa javilo že autori navzájom reagujú na ich predstavy o hrdinovi v pozitívnom, negatívnom alebo ironizujúcom zmysle a načrtáva sa meandrujúci, meniaci sa koncept hrdinu.

Kľúčové slová: hrdinovia, rural outlaw, Juraj Jánošík, Jan de Lichte, autorita, posture

ABSTRACT (English)

Benjamin Bossaert – No nation without representation: heroes going places. A comparative research of Flemish and Slovak heroes in literature. Literary and historical representations of two national rebels: Jan De Lichte (Flanders) versus Juraj Jánošík (Slovakia)

Abstract:

The aim of the thesis is a comparative study at the intersection of history, literature and cultural studies where a typology of the so-called rural outlaw a primitive rebel figure as a hero in the national movement is investigated. On the one hand the case study discusses the Flemish robber hero Jan de Lichte, on the other hand the Slovak robber hero Juraj Jánošík.

In the first part of the thesis a cultural-historical overview is made of the tradition around Jan de Lichte and Juraj Jánošík using theoretical concepts from imagology, written folklore, *histoire croisée*, an overview of hero typologies and stereotypes about national movements.

The second part of the thesis focuses on the writers who depicted the heroes. Using the concept of *posture* of Jérôme Meizoz, sharpened by the Dutch researcher Ham (2015), the author's relationship as an authority on the characters Jan de Lichte and Juraj Jánošík is investigated.

The results of the research show that no strict distinction can be made between a poetic heroic image of a robber criminal versus a so-called noble robber, but an ideal robber hero shares ambiguous traits according to the context. In the historical overview of authors and their posture, it appears that the authors explicitly refer to each other's imaginations of the robber-criminals and a meandering, changing hero concept is outlined.

Key words: heroes, rural outlaw, Juraj Jánošík, Jan de Lichte, authority, posture

ANOTÁCIA (Slovensky)

Priezvisko a meno autora: Bossaert, Benjamin August Firmin

Názov katedry a fakulty: Katedra Bohemistiky, FF UP Olomouc, program teórie literatúry

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Krátká charakteristika: Cieľom dizertačnej práce je komparatívna štúdia prieniku historických, literárnych a kultúrnych štúdií, kde sa skúma typológia takzvaného *rural outlaw*. Na jednej strane sa v prípadovej štúdií diskutuje o flámskom hrdinovi - lupič (zbojník) Jan de Lichte, na druhej strane o slovenskom hrdinovi a zbojník Juraj Jánošík. Druhá časť práce je zameraná na autorov, ktorí zobrazovali hrdinov. Na základe koncepcie *posture* Jerôme Meizoza, doplnené holandským výskumníkom Laurensom Hamom, sa skúma autorský vzťah ako autorita k postavám Jan de Lichte a Juraj Jánošík.

APPENDIX

Fig. 1: Map of the County of Aalst by Leclerc, from 1784, main looting area of the Jan de Lichte Gang (source: Aalst city archives institution)

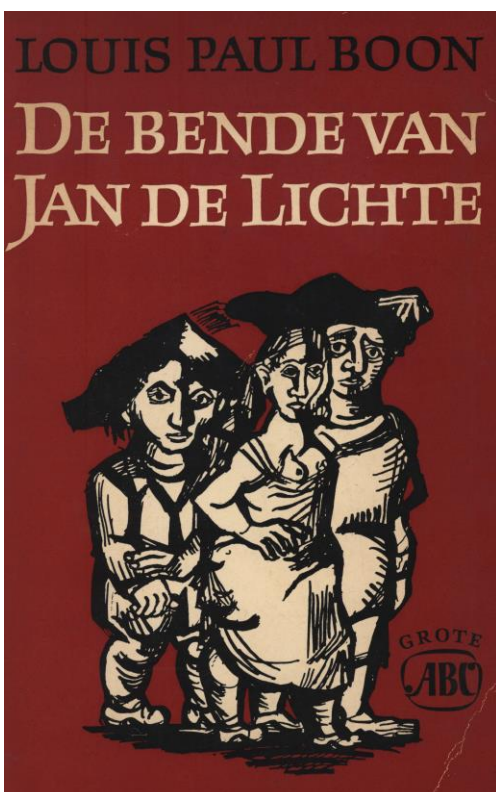


Fig. 2: Book Cover from the 1972 Version of Louis Paul Boon's *De bende van Jan de Lichte*, Amsterdam: Arbeiderspers



Fig. 3: Map: in the footprints of Jánošík in Slovakia (source: Sroka, Stanisław Andrzej, 2009. Jánošík. Pravdivá história karpatského zbolníka. Bratislava: Goringa)

Legend: 1. Regions where Jánošík and his gang were active. 2. Places of interest about Jánošík's actions 3. Jánošík's birthplace 4. Court trial and execution of Jánošík 5. 6. Personal belongings of Jánošík to be found. 7. Place of Jánošík's military service. 8. The pub of Jánošík 9. The place of Jánošík's imprisonment