A DELICIOUS PARODY OF CELEBRITY (NON-)CHEFS. *GOTH GIRL AND THE FETE WORSE THAN DEATH* AND ITS ROMANIAN TRANSLATION

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Résumé : *Les cinq volumes de la série* Goth Girl *de Chris Riddell (parus entre 2013 et 2017) offrent aux lecteurs de tous âges et de tous horizons un vrai régal iconotextuel : une petite chronique d'une famille « gothique », brillamment rédigée dans un style à la fois simple et sophistiqué et copieusement illustrée par l'auteur (qui est, d'ailleurs, illustrateur et caricaturiste avant toute chose). Le présent article s'attache à examiner le deuxième tome notamment (*e.g. Goth Girl and the Fete Worse than Death, 2014*) et sa traduction en langue roumaine faite par Mihaela Doagă en 2018 chez Corint Junior. Ce qui nous intéresse particulièrement c'est, dans un premier temps, la manière dont le discours alimentaire, qui semble envahir et imprégner le niveau narratif tout comme le côté sémantique, est exploité afin d'appuyer les mécanismes parodiques. Dans un deuxième temps, on verra dans quelle mesure la traduction roumaine réussit à restituer le savoureux humour intertextuel que la parodie engendre.*
Mots-clés : *discours alimentaire, parodie, jeu de mots, onomastique, traduction, paratexte.*

Introduction

Even though it explicitly targets young readers, Chris Riddell's *Goth Girl* series deliberately chooses to appeal primarily to adults, "using the child as an excuse rather than as a real addressee." (Shavit, 1986: 37) Under the pretense of delivering a perfectly innocent story about a twelve-year-old girl, Ada, living with her father, Lord Goth, in the enormous estate of Ghastly-Gorm Hall, the series rests on traditional Gothic tropes (*e.g.* an orphaned maiden, an eerie setting, an attic, villain(s), ghosts, vampires, night journeys etc.) which it clearly and cleverly subverts. Myriads of allusive cultural elements of variable transparency are buried in the text, waiting to be uncovered by the (adult) reader. *A wide array of classic characters, objects, historical events, even sayings, are revisited and reinvented, be it mockingly, much to the literati's delight. The list alone of Ada's governesses, which opens the first book in the series, is more than enough to provide a tantalizing glimpse at the tremendous magnitude of intertextuality: Morag Macbee, Hebe*

Poppins, Jane Ear, Nanny Darling, Becky Blunt, Marianne Delacroix are obvious hints at fictional governesses like Nanny McPhee, Mary Poppins, Jane Eyre, Nana Darling (the St. Bernard who appears in Disney's 1953 animated feature film Peter Pan), Vanity Fair's Becky Sharp, but also at Eugène Delacroix's painting La Liberté guidant le people [Liberty Leading the People], which depicts a woman personifying the French Republic (popularly known as "Marianne").

The copious subtexts and intertexts which make up the very substance of the five books are food for the adult readers' thought to a perhaps greater extent than incentives meant to fuel the young readers' imagination. Thus, formally belonging to one literary system (*i.e.* children's literature), while at the same time alluring the reading public of another (*i.e.* the 'adult' system), Chris Riddell's series is highly ambivalent in terms of the public it addresses. *Kiddults*, a creative portmanteau word coined by Rachel Falconer (2009) effectively captures the essence of this type of *dual addressee.*

What complicates the (trans)textual status of the series even further is that it is not a mere parody: it is a good-natured mockery of Gothicism (which intrinsically parodies other texts or modes) as well as a mild spoof of contemporary (British) (popular) culture. This means that the various hypotexts are not used for the sake of satire, but rather for the sake of amusement. The resulting situational humour goes hand in hand with the exceedingly self-conscious language and literary style Riddell makes use of in order to make (meta)linguistic humour the primary stake of the series (not to mention the primary challenge for its translators).

What the present paper examines as a case in point is the second volume of the series, *Goth Girl and the Fete Worse than Death* (2014), which capitalizes on food discourse, and its Romanian version (the first and only translation, to date), with a view to identifying the extent to and the means by which the translation manages to minimise source text entropy.

The comparative analysis will integrate various ideas from semantics, onomastics, structuralism, and will loosely dwell on an eclectic translatological model with elements from Delabastista (1993), Henry (2003), Zabalbeascoa (2005), Epstein (2009, 2012) etc. Back-translation (from Romanian to English) written between brackets is always mine.

The 'Source' Text and Its Underlying Source Material

With a well-established career as a political cartoonist and occasional illustrator of children's books, Riddell has nevertheless been proving himself as a children's author, too. As of 1986, he has produced two other children's series besides *Goth Girl* (*e.g. Ottoline* and *Alienography*, *Goth Girl* actually being conceived as a follow up to the *Ottoline* series).

The *Goth Girl* series comprises a total of five books, published between 2013 and 2017, as follows: *Goth Girl and the Ghost of a Mouse* (2013); *Goth Girl and the Fete Worse than Death* (2014); *Goth Girl and the Wuthering Fright* (2015); *Goth Girl and the Pirate Queen* (2015 World Book Day edition), and *Goth Girl and the Sinister Symphony* (2017). Three out of these five volumes have so far been transposed into Romanian (*i.e. Domnișoara Goth și fantoma șoricelului, Domnișoara Goth și festinul cel sinistru, Domnișoara Goth la răscrucea groazei*) by freelance writer and translator Mihaela Doagă in the "Aventură și mister" collection issued by Corint (Junior) Publishing House (the first volume, in 2017, and the other two, in 2018).

Although there is a main 'cast' (the Goths: Ada and her father, along with their servants-turned-friends-or-opponents) and a number of details which push the narrative forward in time and from one volume to another, each of the five books enjoys a certain autonomy: the main characters, the estate and some of the previous events are always reiterated as the series unravels (illustrations are reproduced, whereas characters are

constantly reintroduced, in slightly different contexts). The very essence of parody – "repetition with a difference" (Hutcheon, 1991: 32) – seems to be the binding agent of the series, which recycles not only previous gothic works, but also its own (original) material.

All three major parodic kinds are illustrated by Riddell's texts:

- parody directed at texts (see, for instance, the novel *Northanger Cabbie*, mentioned in the series – an overt reference to Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, which, in its turn, parodies the Gothic novel) and personal styles (*e.g.* Lord Goth's lifestyle closely mirrors Lord Byron's)
- parody directed at genre (*e.g.* major Gothic tropes such as vampires or apparitions are incorporated into the narrative with the express purpose of triggering laughter, not panic)
- parody directed at discourse (*e.g.* not only are famous incipits like "Call me Ishmael..." or "It is a truth universally acknowledged that..." put to good use, but the rhetoric of food or fashion, and the traditional hunting and musical discourses are also turned to good account.

Abolishing chronology, the parodic mode imposes a perpetual back and forth between past and present, something *Goth Girl* excels in, as Chris Riddell's parody targets a wide spectrum of people, characters and subjects (from mythology: centaurs, minotaurs, harpies, cyclops, gorgons, fauns, the three Graces; from the distant or recent history: Henry 8th, Anne Boleyn, Lucrezia Borgia; from pop culture: King Kong, 007, *Frozen*, *Pop Idol*, *The X Factor*, *Britain's Got Talent*, Simon & Garfunkel, ABBA; from British literature: Romantic poets, Victorian authors etc.). As emphasized elsewhere (Hăisan, 2020), all these secondary characters, the various guests populating the books as the story unfolds, are "mostly flat characters with a purely decorative purpose which rarely goes beyond making an entrance and an impression".

In the volume under debate here (*i.e. Goth Girl and the Fete Worse than Death*), Lord Goth organises a "Full Moon Fete" and "The Great Ghastly-Gorm Bake Off", both of which turn into a mêlée. The parody targets are contemporary British celebrity chefs, while the Ghastly-Gorm culinary competition is an obvious nod to the now iconic *The Great British Bake Off*.

It is worth recalling that Riddell's use of intertexts is meant as praise rather than criticism. After all, allusions may fulfill a variety of functions in texts, which go beyond making connections between texts; a clear function of allusions is that of producing humour (see Epstein, 2012). The primary source of linguistic playfulness in the *Goth Girl* series is semantic ambivalence, but wordplay humour may also rely on substitution, literality or concretisation (*e.g.* giving a literal interpretation when a figurative one is in order), and, last, but definitely not least, in the highly allusive onomastics.

In onomastics, phonetic as well as lexical changes are common, on both the paradigmatic axis (*in praesentia*) and syntagmatic axis (*in absentia*) (see Guiraud, 1976). Always semantically loaded, with a more or less opaque semantic content[1], the proper names in the five books are always culturally connotative, being coined from classic (literary or historical) names, places or titles, often based on substitution (*e.g. Martin Puzzlewith < Martin Chuzzlewith; The Hairy Hikers < The Hairy Bikers; Charles Cabbage <*

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[1] See Theo Hermans' 1985 study on *semantically loaded names* (*i.e.* invented names in which some kind of semantic content is evident). A further distinction is between *expressive names* (in which the semantic content is transparently evident) and *suggestive names* (in which the semantic content is opaque).

Charles Babbage; *William Flake < William Blake* etc.) or addition (*e.g. Alfred Lord Tennislesson < Alfred, Lord Tennyson*; *William Wordsworthalot < William Wordsworth*; *Charlotte Lambchop < Charlotte Lamb*; *Mary Huckleberry < Mary Berry*), or being recurrently phonaesthetic (*e.g. The Harrow Harrumph; The Hairy Hikers*).

Food Terms: A Pretext for Intertext

As stated above, *Goth Girl and the Fete Worse than Death* (2014) revolves around an outdoor event ("The Full Moon Fete") which includes a culinary competition ("The Great Ghastly-Gorm Bake Off") under Lord Goth's patronage. Deeply aware of the significance of food as "a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations, and behaviour" (Barthes, 1997: 24), and willing to expose the overrated side of the cooking contests fad, Chris Riddell takes the concepts of *celebrity chef* and *cookery show* and exposes them to a few good rounds of harmless raillery.

Food terminology serves, in effect, the same purpose all along the series: it is simply a pretext for intertext; form for the sake of form. While relying on bona fide ingredients and dishes as a starting point, the food described in the series is always creatively seasoned with literary spices. If, to some extent, "any text is an intertext: other texts are present in it, at varying levels, in more or less recognisable forms" (Barthes, 1981: 39), it is no less true that "Gothic signifies a writing of excess" (Botting, 1996: 1). Chris Riddell's series, which casually parodies Gothic conventions, is therefore no stranger to exorbitance: in the texts under analysis here, we find that almost everything is an intertext, an allusion to something else.

Playfully exploited so as to permeate a wide range of linguistic and cultural fields, food terms are not restricted to meals and dishes, ingredients or kitchen utensils. We also come across food-related inventions ("the cake-catcher", "the gravy rocket"), various professions within the food industry (besides chefs and scullery maids, a new branch emerges: that of "Gourmet vampires"), reimagined spaces in residential buildings ("the outer pantry", "the inner pantry" and "the Whine cellar"), 'innovative' techniques of preparation ("frangellate the crusts", "neptunize the prawns", "bedevil the batter", "fuddle the eggs"). Idiomatic language itself is 'contaminated' and turned into culinary jargon (*e.g.* "Haway the cake crumbs, if it isn't Will Flake!", eloquently rendered into Romanian by "Ia te uită, să-mi scadă cozonacul, e chiar Will Flake!" [Lo and behold, I'll let my cake fall in the centre if that isn't Will Flake himself!]).

The ever-closer affinity between food, language and culture is brilliantly manipulated in Riddell's text. Since food vocabulary in any language is predominantly nominal, with some decorative verbs and adjectives sprinkled here and there, Riddell's gastronomic puns inevitably revolve, morphologically speaking, around the noun phrase. In *Goth Girl and the Fete Worse than Death*, gastronomy, Gothic motifs and various other intertexts are fused into creative portmanteau words or hybrid concepts. A good example is "the Whine Cellar", a pun relying on the homophony of *wine* and *whine*, creatively transposed into Romanian as "Crama de Chinuri", which obtains the maximum efficiency (alliteration, rhyme, allusion to a medieval torture chamber, akin to Gothic imagery etc.) with the minimum of effort (the set phrase "the wine cellar", which serves as a basis, can as easily be inferred in the Romanian "crama de chinuri" – a fresh twist on "crama de vinuri").

Last but not least, food terms pervade literary onomastics. Characters, too, whether parodies of eminent Victorians (like Charles Babbage and Mary Shelley), or contemporary celebrities (like Nigella Lawson or Heston Blumenthal), are inscribed with

humour-generating references to foodstuffs and kitchen utensils (Charles Cabbage, Mary Shellfish, Nigellina Sugarspoon, and Heston Harboil respectively). We may distinguish, on the one hand, between distant past celebrities and recent past celebrities, and on the other hand, between real-life chefs and non-chefs. As follows, we will present these two categories in two tables, detailing upon the alluded personality.

NON-CHEFS	
Goth Girl **name:**	**Name(s) Alluded to:**
Caroline Lambchop (Lord Goth's lady-friend)	Lady Caroline Lamb (Anglo-Irish aristocrat and novelist, author of the Gothic novel *Glenarvon* (1816), who had an affair with Lord Byron in 1812, whom she supposedly described as "mad, bad, and dangerous to know" – a phrase which became his lasting epitaph)
Mary Shellfish ("distinguished lady novelist")	Mary Shelley (author of the Gothic novel *Frankenstein* (1818))
Charles Cabbage ("the inventor")	Charles Babbage (English polymath and inventor who originated the concept of a digital programmable computer[2])
William Flake ("the baking poet")	William Blake ((pre-)Romantic poet and painter, who claimed to have experienced visions of anges, archangels, of Christ throughout his life)

Table 1. A Parody of 19th-Century Celebrities (Non-Chefs)

The four characters are cleverly assimilated by the narrative magma of the second volume in the series (here debated); they all make sense in the context, and the apparently casual details point to actual events. If the first three (Caroline Lambchop, Mary Shellfish and Charles Cabbage) have surnames which point to foodstuffs, but are not usually involved in cooking activities, William Flake, unlike the others, acts as a chef in *Goth Girl and the Fete Worse than Death*, thus making the transition from non-chefs to chefs.

While not a real-life chef himself, poet William Blake is a cook in *Goth Girl*, with a name evoking both patisserie (*flake*, as in *chocolate or coconut flakes*, but also fish scales or snowflakes, or, in American slang, a a crazy, unreliable or eccentric person). On the occasion of the Great Ghastly-Gorm Bake Off, he bakes two types of pastry: "Pastries of Innocence and Experience" (an obvious allusion to Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*), off contest, as a sort of warm-up before the culinary competition, and his "famous Jerusalem cake... with its fondant footprint on green icing sugar" (another allusion to one of his poems, *Jerusalem*). This is one of the hints which are explained in a translator's footnote, which cites the opening lines of Blake's poem, in English and in translation: "And did those feet in ancient time/ Walk upon Englands mountains green.... / Şi oare chiar au păşit acele tălpi în vechime/ Pe munţii înverziţi ai Albionului?").

Celebrity Chefs in *Goth Girl and the Fete Worse than Death*

Celebrity chefs are generally defined as cooks who have gained public acclaim. However, as shown in Albala (2015: 192), their fame, often cultivated through mass-media

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[2] Chris Riddell's inspiration for the protagonist of the Goth Girl series was Ada Lovelace (1815-1852), Lord Byron's only daughter – a great mathematician who, working with Charles Babbage on his *"analytical engine"*, wrote the first ever computer programme.

and Internet social media, is not always awarded "on the basis of their superior culinary skills, but often, celebrity status is ascribed due to other factors such as personality and physical attractiveness". There are variable levels of authority involved in the celebrity chef 'institution' (they dictate the parameters of taste, create culinary trends, endorse and promote products or eating establishments), which is in perfect consonance with the etymology of the word (*chef*, in French, denotes leadership which may or may not be related to the culinary realm) and the beginnings of the concept. It is believed that the French chef Auguste Escoffier (1846-1935), who cooked for Melba, Sarah Bernhardt and Anna Pavlova, was the one who, drawing inspiration from military hierarchies, divided kitchens into departments, with overseers. It was Marie-Antoine Carême (1783-1833), however, who is widely regarded as the first celebrity chef. The fact that he lived in the same period the adventures narrated in Riddell's books are apparently set is, of course, no coincidence. The chefs he mildly satirizes have the privilege of mass-media coverage, which ensures them middle-class viewership as well as social elites. Their "carefully cultivated public personae" (Albala, 2015: 194) and the adulation and ire they attract are the main target of Riddell's derision (*e.g.* in Gordon Ramsgate, he satirizes the so-called 'bad boy' chef persona, who shouts expletive laden-language at television cameras, and not necessarily chef Gordon Ramsey). The fact that the British chef Jamie Oliver, who has used his celebrity status to fight childhood obesity by striving to diversify school lunches in the United Kingdom and the United States, is absent from Riddell's list and escaped vituperation, is equally significant.

In his 'delicious' parody of British celebrity chefs, we come across two main techniques: substitutions and merging (of at least two allusions into one name). The table below lists the chefs in *Goth Girl* that are also chefs in real life. The toponyms that we identified as possible references are also places significant for the 19th century, the approximate period events in the *Goth Girl* series take place.

CHEFS	
***Goth Girl* name:**	**Name(s) Alluded to:**
Mary Huckleberry ("the cake decorator")	(1) Mary Berry (English food writer, chef, baker, television presenter)
	(2) Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*
Hollyhead ("Mary Huckleberry's faithful manservant")	(1) Paul Hollywood (English celebrity chef who judged, together with Mary Berry, *The Great British Baking Show*, for seven seasons; he was also a head baker at a number of British and international hotels)
	(2) Holyhead (a town in Wales and a major Irish sea port serving Ireland; in mid-19th century, Lord Stanley, a local philanthropist, funded a larger causeway, known as the Stanley Embankment)
Gordon Ramsgate ("the furious cook")	(1) Gordon Ramsey (multi-Michelin starred chef famous for the profanity and the fiery temper displayed on television cooking programs)
	(2) Ramsgate (one of the great English seaside towns of the 19th century)
Nigellina Sugarspoon ("the high-society baker")	Nigella Lawson (food writer and television cook, daughter of Nigel Lawson, Lord Lawson of Blaby)
Heston Harboil	(1) Heston Blumenthal

	(celebrity chef, TV personality, food writer, one of the driving forces in the avant-garde food movement, advocating a scientific approach to cooking, known for unusual recipes, such as bacon and egg icecream)
	(2) Blumenthal is widely popular for, among other things, his soft-boiled egg recipe (which relies on residual heat and is actually a no-boil boiled egg); *Harboil* is an oronymic[3] pun on *hard-boiled*, the opposite of *soft-boiled*
the Hairy Hikers	The Hairy Bikers (a BBC / Good Food Channel show that combines cooking with the travelogue format, hosted by David Myers and Si King)

Table 2. A Parody of Contemporary Celebrity Chefs

Each of the fictional chefs cooks something in keeping with the style of the real-life chefs they are supposed to mock. Thus, Mary Huckleberry prepares herself for the culinary contest by baking "Baby Victoria sponges with an amusement of plum jam", further detailed upon in the text as being "half a dozen tiny but perfectly formed cakes", which honor Mary Berry's classic Victoria sponge cake as well as her habit of producing miniature pastries (*e.g.* mini apple and almond cakes, mini three way biscuits, a.s.o.). The Romanian translation ("minitarte Victoria cu un strop de gem de prune... şase prăjiturele minuscule, dar fără cusur") does justice to the original description, while it also displays the translator's personal touch. Approximation is by necessity also resorted to. For *sponge cake*, "pandişpan" might have, technically, been a closer term. Nevertheless, in the Romanian cuisine, "pandişpan" usually comes as one big loaf; the use of the plural is also rare, which means "minitarte" is a fortunate solution both culturally and morphologically. The phrase "fără cusur" [flawless] is also an interesting choice, more nuanced than the rather bland equivalent "perfect(e)", as is the thematically adequate (though slightly less playful) partitive phrase "un strop de" to render the creative "an amusement of".

The centerpiece of the Great Ghastly-Gorm Bake Off is the "Brighton Pavilion Cake" ("a Young Victoria sponge with white chocolate fondant in the shape of the Prince Regent's New Pavilion in Brighton"). It is not the only reference to the Prince Regent (George, Prince of Wales, often referred to as Prinny, the eldest son of George III, who reigned as George IV from 1820 to 1830). His extravagant lifestyle, heavy drinking, huge banquets and morbid obesity made him the target of ridicule even during his lifetime. The Romanian translator is consistent in using the term "pandişpan" to render "sponge" ("Tort "Pavilionul de la Brighton"... Mary Huckleberry pregătise un pandişpan Victoria la Tinereţe, cu fondantă de ciocolată albă, care imita noul pavilion de la Brighton al Prinţului Regent").

It is only natural that Mary (Huckle)Berry should be in the spotlight at the Great Ghastly-Gorm Bake Off, given that the real Mary Berry used to judge *The Great British Bake Off*, a show which, with its nostalgia for the past and the notion of *heritage*, of "juxtaposition of old and new" (Burgoyne, 2008: 11), suits to perfection the homage to the past Riddell delivers in the series. In *The Great British Bake Off*, "the elderly Mary Berry (with her received pronunciation and being almost as old as the queen) stands in as a signifier of the monarchy" (as she possesses a similar bearing of authority, albeit in the

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[3] We employ the term here as it has been previously used by Gyles Brandreth in *The Joy of Lex* (1980), namely as a special subtype of homophony which supposes groups of words which, in connected or rapid speech, may lead to confusions (*e.g. ice-cream* vs. *I scream*).

field of cooking) (Bradley, 2019: 16). At the Great Ghastly-Gorm Bake Off, Mary Huckleberry is less formal, but no less majestic. If the other professional baker and *Bake Off* judge, Paul Hollywood, is known for bringing "a regional touch of the common people to the programme with his tempered Merseyside accent" (Bradley, 2019: 19), his *Goth Girl* counterpart, Hollyhead, produces a "Liverpool Strawberry Roll… with a spun-sugar cormorant on top"). The Romanian translator resorts to an encyclopedic footnote in which she explains outside the text what the text could not accommodate ("Hollyhead tăie apoi felii din propria lui creaţie, o ruladă de căpșuni în stil Liverpool cu un cormoran de zahăr caramelizat deasupra." Footnote: "Cormoranul este emblema orașului Liverpool." [the cormorant / liver-bird is the symbol of Liverpool]).

Gordon Ramsgate bakes "Extremely Cross Croissants" or "eye-wateringly fiery croissants", thus combining features of Gordon Ramsey, the *Hell's Kitchen* 'torturer' who occasionally teaches us how to make croissants at home (with very little butter). For the express purpose of the culinary competition, he proposes a befitting "«Nightmare in the Kitchen» Cake… cake covered in white chilli-chocolate with marzipan figures").

Nigellina Sugarspoon's desserts ("Chocolate Finger-Licking Upside Down Cake… [a] giant chocolate sponge in a lake of melted chocolate)" and "Giant Fondant Fancy… with praline-spoon decorations" are hints at Nigella Lawson's Chocolate-Fudge Upside Down Cake and her preference for fondant as an ingredient.

The first dish cooked by Heston Harboil is not a sweet treat, but a main dish: "Ode to a Nightingale Soup with autumn fumes and over-warmed hay", a nod at Keats' elegy, but at the same time at Blumenthal's the Alice in Wonderland-inspired Mock Turtle soup, which modernises the popular Victorian-Era dish. The suggestion of burnt food is absolutely hilarious. Harboil also bakes "Shall I compare Thee to a Summer's Trifle (Breakfast Brioche with Stilton Solar Flares)" which represents "[a] beautifully sculpted princess made of toasted brioche sat on a cushion of fluffy scrambled egg from which, like the rays of the sun, came cheesy sponge fingers."). An obvious tribute to Shakespeare, the invented confection also points to Heston Blumenthal's highly innovative dishes, experimental cooking techniques and original flavour combinations. The Romanian translation ("Pot să te asemăn cu o tartă a verii?") fails to render the double meaning of *trifle* (which is the very source of humour: denoting not only a cold dessert of sponge cake and fruit covered with layers of custard, jelly and cream, but also a thing of little value or importance). Heston Harboil's last creation is ""Plum Pudding in Danger" Cake… larger than all the rest and rather disappointingly decorated with yellow gloop….. with gas-proof custard…. garlic gas", a hint at the liquid nitrogen Blumenthal has been using not only to chill food down very rapidly, but also to release a swirling, freezing mist out of mousse of green tea and lime.

As for the Hairy Hikers, their contribution to the culinary contest lies in "a Cairn of Cumbrian Macaroons (a pile of rocky-looking macaroons glued together with lemon curd)" – succinctly transposed into Romanian ("Un morman de macarons de Cumbria… cu aspect bolovănos, cu cremă de lamâie pe post de liant") – and a "Giant Geordie Scone… with black-and-white chocolate ganache"), which, in the Romanian version, benefits from a footnote clarifying the diatopic and diaphasic aspects of *Geordie* (*i.e.* "Geordie – termen care denumește persoanele care provin din regiunea de nord-est a Angliei, precum și dialectul vorbit în acea zonă.").

Conclusion

The *Goth Girl* series poses quite a few challenges for translators, among which linguistic playfulness, so "common in children's literature, but [...] also one of the hardest issues to cope with in translation." (Bertills, 2003: 209) Next, as suggested by Patrick Zabalbeascoa (2005: 189), *inter-/bi-national* may offer resistance to translation if the source and target cultural systems do not possess the same shared knowledge, values and tastes. Or, as there is definitely not enough in common between the British and the Romanian cultural systems so as to afford leaving the readers of Riddell's text to decipher this or that reference on their own, footnotes may be occasionally added. For B. J. Epstein (2009), when translating a text which contains food terms, the availability of ingredients, the different cuts of meat, measurements, and the kitchen equipment (implements, pots and pans) turn out to be the most problematic aspects – to which Köhler (2011) adds another, namely culture specific names.

Taking all these difficulties into consideration, our overall conclusion is that the Romanian version under analysis is as accurate as possible. Even if it resorts to transfer (or direct copy), occasionally doubled by extratextual, exegetic footnotes, and manages to recreate the puns in the Romanian language only to some extent, the final result is valid and gratifying, offering the reader a glimpse at the complexity of Riddell's text as well as of the connections of food to almost every aspect of our lives and relationships. Not all allusions could have been explained, given the strict layout limits imposed by a book which reproduces illustrations. The footnote to *Caroline Lambchop*, for example („În traducere, „cotlet de miel". Aluzie la Caroline Lamb, celebră pentru legătura ei cu Lordul Byron.") offers both linguistic and extralinguistic enlightenment. *Mary Shellfish*, too, is explained as a pun upon the name of Mary Shelley, author of *Frankenstein*; at the same time, the footnote clarifies the meaning of *shellfish* ("crustaceu"). The "selfish" hint is, however, lost in both translation and paratext.

One may wonder which of the allusions contained in *Mary Huckleberry* will the contemporary (young) reader decipher first (if any?): the one to *Huckleberry Finn* or the one to Mary Berry? Fortunatey, we need not be keen British life connoisseurs to be able to enjoy *Domnișoara Goth și festinul cel sinistru*: with all its losses, it is still as readable and palatable as can be.

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